



Ho Shu Jun (left) and Yeoh Peyee.



The participants of field trip in front of Busan station.

UMS students receive AIMS scholarships to study in South Korea

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KOTA KINABALU: Two students from the Faculty of Business, Economics and Accountancy, University Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Ho Shu Jun and Yeoh Peyee, received scholarships from the Asian International Mobility for Students (AIMS) programme and spent a semester abroad as exchange students in Dongguk University Gyeongju, South Korea.

Shu Jun, a second-year student majoring in Tourism Management shared her experience.

According to her, she is enriched with the experiences she had in South Korea from March to July 2022.

"I am appreciative of the opportunity given by UMS to participate in this international mobility programme. It is said that reading a thousand books is not comparable to travelling a thousand miles.

"It is true that sometimes the lessons you draw from your own life experiences are richer and more relatable than those you learn from books," quipped Shu Jun.

Arriving in South Korea in March was a challenge as Covid-19 restrictions had not been lifted in the country. After arriving in

Incheon, one of the country's three main cities, Shu Jun and Peyee were quarantined for seven days. Every day for a week, food was delivered to their rooms on schedule.

After quarantine, they took the Korea Train Express from Incheon to Gyeongju City. Gyeongju is the birthplace of Buddhism, which is also a home to numerous important historical landmarks in Korea, including Cheomseongdae and Woljeong Bridge.

Dongguk University, a comprehensive university, was established in 1906. It is unique in that it is the only institution in South Korea to offer a major in Buddhist studies. The professors and students at Dongguk University were kind to them on their first day there.

Shu Jun and Peyee took five classes taught in English. The credits were transferable upon returning to UMS.

During their classes, they had the opportunities to sample local Korean cuisines besides learning about Gyeongju's history and culture.

The Silla Dynasty left behind a wealth of historical and cultural artifacts in the city of Gyeongju, many of which

have been conserved and are now beautifully on exhibit. Both students were invited by their professor to visit her hometown.

Professor Jay Soo who is a Daegu native invited both students to learn more about her hometown and took them there to explore the local cuisine, culture and history. In comparison to Gyeongju, Daegu is a comparatively metropolitan metropolis.

It is the fourth largest city in Korea. They were also informed that Daegu had another name. It is 'Daefrica'. What does the name 'Daegu + Africa' signify? This unique appellation for Daegu is a result of the city's intense summer heat.

In one of their classes, Professor Jay Soo had presented the Korea Virtual Reality Tour as an example of Korea's cutting-edge technology. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic that has impacted the lives of many people all over the world, South Korea has developed a Virtual Reality Tour website to allow people to 'go out and vacation' even if they were impacted by the pandemic.

The exchange students from Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia,

and a few Korean students were given the opportunities to participate in a two-day and one-night field trip to Busan hosted by Korea Maritime & Ocean University.

The Korea Maritime & Ocean University is an important maritime institution with a concentration on shipping, logistics, marine, and transportation.

The students visited the Korea Maritime Museum, Busan Customs Headquarters, Busan New Port Public Relations Hall and Busan New Port Terminal to learn about the history and culture of Busan city.

Shu Jun and Peyee encountered with many individuals on this trip who were welcoming and eager to assist them when they needed it, which left them with a positive and insightful view of South Korea.

Peyee, also a second-year student, majoring in Tourism Management believed that the AIMS programme brings a lot of benefits to students.

Both students have gained a lot from their time spent in South Korea as exchange students. They have also learned more about the country's history

and culture.

Associate Professor Dr Mohd Rahimie Abd Karim, Dean of Faculty of Business, Economics and Accountancy, UMS emphasised the importance of international mobility experience as part of students' learning experiences.

The faculty has been actively engaged in international mobility programme for both staff and students.

In September, two students from the faculty will enroll in autumn semester in Dongguk University WISE Campus, while three Korean students will spend one semester in UMS (October 2022).

According to the Director of the Centre of Internationalization and Global Engagement, UMS, Associate Professor Dr Wardatul Akmam Din, "Preparing global citizens has become more important than ever in an increasingly interconnected world; however, as lauded in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, it is important to balance the development of global citizenship with a strong national identity."

The curriculum in Universiti Malaysia Sabah strives to achieve a balance in both.