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## **FEELINGS ABOUT THE STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM BETWEEN CAN THO UNIVERSITY AND AIRLANGGA UNIVERSITY**



Last September, I had the opportunity to become one of 20 students representing the School of Economics of Can Tho University to have a short-term exchange program from September 18 to September 24, 2022, with Airlangga University. I was very emotional when I received the news that I had won the scholarship because it was the first time I had the chance to study abroad after two years of the Covid 19 pandemic that made everything seem to have come to a halt. Thanks to that, I had 7 days (actually 2 days for the flights) of memorable learning experiences.

### **Day 1: The flight starts a new journey**

At first, the immigration procedures seemed very difficult for me because it was my first time going abroad without my family. We gathered at our school at 2 am and moved from Can Tho city to Tan Son Nhat International Airport by school bus. Thanks to the driver for giving us a safe and fun drive for 3 hours on the way. We had an all-day flight schedule. From Ho Chi Minh City, we flew to Kuala Lumpur and transited here for 6 hours before starting our flight to the final destination, Surabaya, Indonesia. I was confused because the required documents and procedures had been changed after the pandemic. But thanks to the enthusiastic guidance of Mr. Anh Tu and Ms. Thuy Ngan (two lecturers lead the exchange student), our whole group had an extremely smooth trip. But what surprised me the most was the support from our Indonesian friends from Airlangga University. They prepared banners and waited at the airport to welcome us. Then they took us to the hotel and served us a cozy dinner. That warm welcome made me feel at home.

### **Day 2: Opening Ceremony**

For the first time, I heard the National Anthem “Indonesia Raya” and the Hymne Airlangga. Although I am not an Indonesian speaker, I can feel the strength and national pride in the melody of the national anthem. After that, we got to see a Remo dance performance (a traditional Indonesian dance) and learned about Indonesia's economy in general. Besides, we

had a sharing session about the Students Organization in Vietnam and UNAIR (Indonesia). I was quite surprised when the student organizations of the two universities had many similarities. I think maybe that's why we can easily communicate, get along quickly.

### **Day 3: Indonesian culture**

We had a general lesson about Indonesian culture and learned the “Saman” dance together. What is interesting is that we even performed it on stage after learning. It was an unforgettable experience. I feel like we have a real connection when we practice together and that is really fun.

### **Day 4: Batik**

After the informative Technology Adoption class in the morning. In the afternoon, we visited the Batik craft village and had the experience of drawing Batik motifs. From day one, I caught sight of Indonesian friends wearing beautiful Batik (especially Avin's blue one - I really like the patterns and color of it). It was quite challenging to do as I had to draw hot wax on a piece of cloth. Finally, with the help of Anis and Novia, I successfully finished my drawing.

### **Day 5: Sharing**

In the morning, we visited a local business which is Bolu Ketan Mendut. The business owner shared about the snack production process and enthusiastically answered our questions. We even got a free sample and it was really delicious. After that, we went back to campus and had a Lecture on Entrepreneurship. The lecturer inspired us a lot with her startup talk. In addition, two lecturers from Can Tho University also had a lesson on the Vietnamese economy and culture. I feel so proud when friends around the world know more about Vietnam. And finally, the students of Can Tho University shared their experiences in recent days. It was very emotional. Most of us cried because we were grateful for the hospitality of Indonesians, especially students and professors of Airlangga University. It was truly a day of sharing.

### **Day 6: On The Way to Bromo Mountain**

We went to Mount Bromo and took a lot of pictures together to keep the memories. We set off from the night before so we could see the sunrise on the top of the mountain. Honestly, this is the mountain that I came to for the first time in my life. The landscape is very majestic.

### **Day 7: Back to Vietnam**

After a long journey, I returned to Vietnam full of love from Indonesian friends. They have left an indelible impression on me. I'm glad we had a safe flight.

Ending the short-term exchange program within 7 days has left me with many memories. This journey gives me more motivation to seek more opportunities to study abroad. I have met friends that I never thought I would have the chance to meet, learning about your culture. Thank you for your enthusiastic welcoming and accompanying. I hope we will reunite soon. And a big thanks to Can Tho University and Airlangga University for organizing this student exchange program so that we have the meaningful opportunity to study and experience the culture.