

After GCEC

From June 21st to the 29th, I was given the opportunity to attend the Global Culture Engagement Convention held at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. The convention was short in a way, or long. However, the convention itself is an unforgettable memory, and I can say that I learned priceless lessons while I was in Hong Kong.

It was my first time visiting a part of China, but Hong Kong is a little special from China. So the overall atmosphere I think that was in Hong Kong was much more with liberty than China. To say the truth, my first impression of Hong Kong was not so great. Due to the delay of my flight, I arrived at the airport at eleven o'clock at night and when I arrived, the air was so humid, everything so unfamiliar, so much Cantonese, and the cab I had to take was also very different from the usual ones I used to take. That was the start of my trip. I didn't expect myself not wanting to go back on the last day of the convention.

With the supporter's help, I successfully settled in the dormitory that I will stay for nine days, and slept. I do not remember the rest. Then started the real convention from Monday. There were a total of sixty participants from all over the world and among them, eight were from Japan, seven were from Kyushu University. We had to dress formal in the opening ceremony, and the ceremony ran for the whole day. Throughout the whole ceremony, there were invited speakers and professors from the school, and kindly shared us their stories about integration and balancing different cultures. Then we had four speakers from our participants to make a speech about what they thought "Leadership" is. Some were young students, some were almost towards the end of their study...But regardless of how much they were experienced, I was surprised how they individually defined "Leadership" and the experiences they shared being a leader. I could see great potential in each and every one of them.

For the next few days after the ceremony held icebreaking, leadership games to integrate with your teammates, and the main project started of how to build integration between the foreign and the local students in your campus through the four subjects: Food, Body Language, Humor, and Gender roles. Students were divided into these four groups and had to come up with an idea to integrate through the topics. We had a little more than a day to come up with an idea and write 2000 word proposal and 15 minutes presentation. That part I should say most difficult. At last, I was in a group of Food, and although we didn't win a prize, I think we did a good job in coming up with an idea, writing a proposal and presentation.

On Thursday, it was my turn to speak as one of the three individual speakers about what I think "integration" is, and also relate to how Kyushu University encourages affiliating the foreign and the local students. It was an inexplicable honor to stand in front of students all over the world and talk about my school. Although I was the youngest among the Kyushu University participants, I tried to convey my best and my true thoughts about the life as an international student in Kyushu University. After the speech, I was surprised that many students came up to me and asked about the programs and system in

our school. I was delighted to realize that through my speech, more and more people showed interest in Japan.

Currently, I am living my college life as an international student in Kyushu University. So more than anyone else, I get the opportunity to live with all the students from different cultures. Nevertheless, the experience in GCEC is priceless, in a sense that I could interact with more students from various parts of the world, and also having the convention held at a different site than where I am at, was a whole different thing. I was surprised at times how differently students would think, and as a result, attending the convention in HKUST helped me widen my perspective and drive forwards, and to appreciate the cultures. If I get a chance, I would be surely like to attend the convention once more, and for all the students in Kyushu University that are thinking whether to participate, I want to tell them that through GCEC, you will get to experience and learn much further than you expect. So do not hesitate, join!