



國立臺灣師範大學
NATIONAL TAIWAN NORMAL UNIVERSITY

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Gong-fu initially arrived in Taiwan to learn Chinese. His interests, however, later grew to include the field of human resource (HR) management. Soon

Human Resource Development

2021

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NTNU

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Link 2021/ Issue No.6

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Confidence and Peace of Mind at NTNU

By Pei-ying Liu

A native of Thailand, Chayanis Chunyawongsak received her BA from Chulalongkorn University where she graduated with an accounting degree. Soon after, she decided to pursue a master's degree at the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development at NTNU. Following her graduation from this program, Chayanis has remained in Taiwan and now studies Chinese full-time at NTNU's Mandarin Training Center. Living every day in Taiwan to its fullest, Chayanis plans to eventually return to Thailand to share what she has learned with others.

Asked about why she chose a graduate program in human resource (HR) management after studying accounting in university, Chayanis replies: "My ambition before university was to become a doctor; however, after testing into university and with an eye on future workplace opportunities, I decided to study accounting instead. Accounting is considered a foundational skill in both business analysis and management. After graduation I knew it would be easy for me to find work in either the accounting or finance field."

However, after working as an accountant for several years, Chayanis still felt drawn to her childhood dreams. For her, HR management is a field with people at its foundation that brings together the studies of psychology and business. From her previous work experience, Chayanis understands that HR management is key to the development of successful organizations. She knows that through the ongoing development of strong employees, a strong organization is born. Although she knew it would be challenging to fulfil this long-standing dream of hers, Chayanis decided to quit her accounting position and enroll in a graduate program in HR management.



"I was looking for a program that would help lessen my financial burdens," says Chayanis. Once she had decided to study abroad, she analyzed what resources would be available to her and how much it would cost. After taking into account factors such as the curriculum at NTNU and the relatively short distance between Taiwan and Thailand, Taiwan became her country of choice.

A wealth of academic resources and an international student body were the main reasons Chayanis chose NTNU. Take the class composition of the HR program for example. In addition to local Taiwanese students, a significant portion of those studying at the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development are international students. In fact, Chayanis says every class was almost like the convening of a United Nations meeting. Thinking back to her studies, Chayanis remembers well working with classmates from all over Europe, Central and South America, and Africa. This constant interaction led to a real understanding across cultures for everyone involved.

Chayanis remembers when she first arrived at NTNU, she was unused to the many different forms of communication being used. However, after a period of time, the variations in communication styles were no longer a problem. Instead, these differences—and the experience bridging them—have become the cornerstones of Chayanis' future success. "Interacting with the international student body at NTNU and meeting them on a daily basis has allowed me to cultivate excellent communicate skills, as well as an ability to adapt to different people," says Chayanis. "This will be great help in whatever future workplace I find myself."

Practical curriculums help to prove theories

Among her program's curriculum, the classes that Chayanis remembers best are those in which guests were invited to speak to the class and share their professional and workplace experiences. These moments were excellent opportunities for Chayanis to put the theories that she was learning into practice, verifying their validity with own experience.

Chayanis remembers one particular exercise that she found particularly enjoyable and instructive. Her program had organized a mock interview in which students took turns being either a HR director or an interviewee. This was the first time Chayanis had experienced the role of a HR manger. During the mock interview, she learned how to put forth queries to job applicants, to observe the qualities and personalities of each applicant, and to apply the theories that she had previously learned across the duration of the interviews.

"During my study at NTNU, I found that the teachers in my graduate program and the staff of the Office of International Affairs were always willing to help and look after us," says Chayanis. "Regardless of the size of the problem, it was easy to feel the care and patience extended by them. In the same vein, whenever I would send out a question or request by email, they would always get back to me very quickly."

Chayanis says she feels that the faculty and staff of NTNU are very sincere about helping international students and always ready and willing to offer advice or solutions. In fact, her experience with the professors and TAs of her graduate

OVERCOME

'Avoid limiting yourself in your thinking and bravely accept the challenges that come from meeting different cultures.'

program were like that of a big family. When Chayanis was writing her thesis, she says that there were many concepts that she needed to be reminded of, and a lot of mistakes that required correction. Without fail, her professors were always willing to review her work and to offer valuable feedback with each new revision. Tirelessly, they offered important reminders, laying down a step-by-step process for her to follow when writing her thesis. With such a clear understanding of how to proceed, Chayanis says writing her thesis was mostly stress-free. In fact, Chayanis says laughingly, she did not expect her studies at NTNU to go as smoothly as they did! Despite being the first time she had left Thailand to spend a significant amount of time in another country, Chayanis says she never encountered any problems serious enough to make her consider quitting.

In autumn of 2020, Chayanis was awarded her master's degree by the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development. Although she initially planned to return to Thailand to continue to find opportunities in the HR field, due to the pandemic, Chayanis decided to remain in Taiwan and study Chinese. She holds precious this time

where she can quietly and thoroughly review everything that she has learned over the past two years. Looking back, Chayanis feels that she has come to understand how to work with people of different backgrounds, as well as developing skills to communicate across cultures in the process. Furthermore, with her HR program being taught entirely in English, her English communication skills and professional vocabulary have also improved. She is now much more confident when it comes to expressing her ideas in English. Finally, Chayanis' time at NTNU has also expanded her horizons, helping her learn many new things that she was unaware of in the past.

Chayanis' experience at NTNU has taught her how to open her heart to learning and how to proactively understand and overcome cultural differences. For students hoping to study at NTNU, she has one piece of advice: "Avoid limiting yourself in your thinking and bravely accept the challenges that come from meeting different cultures." By doing so, future students will find that their experience at NTNU mirrors Chayanis'—i.e. fulfilling, rich, and successful.



A Love of Making New Friends. A Love of Study. A Love for NTNU

By Chien-ling Tung

Savannah comes from the U.S. and her Chinese name, Li Shan-nan, stands out for its distinctiveness and beauty. "Many people ask me why my surname in Chinese is Li," Savannah says.

The answer is simple. Her full name is Savannah Lee, so Savannah decided to transliterate her last name as Li. In that way, her Chinese and English names overlap.

Now in the second year of her master's program at the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development, looking back on her decision to attend NTNU, Savannah says: "I chose NTNU because I hoped to study in a place with different customs and traditions. I wanted to experience an environment that differed from the culture that I grew up in." Savannah didn't want to go to Europe, as she was looking for something different from the Anglo European culture with which she was already familiar. As a result, she chose to look to Asia as a destination and found Taiwan to be the perfect choice. Taiwan not only offered Savannah the chance to experience a different culture, but it was also a great place to study Chinese. "After searching online, I discovered that NTNU is home to the famous Mandarin Training Center. Outside of my graduate program, I also wanted to take Chinese classes and NTNU offered the chance for this type of study." After a bit more research, NTNU soon topped Savannah's list for possible schools in Asia.



‘If you are able to live aboard successfully, you can handle almost any other problem in life.’

With an interest in enrolling in a business-focused curriculum and hoping to study Chinese, Savannah, who had been awarded a Fulbright U.S. Student Program scholarship, decided to enroll in the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development. Looking back, Savannah knows she made the correct choice in selecting NTNU.

Savannah says that business is, by its nature, international, and every enterprise needs employees with relevant business skills. As such, the two classes that she enjoyed the most were International Business and Compensation. Thanks to the many theories introduced and the professors' use of real-world cases to highlight certain concepts, Savannah's knowledge of business management grew by leaps and bounds. She was also able to improve her communication skills, something that has proved very beneficial.

Savannah loves studying at NTNU and has enjoyed her time there as a student—a time that has been filled with many new and interesting experiences. In addition to her graduate program's curriculum, Savannah has a passion for studying Chinese and meeting students from around the world. She encourages those who are considering studying abroad to learn how to step outside their comfort zone and to interact with people from different backgrounds and cultures. Studying abroad offers an excellent opportunity for this. “If you are able to live aboard successfully, you can handle almost any other problem in life,” says Savannah.

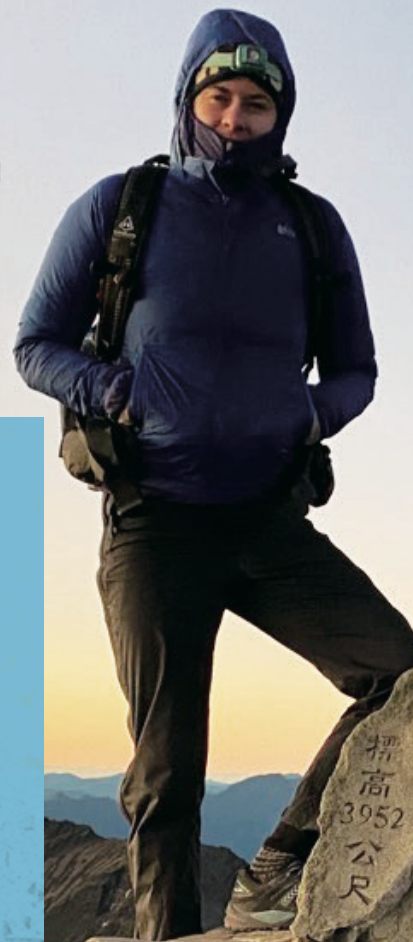
As a student at NTNU for over a year now, Savannah says she has come to greatly appreciate the assistance of her professors and classmates. She remembers her first day on campus and how worried she was that she would be clueless or would embarrass herself due to the language barrier. However, with the help of her classmates and teachers, she has slowly acquired an easy familiarity with the food, clothing, transportation, and overall life at NTNU. Thanks to the encouragement and care of her professors and classmates, Savannah says that she encountered no

large problems in adapting to campus life. For the curriculum or other questions on academic affairs, she has been able to find timely assistance at her graduate institute's office or from the Office of International Affairs.

In addition to school life, Savannah has also experienced Taiwan's traditional festivals. Every year around Chinese New Year, students from all over Taiwan happily pack their bags and head home to spend time with their families. Experiencing the festive atmosphere ahead of the holidays and the quietness in the dorms after most students have left can be a difficult time for international students, who often find their thoughts beginning to stray homeward. Fortunately, Savannah received an invitation from a local student to come visit over the new year's holidays, so she and another international student traveled south to spend Chinese New Year in the manner it was meant to be celebrated—with family. The care that she received from her classmate's family meant that she was able to experience the warmth of the holidays in a home setting in her first year abroad.

“To boldly explore without fear” is Savannah's life motto. A lover of mountains, Savannah has already hiked Yangming Mountain and Ali Mountain. She has also visited the hills around Taipei's Jingmei to view a solar eclipse. Among the mountains that she has hiked in Taiwan, Savannah feels that Jade Mountain is one of the prettiest. For international students studying at NTNU who love hiking, Savannah recommends that when they have time off from class, they should take advantage of Taiwan's convenient transportation to plan a trip into the mountains and appreciate their beauty.

Apart from enjoying the scenery, hiking is a personal exploration, a time for Savannah to unearth her untapped potential. “Life is like hiking, there are mountain trails that are comfortable to walk and going downhill feels easy. However, if you hope to reach the heights of what is possible, you need to elevate the altitude of your life,” Savannah wisely points out.



Jade Main Peak
Elevation: 3952m

TO ELEVATE THE
ALTITUDE OF
YOUR LIFE

A Wellspring for International Cultural Exchange and Understanding

By Chia-yi Yu

“A manager is someone who needs to lead employees from various backgrounds. Each employee arrives with a different life experience and a unique outlook. Management skills based on logic are only half the story. You also need to find a way to express empathy and emotional connection and guide your team in cultivating tolerance and diversity. This is the key for both leaders and their organizations,” Pamela Simelane says.

A student of NTNU's Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development since fall of 2018, throughout our interview Pamela Simelane is full of enthusiasm as she describes her study at NTNU. Each learning opportunity offers new inspiration, while each new experience has her looking forward to future professional developments.

A native of the tiny African country of Eswatini, due to her background, Pamela has faced discrimination in the past. Social prejudice against Africans still exists and tends to be more noticeable in the workplace. As a result, Pamela has become keenly aware of the issues and opportunities surrounding cultural differences. “Studying at NTNU, I've experienced an on-going exchange between different cultures,” Pamela says. “I've realized that the cultural issues I've wanted to explore actually closely align with the field of human resource management. In any work environment

where there is human interaction on a daily basis, we need to understand each other's culture and come to a deeper understanding of human nature. We also need to extend to each other a high degree of care and empathy in order for any team to develop and grow. These are some of things I discovered during my studies at NTNU.”

As if it was destiny!

Thinking back to the process of applying to NTNU, Pamela says in many ways it seemed like fate. She had already received a BA in human resource management and had early on decided to go abroad for further studies. At the time, her familiarity with top international human resources departments was minimal, so she searched online—the most direct way to get information in this digital age. Typing in the keywords “international IHRD MBA recommendation” what followed was “destiny,” says Pamela.

The first recommendation was a link to NTNU's Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development. At that time, Pamela was leaning towards attending university in England for her master's degree, but she was curious about the graduate program at NTNU that her Google search had turned up. What followed was an exhaustive side-by-side comparison of the two schools and programs.



A manager is someone who needs to lead employees from various backgrounds. Each employee arrives with a different life experience and a unique outlook. Management skills based on logic are only half the story. You also need to find a way to express empathy and emotional connection and guide your team in cultivating tolerance and diversity. This is the key for both leaders and their organizations.

Pamela Simelane

Eventually, Pamela decided that the curriculum at NTNU was more applicable to her needs. Furthermore, the professors of the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development all enjoy a solid international reputation. Browsing the comments left by graduates and current students about their time at NTNU, Pamela also noticed how enthusiastic and positive everyone was about their experience. Although nearly convinced, Pamela decided to do her due diligence and brought her research to her college professors. As it turns out, her professors only had positive things to say about the program at NTNU, all vouching for its strength and professionalism. On the basis of these glowing recommendations, Pamela decided that NTNU was the right place for her graduate studies, and she began to look forward to her academic journey in Taiwan.

"Taiwan and Eswatini are diplomatic allies, so during the visa application process, the Taiwanese embassy was extraordinarily helpful. After assessing the cost of living in Taiwan, the good public safety and convenient transportation, I knew that the living and academic environment in Taiwan would be a perfect match for me," Pamela remarked.

Pamela says that she feels lucky that her decision was the right one. She adds: "Compared to the school in England, I prefer the curriculum at NTNU. However, language was also a factor in my decision. A curriculum in English means that I won't have to skip certain options because of language barriers. For example, if language was a problem, that might limit which classes I could take." Pamela goes on to stress: "Because the curriculum at the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development is taught entirely in English, I chose NTNU."

Flexibility of interdisciplinary classes to shape a future

"I know that NTNU is home to the internationally famous Department of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language. I also have several friends who are studying Chinese at NTNU's Mandarin Training Center," Pamela says. "For myself, my primary goal is to study and learn further in field of human resources (HR). I am happy with my choice of NTNU, because we are given much leeway in how we go about our studies. For students who want to study Chinese or focus on graduate classes, they're free to do so." Pamela believes the reason that NTNU attracts students from around the world and from a host of different cultures is because it has created a diverse learning environment on campus, as well as offering students a multitude of avenues to explore. International students also never have to worry about language barriers stifling interaction. At NTNU, they can interact to their heart's content in the classroom, find stimulation in new academic insights, grow to understand cultural differences, and experience a tolerant and empathetic learning process. Among the back and forth between professors and students, and among the students themselves, international students discover deep personal and academic growth. They soon arrive at a clearer picture of where they stand in life and what they want out of it. This kind of learning is not written down in any human resources textbook, but is vitally important just the same.

The curriculum of the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development is divided into four areas: research foundations, human resources development and management, international skill cultivation, and special topics research. Class lectures introduce both theory and application, while outside the classroom, students attend



regularly scheduled seminars or listen to talks given by leaders in the HR field. Along with such lectures, students are also given matching internship opportunities.

The curriculum at NTNU has been designed with the goal of enabling students to be able to apply what they learn in the classroom. Pamela says she always looks forward to the lectures organized by NTNU, as in the past she attended most of her classes online. Learning online, she points out, lacks the immediacy of being in the classroom and often fails to stimulate a desire to learn. After coming to NTNU, Pamela now takes every opportunity to attend in-person lectures. She enjoys interacting with the speakers and sees them as an important resource from which to learn valuable skills first-hand.

In one instance, a lecturer asked the audience to share their views on management. While everyone else was still thinking, Pamela quickly raised her hand and stood up to answer. Her answer was not only accepted by the lecturer, but praised for its accuracy and insight. After several similar experiences, Pamela now holds precious each opportunity to attend a lecture. Where else can expert opinions and ideas be obtained with such immediacy? Pamela believes that every one of these exchanges is a 'once in a lifetime' learning experience, helping her to expand her vision and

passion in the field of HR management. Pamela says she loves the fact that leaders in the HR field are often brought into the classroom to share practical examples of what works and what doesn't. This type of teaching model goes beyond textbooks and is key to helping students integrate what they learn in the classroom with the needs and reality of the HR industry.

After such classes, Pamela will often review her lecture notes and try to remember how these HR experts shared their knowledge. She next tries to emulate their way of thinking and imagines what kind of decisions they would make in certain situations. Pamela learned this sort of independent thinking only after coming to NTNU. Through thoroughly digesting class material, she has found the confidence to share ideas and research with others. This, in turn, has won her the praise of her professors and classmates and given her a sense of accomplishment to a degree she has never felt before. Finding satisfaction in the learning process has helped Pamela acquire a solid foundation and understanding of HR. In the future, thanks to her passion and sense of mission, Pamela intends to return to her country to use the professional knowledge and understanding acquired at NTNU to cultivate a new generation of students in the HR field.

‘For students who want to study Chinese or focus on graduate classes, they’re free to do so.’

PRACTICAL

Practical · Caring · Encouraging

As for the teaching models used by her NTNU professors, Pamela says that they are quite different from those she encountered in the past. Not only are they much more applicable to the workplace, but they have shown her a way to learn that goes beyond books. Consequently, in addition to the solid foundation of its professional curriculum, the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development also encourages its students to go beyond textbooks to practice thinking and answering on the spot. This helps students to reflect on the cases and conflicts that they might encounter in the workplace and to have the tools and confidence to solve them.

Pamela then describes a bit of how she was taught back in Eswatini. Classes hewed to what was being discussed in textbooks. Although terms and theories were explained in detail, there was little in-depth analysis into individual cases and few opportunities for in-class group practice. Exams just tested situational narratives, making it hard for professors to identify the actual learning situation of students. Thus, it was impossible to adequately test each student's ability to adapt to future workplaces.

As an antidote to the above, NTNU's training and management practice curriculum is everything that Pamela was looking for and more. Classes are broken into small groups for group discussions. The professor gives each group a workplace simulation, with group members taking turns acting as a supervisor or employee. Through this interactive method, workplace events can be discussed, practiced, and analyzed. In these classes, Pamela has done her best to master each role. If she is assigned to be an employee, she will closely observe how she reacts to the student acting as a manager—his or her logic, leadership, tone of voice, etc. If she is asked to be the manager, she will make it point to observe the reactions of the "employee" and whether the person is accepting or disregarding her words, and whether they are being active or passive, etc. After class, Pamela will often ask her classmates whether they thought her performance was good and where it needed improvement.

Pamela also loves NTNU's interdisciplinary course selection system, which allows her to go beyond her current area of research to find areas of new potential by studying in different fields. Among other things, the flexible and open course selection system at NTNU allowed Pamela to meet Associate Professor Shen Hui-wen of the Graduate Institute of Social Work. "I'm very happy that I enrolled in the class Introduction to Cross-cultural Studies. This class represented one of my most fruitful periods of study at NTNU and Professor Shen is, without a doubt, one of my favorite teachers. She is someone with empathy, as well as vision. She encourages students to express themselves in the classroom, and values every student's opinion and the time that she spends with them," Pamela gushes.

Learning and living in a foreign country, it is inevitable that international students will occasionally have trouble adopting to a new culture. In one instance, Pamela was feeling blue and needed someone to talk to about her life in Taiwan. Unannounced, she showed up at Professor Shen's office. Professor Shen, however, took it all in stride. She patiently listened to Pamela and answered her questions with a warm smile. "I felt what I'd received that day was not knowledge, but a sense of being cared for and heard." Even today, Pamela looks fondly back on that day and her meeting with Professor Shen.

Since that day, Pamela has often turned to Professor Shen when she needs help or advice. Either through email or by finding Professor Shen after class, Pamela will share with Professor Shen the cross-cultural issues and problems that she currently finds herself dealing with. For her part, Professor Shen will always offer numerous suggestions or solutions. "I am very happy that I have gotten to know Professor Shen. She has really changed my thinking and ignited my interest and enthusiasm for cross-culture dialogue," says Pamela. "Even more important is that she has made me understand that the foundation of training others is built on an understanding of cultural backgrounds and backdrops. Only then can we build a harmonious relationship, one based on respect for oneself and others."

Memories of NTNU close to her heart

According to Pamela, NTNU's Office of International Affairs (OIA) was the kicking off point for her studies at NTNU. Pamela says that her first time applying to the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development did not go smoothly. In fact, her first application to the program was rejected. Not willing to give up so easily, she wrote to NTNU for reasons why her application had been rejected. Pamela says she wasn't expecting much of a response; after all, NTNU gets hundreds of applications and the school has no responsibility to explain its decision process. What Pamela got from NTNU, however, was not the usual boilerplate response, but a heartfelt letter from the staff of OIA who encouraged Pamela not to give up and to continue to strive for her dreams. This answer gave Pamela the courage to prepare again and apply the next year. This time her application was accepted. "The OIA is like a beacon in the night for international students," praises Pamela. "Basically, any problem that you might have can be solved with a visit to the OIA. The office was really instrumental in helping me get off on the right foot in my studies at NTNU."

Outside of academics, the OIA is also there to help students navigate through their new life in Taiwan. One time, Pamela was very sick and had to check into the hospital for observation. She remembers feeling intensely lonely and homesick as she lay there in her hospital bed completely alone. Suddenly, the door to her room opened and in came one of the staff of OIA. She had come to check up on Pamela and to deliver some get-well presents of food and fruit. The staff member also kindly asked Pamela what other help she might need. Pamela says that to receive such personal care and attention in her time of need was an unforgettable experience.

The OIA also arranges for international students already enrolled in NTNU to help out with new arrivals during their first few weeks at NTNU. Pamela was quite surprised to encounter NTNU's student 'buddy' system, as in Eswatini, international students need to seek out assistance by themselves and there is no system in place to help them meet other students. "I remember when I first moved out of the school dorms to an apartment I had just rented. On my first day, I got lost on the way to school," Pamela recalls. "I called my student buddy who immediately came to find me and showed me the right bus to take. Perhaps for my buddy this was no big deal, but for us newly arrived international students, their help can be a lifesaver. Even today, I feel so much gratitude for my buddy's help. It feels good to know that you have someone looking out for you when you first arrive here in Taiwan," says Pamela.

Finally, Pamela would like to tell all future students to never give up on their dreams. The first time Pamela failed to get into NTNU, her application for an International Cooperation and Development Fund scholarship was also refused. Unwilling to give up and determined to try again, Pamela was eventually able to realize her dreams of studying for her master's degree at NTNU. For students currently studying in Eswatini and who are interested in coming to NTNU, Pamela's advice is they first do their research. They should also definitely get in touch with the staff at OIA who will be more than willing to offer any necessary help or advice. Pamela says that NTNU is like a treasure chest—the reward is worth the effort of finding it. If she had to do it all over again, Pamela says she would choose NTNU without hesitation.

Pamela deeply believes that whatever happens in our lives, the final result will be perfect. If you find the results lacking, that means you are not yet at the end. Instead, you need to try a bit harder and perhaps be a bit more courageous as you push on. Only then can you taste the sweetness that comes with crossing the finish line.





NTNU: An Opportunity to Meet His Benefactors

By Chien-ling Tung

In 2018, Le Cong-phu came to Taiwan for a short period to study Chinese. Following, he returned to his native country of Vietnam to finish his university studies. Due to the wonderful memories of studying in Taiwan, Cong-phu considered getting his master's degree in Taiwan as well. With the renewed emphasis on Southeast Asia following Taiwan's implementation of the New Southbound Policy, many opportunities are now available for Vietnamese students to study in Taiwan. For its part, Vietnam heavily encourages students to study Chinese in Taiwan and offers scholarships to do so. With this level of support, it is easy to see why Taiwan was Cong-phu's first choice.

Cong-phu initially arrived in Taiwan to learn Chinese. His interests, however, later grew to include the field of human resource (HR) management. Soon after, he was looking for a program near his language school that offered HR-related classes in English. Not surprisingly, Cong-phu found NTNU's Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development to be the perfect fit. Once enrolled, Cong-phu discovered a truly international student body, further solidifying his belief that he made the right decision in choosing NTNU.

In his study at the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development, Cong-phu partners with students from a variety of countries and backgrounds. In the process, he has developed a broader understanding of the organizations and cultures that are unique to each country. These ongoing encounters with a wide range of culturally based concepts have further stimulated new insights and viewpoints on his part.

Cong-phu has gradually trained himself to be a graduate student who is willing to bravely express his opinions and dares to think outside the box. Because his professors emphasize group cooperation and a respect for differing opinions, written reports and oral presentations are done in teams. At the same time, during group presentations, the professors listen carefully to each student's individual opinion or idea. In fact, students are free to express any off-the-wall idea they might have. As long as these ideas are reasonable and appropriate, they will be respected and perhaps even adopted. "All you have to do is bravely raise your hand to answer, don't be afraid of expressing yourself," encourages Cong-phu.

MOTIVATION

‘I believe that before taking any action, you need to first find the proper motivation. This is key.’

Extra-curricular activities and internships offer a chance for self-growth and learning

Cong-phu says a major turning point in his studies came from the Office of International Affairs (OIA) which brought the E.Sun Bank ASEAN Scholarship to his attention. Since 2018, E.Sun Bank has partnered with NTNU to offer scholarships to students from Southeast Asia and Cong-phu was among the first NTNU students to be selected for this particular scholarship. As an E.Sun scholarship recipient, he was invited to participate in the bank's social welfare activities to meet people in the industry with both experience and knowledge to share. Cong-phu later chose to participate in a beach clean-up hosted by the bank. During the event, he noticed how courteous and kind the bank employees were with one another and how well they got along with their manager. Impressed by the bank's business culture, Cong-phu decided to apply for an internship.

"I believe that before taking any action, you need to first find the proper motivation. This is key," remarks Cong-phu. Ahead of starting as an intern at E.Sun Bank, Cong-phu was nervous that he would have trouble adapting to the bank's company culture. The first day of his internship, he arrived assuming that he would just be given busy work. In fact, his internship was handled both professionally and in a systematic manner. Interns first met with a dedicated bank employee who explained in detail the company's culture and the bank's services. Following, group activities were undertaken to help introduce the interns to the bank and each other.

Part of E.Sun Bank's 38th intern class, Cong-phu was its only foreigner. "The internship was initially challenging for me," Cong-phu recalls. "Everything was in Chinese and we had to learn a lot of financial terminology. But being willing to speak up and ask questions when you have a problem is very important. Thanks to my professors at NTNU, I felt confident in doing so. In fact, one of the main characteristics of HR related work is to proactively get to know others."

In class, whenever a professor asked a question, Cong-phu would be the first to raise his hand. Even if his answers were not 100% correct, his replies served as food for thought for his classmates. A willingness to speak in front of others is one of the skills Cong-phu learned while studying at the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development. In the end, as a new intern, Cong-phu was not as nervous as he imagined. As it turns out, being the only foreigner, the other interns looked out for him.

During his internship, Cong-phu spent much time thinking about questions raised by business leaders and his professors from a HR viewpoint. Later he would search extensively for confirmation in relevant financial literature in both English and Vietnamese. Looking back on his time as an intern, Cong-phu remembers it as being an extremely valuable experience and something he is glad he did. He also has many words of thanks for the help extended by OIA with the scholarship application process, including assistance with his resume, personal statement, and gathering the necessary documentation. For international students looking to come to NTNU in the future, Cong-phu recommends having ready your resume, language proficiency certificates, graduation diploma, and a personal

statement written in English. "NTNU offers a lot of internship opportunities. With these items at hand, you can present yourself in the best light and find success in the application process."

With the help of NTNU, Cong-phu also participated in a speech contest held by the Rotary Club. The topic of his speech was "My Benefactors in Taiwan" in which he talked about his feelings and memories of Taiwan. Cong-phu says his first benefactor was the host family he stayed with during his initial visit to Taiwan. He remarks that their sincerity and care was truly heart-warming. Even today, Cong-phu will try to find the time to invite them for a meal to catch up.

The second benefactor was a member of the church he attends in Taiwan. Because the weather in Vietnam is hot and humid throughout the year, Cong-phu has never really experienced the cold of winter and wasn't expecting Taipei to be so cold. All he had packed was a thin jacket, which was only sufficient for autumn in Taiwan. At church one day, a woman asked him if he had brought any warm clothing. Hearing he had not, she gifted him with a winter jacket that kept him warm throughout his first winter in Taiwan.

Preparing his speech, Cong-phu remembers: "Before I'd arrived in Taiwan to study, my impression of Taiwan was a place that was clean, boasted a vibrant economy, and enjoyed a polite and eco-conscious population. Coming to Taiwan, I realized all these things were true!" In his speech, Cong-phu talked about his feelings of Taiwan and the many benefactors he has met over the course of his stay. It was a topic that succeeded in moving both the audience and judges and earned him second place in the competition.

Regarding his life in Taiwan, Cong-phu feels that there is no particular area which he would consider to be overly difficult. This is due in part to the fact that Vietnam and Taiwan share many cultural similarities and that the distance between the two countries is relatively close. In the course of his studies and internship, Cong-phu has realized the necessity of cultivating himself academically, having the capacity to explore relevant literature in his field, and being able to think independently. Not surprisingly, these are all areas highlighted in the curriculum of the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development!



NTNU: The Beginnings of a More Colorful Future

By Pei-ying Liu



Coming from the south of Germany, near the border of Switzerland and Austria is Dominic Genot. Dominic previously spent time in Taiwan as an exchange student. Following this initial period in Taiwan, Dominic decided that after graduating from university in Germany, he would return to Taiwan to continue his studies. Dominic enjoyed living in Taiwan as an exchange student where he was astonished with the level of openness and friendliness that Taiwanese show foreigners. On the basis of this good impression, when it came time to choose a master's program, Taiwan was Dominic's top choice.

Dominic had already lived in many different locales and experienced different cultures and traditions. Now at NTNU, his classmates come from around the world and from a variety of backgrounds. Partnering with them in class, Dominic says his world view has expanded even further to become much more inclusive. He says he now has a much deeper understanding and recognition of different cultures. "Choosing NTNU for my studies means that I have Classmates from places such as Central America, Russia, and Central Asia," says Dominic. "This is one of the things that I love most about studying at NTNU!"

Dominic says that the degree of internationalization of NTNU's Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development compares favorably with other international programs. His previous experience as an exchange student has allowed him to easily connect with the program's international student body and to appreciate and enjoy its cultural diversity. With regard to the program's curriculum, Dominic highlights: "When deciding on a school, I was leaning towards programs with courses taught in English so that I would not have to face language limitations. This was one of the biggest reasons that I chose NTNU."

Dominic says that in Germany the number of facts that students have to learn is considerable. Pedagogical techniques focus on case discussions, while class content depends on student progress. After enrolling in NTNU's Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development, Dominic has had to work on strengthening his grasp of theory. And although class structure tends to be more lecture-focused when compared to his undergraduate studies in Germany, Dominic rarely worries about rote memorization. The reason being is that his professors, after explaining a certain theory, will offer real-world examples and encourage students to discuss the cases among themselves. "I really like the way classes are taught at NTNU," praises Dominic. "I feel that I can use both theory and practice interchangeably as tools in the thinking process."

Dominic has also made good use of the resources available on the tri-university National Taiwan University System by taking classes on social issues at National Taiwan University. In these classes, he has learned to interpret the diverse cultural characteristics of campus life from a more varied and open perspective. He has also begun to think about the relationship between social spaces and ethnic-based habits and values. Never having explored such issues in the past, these new ideas and encounters have greatly helped his research and academic studies at NTNU.

After getting his master's degree at NTNU, Dominic hopes to take what he has learned back with him to Germany. He believes that the experience of studying abroad will be a great asset when it comes to working in business, while his experience with cross-cultural communication will aid him in the job search process. Apart from deepening his professional knowledge, his studies at NTNU have allowed him to experience Asian culture firsthand, both in Taiwan and other Asian countries. Dominic has also had time to learn Mandarin Chinese—another benefit of studying abroad! Dominic deeply believes that his experience in Taiwan and NTNU will add much color and opportunity to the future, whether it be in the workplace or life in general.

