

The Study Abroad Foundation, Mainland China Office

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SAF SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

SAF 奖学金申请指南

SAF 为学生提供两个名额奖学金, 每个名额奖学金金额为 2000 美元。请有意申请 SAF 奖学金的同学按照以下流程进行 SAF 奖学金申请。

1. 用英文根据下面问题撰写文章;
2. 在报名申请截止日期之前, 将 SAF 奖学金申请表和 SAF 项目申请材料一起递交给 SAF 国际项目中国办公室;

SAF 奖学金获奖名单将在每年 6 月及 11 月公布。

Date Applied May 12

Student Name Tian Zhou

Home University Southeast University

Please write an essay on the question below in English.

Essay Question: Why do you want to study abroad?

"Life is like a box of chocolate, you never know what you are going to get."

---Forrest Gump

Three years have passed since I attended University. Looking back, I find my path to be pretty tortuous and tough. Now I would like to share my growing track and show you how I finally make the great step forward to decide to study abroad.

Key Word: Boring

Three years ago when I attended Southeast University, I was typically a conservative student. I had kept the life-style of a senior high school student. All I cared about were attending the classes, finishing the homework on time and achieving high scores in the final exam. In the first year, I didn't participate in any social activity. During that time, all I thought about was keeping a high rank and got promoted to the EE graduate department of my school.

This period of my life could be defined as "BORING". It's life with no rise and fall, no passion and no challenge. My future was almost settled down and I was going to live in this campus which lied in the suburbs with few entertainment places around it, for 7 years. These 7 years should be the most colorful period of my entire life. However, I was planning to spend all of it in this rare place doing my homework!!! That's when I got scared and became extremely hungry for an opportunity to change.

Key Word: Experience

During the summer holiday of my fresh year, I attended the IIALE Program (International Industrial and Academic Leadership Experience Program) which was held in Chong Yuan, Taiwan. That was really a fabulous experience and had overthrown my steady life.

Most of the students in this program are from the United States. I had made friends with lots of them and their attitudes towards study and life had really impressed me a lot. Some students whose major are engineering claimed that they often created all kinds of interesting devices in their labs. Matt, who is from Iowa State University, told me that he once created a robot who can only reply gently to himself but shout rudely to the others. According to himself, he just did it for fun; and with the drive of interest, he could devote himself into the project with all heart with nobody requiring him.

What's more, their attitude towards the balance of study and entertainment also had a great impact on me. During the relaxation time, they could become really crazy and get refreshed totally. During the 20-day program, they had taken me to a lot of interesting places to look for fun. In the bars we enjoyed the rock band, danced to the noisy music, drank Black beer and sat close by, talking like old friends about everything, about our favorite films, music, dreams, career plans and of course, the hot girls. It's complete relaxation and fun without any pressure. But when it comes to the study, they would equally devote all the efforts into it. Before the end of the program, we spent all nights in the lab programming, testing on our research project. Through our corporation, we finally finished the task perfectly. They told me that whatever the thing you are handling is, keep yourself focused and devoted to it, even for entertainment. Don't worry about study, you can work on the task better with the help of proper relaxation. Otherwise, the huge burden could drive you crazy.

I have to commit that I had really learned a lot in these 20-days, not merely about the knowledge, but more importantly, about the living philosophy and the proper way we treat everything. This experience had greatly widened my horizon and made me decide to change myself.

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Student Name Tian Zhou

Home University Southeast University

Key word: Change

After I came back and started a new semester, I became a person who was eager for social interaction. I became interested in joining in all kinds of activities. I found that unlike study, these activities could teach me a lot in other aspects.

I participated in several social activities. For example, I worked as a part-time teacher to teach the subject of "Science" for a month in a primary school with poor teaching conditions and inadequate teachers. I conducted a lot of interesting experiments for these children, like how to prick a needle into a full balloon without breaking it. Besides, I worked as a volunteer in taking several primary school students to visit Nan Jing. They all come from extremely poor villages of An-Hui province and that's the first time for them to come into a city. We spent three days together and had built a strong relationship. Even until now I occasionally send messages to greet them. The American students told me that a lot of students in their school would take a part-time job or work as volunteer in the neighborhood. These actions can make them become more mature and feel responsible as a member of the society. That's what I have learned from them.

Key word: Decision

From all the changes I have made, the most important one is that I decided to give up the chance of getting promoted to be a graduate student in my department. I decided to go abroad to further my study. This is really a hard decision, a decision which would probably change my whole life. With all the challenges in front of me, I still insist on it and keep myself moving forward with no hesitation.

I have consulted several professors from foreign universities about the affairs of studying abroad. Professor Yong from Supélec University, France told me that foreign universities can provide you pretty free choices of research areas, there aren't so many limitations like here in China. What's more, when you are pursuing your M.S. or Ph.D. degrees, you could get full financial support if you are really hard working. This is really exciting information because we don't need to pay the rich fees, which a lot of students from China can't afford.

Also, Professor Pan from University of Victoria, Canada told me that what is equally important in studying abroad is that you could have the chance to meet different people, who are from totally different countries and have diverse knowledge backgrounds. Great ideas often derive from collision between contradiction ideas shared with different people. It's really exciting to have the chance to share your ideas with people from all over the world. Also, he mentions that through studying abroad you could have the opportunity to experience different cultures and meet different people, this kind of interactions will have an important impact on your character formation. It's about how to view the world, the issues and the people in different aspects, which will help you to establish a complete and correct cognition.

These few days I attend the HSIC2012(2012 International High Speed Intelligent Communication Forum) which is held in my university. This is really a precious opportunity. During the conference I have listened to several lectures from professors all over the world. Great ideas are shared between scholars from different nations. Through this conference, I have found the necessity of discussion and communication between people, we need to step out from our country and interact with the world. That's exactly a great way to improve our research levels.

Key word: Journey

Now in my view, life is just like a journey. It's during a journey when we can seek for changes, changes that influence our living attitudes, widen our horizon and rich our heart. Life is pushed forward and by no means can we stay silent in a single place, waiting for the destiny coming to judge you. We should set out and keep ourselves on roads, roads towards our dreams.

Keep changing.
Keep chasing.

Student Signature

周天

Date (Month/Date/Year) 05/10/2012