EEE Week 2004 – Evolution

The first day of the EEE week started on the 3rd of February. At around 12 noon, the Guest of Honour, Professor Er Meng Hwa, Dean of EEE, arrived outside the MLT. He was instantly greeted by a lion dance performance. Afterwards, the Dean invited onto the stage to start the opening ceremony with Ms Tan Dunlin, the EEE club president. When the Dean activated the button, it triggered off the party poppers that were hung on the stage and also lit up the EEE logo. The astonishing moment drew much applause from the audience. The Dean then gave a brief speech about EEE. He also acknowledged the effort put in by the EEE club in organizing the EEE week 2004. The first performance on the stage was a juggling. A masked female juggler appeared on the stage juggling with 3 bowling pins. The next event was a harmonica performance by the Chinese society harmonica band. While the performances were continuing, free ice creams were given out. After the performances, GV movie passes were sold at a very cheap price of $2 to all EEE students. Although the first day performance was short, people were delighted by the exciting performance and free treats.

The second day of the EEE week was welcomed with great enthusiasm by the students. On this day, EEE club gave away free lunches for all EEE students after the Student-Mentor Mentor Session. Great songs created a more festive mood. EEE club presented the Hall 12 Jam band, and we rocked NTU by playing three great songs. Next, games were played with many attractive prizes to be won.

A plethora of stage performances and a games fest was the highlight of the third day of the EEE week. Attractive prizes were given away to the winners and free gifts were given to many students to the various game booths. About 1000 free goodie bags were given away, along with a lucky draw, on the last day of the EEE week. While the students were queuing for the freebies, NTU’s very own Mushu team performing different strokes and styles of Wushu thrilled them. The hustle bustle prevailed all through the event, with the maximum crowd participation observed during the lucky draw event, towards the end.

The EEE week ended with a special event where EEE staff and students came together to enjoy a night filled with fun and entertainment, reminiscing on the year gone by. With the theme “Reminiscence” the event proved to be an extravaganza the likes of which had not been seen in NTU for a long time. On this note, the EEE week 2004 came to a successful end.

EEE Students Abroad – University of Alberta

It took almost six months of waiting, from the start of my exchange program application until the arrival of the approval letter from my host university. I couldn’t help but wonder whether the exchange experience would be worthy of all the effort and the sacrifices that I had made. Well, I managed to find the answer during my four-month stay in Edmonton, Canada… and the answer is a resounding, YES!!!

Canada and Edmonton

Do you know what the word Canada means? It actually came from the word ‘Canadas’ in the language of Huron, which carries the meaning of “village” or “settlement.” With 10 provinces and 3 territories, Canada offers 13 unique capital cities – 14 including the nation’s capital of Ottawa. As Canada is such a big country, the climate varies dramatically from one province to another. The University of Alberta is located in Edmonton, the vibrant cosmopolitan capital of the province of Alberta. As Edmonton is ranked as the sunniest city in Canada, the winter is bearable with warmth from the sun. The West Edmonton Mall is one of the must-go places in Edmonton. You will find nationally known retailers and intimate specialty shops all under one roof.

University of Alberta

The University of Alberta is the Capital University of the Alberta province. It is now one of Canada’s foremost research-intensive universities. It serves nearly 34,000 students in more than 200 undergraduate programs and 170 graduate programs. The park-like main campus has more than 95 buildings - some are stately old brick and stone edifices set along tree-lined boulevards. Others are outstanding examples of modern architecture. The campus houses many high-tech classrooms, state-of-the-art science and computer laboratories, and extensive research facilities. Inside and out, the campus provides an environment that fosters learning.

Costs

I brought approximately of CDN$4,500 ~ $3850 (exclusive of my air tickets) with me when I left for Canada. Most of my money was spent on accommodation and food. Quite a big sum of money was spent on souvenirs too. The details of my expenditure are as follows:

Due to a rise in the Canadian Dollar currency exchange rate, I believe that the total expenditure would be higher today.

My exchange experience

I stayed in a bachelor unit at the HUB mall which is located just beside the Business building on campus. There are 3 different types of units in the HUB mall, the 2- room unit, 4-room unit, and the bachelor unit. Though the bachelor unit is the most expensive, it is the best type of accommodation offered in the HUB mall. I cooked almost everyday during my exchange period in my extremely spacious kitchen. I always made sure that my fridge was stocked with all kinds of food bought in the supermarkets.

One thing that I need to mention is that the room is unfurnished!!! It is basically EMPTY... no bed, no table, no chair, no sink. I was forced to get a free (thus quite worn out) mattress from the church organization with 3 of my exchange fellow students from NTU and NIE. In addition to that, we went to buy blankets and pillows on the second day we moved in. It was unbearable to sleep on the floor as it was extremely cold at night!!!

Studies

After settling in, it was time to study. I got my first shock when I attended my first day of school. I was taught to study every week for 4 of my subjects and the biggest shock came when I realized that my fifth subject actually required me to spend at least 6 hours in the lab every week! Basically, it was a project which involved design, planning and testing. I had never done that in NTU!!! Panic ran through me as I never thought that I would be “challenged” on my practical skills here, in Canada, as an exchange student! Fortunately, the subject coordinator, Loren, and the lab instructor, Ed were very helpful. Discussing with Loren, I was relieved to find out that I was not alone and there was lots of help available. As for my other subjects, I had problems coping with the heavy workload given. Nevertheless, I got used to the stress level in the U of A after a few weeks. I felt that the situation was not as bad as I initially thought.

Activities

There were lots of gatherings and potluck dinners during my stay in Edmonton. Hunting for food with my new friends was definitely one of my weekly routines (other than shopping for groceries). Moreover, the International Student centre organized many trips and outings. Due to my heavy workload, I only managed to join the Corn Maze trip and the Halloween Party. The activities were fun and very memorable as I met friends from all around the world.

I would highly recommend the University of Alberta for all the students out there who wish to be challenged both physically and mentally. Good Luck, guys!

Useful links:
1) http://www.canada.ca/en/main.html
2) http://www.ca.gc.ca/publications/facebook/goes/ca.html
3) http://www.travelcanada.travelcanada.ca/en/can/ome.do.html
4) http://www.ano-on.ca.cps.ca/in/inf/inf0160e.html
5) http://www.gov.edmonton.ab.ca/po/areaserver/pr
6) http://www.usaibo.ca