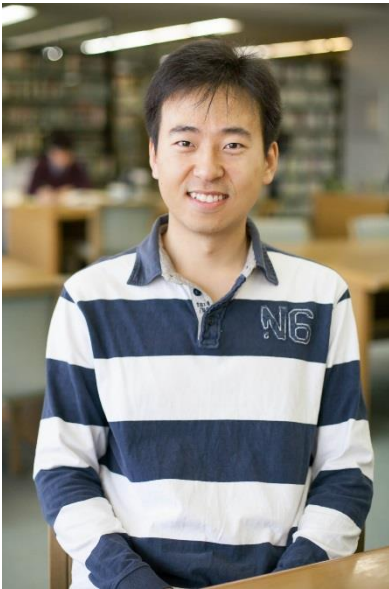


Alec Lee (Qixun Li)
2013 Henry Fong Award Winner

Alec Lee (Qixun Li), a participant in INU Student Seminar for Global Citizenship and Peace and student from Hiroshima University, was a 2014 Henry Fong Award winner. Following a semester of studying at James Madison University (JMU), Alec wrote the following reflection about his time at JMU.



As I reflect on my experience at James Madison University, I still cannot believe I received the Henry Fong Award. I am so thankful to International Network of Universities' for granting me with the chance of a lifetime. Studying abroad has always been a dream of mine and I could not have fulfilled that dream without the support of my family, friends and professors.

Since it would be my first trip to America, I was nervous about attending JMU. Now I feel that JMU is a home away from my home in Hiroshima and China. I settled in nicely and became friends with the staff of JMU's Office of International Programs as well as the Resident Advisors' of Chandler Hall who have all helped to enrich my experience here. I also got great help from teachers of English Learning Service Faculty, classmates and professors after class.

Throughout my time at JMU, I have had many touching experiences through living and studying with friends. I've learned from my sociology and economics courses how hard it is for minority groups to prosper and enjoy equality of freedom in society. I've also seen that there is hope for us to overcome racism, nationalism, political and religious conflicts by sharing mutual benefits and a strong will for change. I've realized I should always be intellectually curious no matter where I am or how old I become because intellectual curiosity embraces different beliefs, cultures and new knowledge just like oceans accept all rivers.

Outside of class, I have made a lot of great friends by joining Saferides, sports clubs and attending church. In Saferides, where members give students a free ride for their safety on weekend nights, I learned how to work with others as a team to accomplish the goals we shared. We also had a good time playing basketball, table tennis, pool, rock climbing, etc. I've witnessed church members reaching out to isolated people through teaching English, hanging out, introducing people to jobs, helping disabled people, refugees and international students.

During holidays I've had the opportunity to stay with the Smith family, who has seven children including two children adopted from Ethiopia. We've had a great time cooking food together, playing volleyball and different games. I was surprised that the children,



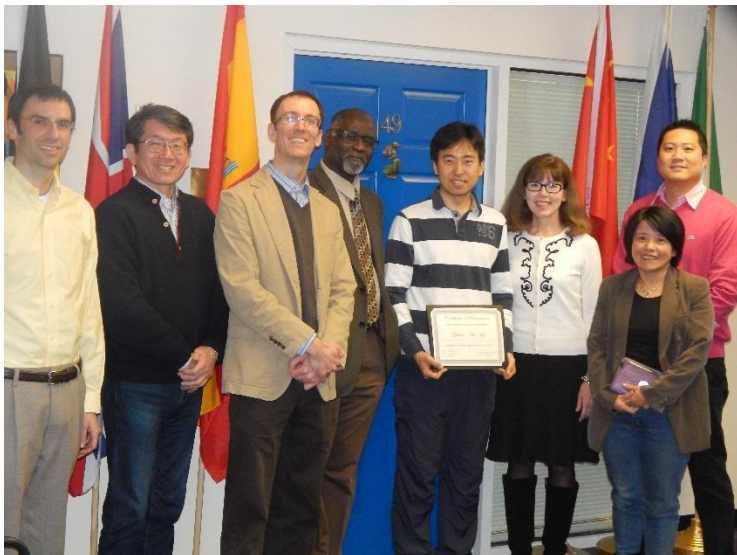
Alec Lee with friends from Saferides.

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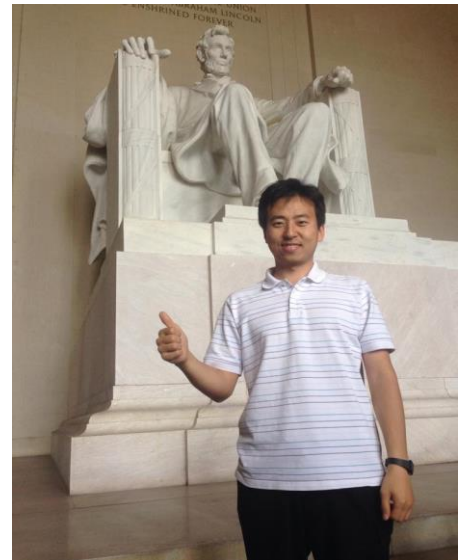
who are home-schooled, are so educated and talented; some of them just like “Wikipedia” with their broad range of knowledge; or an actress with creative ideas and great dramatic skill. I’ve experienced parents are expressing love to their children through everyday hard work, cooking, teaching and their strong religious belief.

Unfortunately, during wars like World War II, the Korean War etc, our grandparents’ generation met each other as enemies without choice, and a lot of us lost our relatives. I feel that this peaceful moment we have should not be taken for granted and we should realize that it can’t be maintained without each person’s individual efforts. The narrow-minded perspective and closed worldview of many ethnic groups, religions and nations during wartime couldn’t support our friendship. That said unlike our grandparents’ generation, we’ve met each other as friends and our world is expanding without limitations through every moment that we share our views and time with one another.

Time flies like an arrow, I feel I finished my semester in the blink of an eye, but the valuable things I’ve learned, the touching moments I’ve had and the friends I’ve made in America will last a lifetime.



Alec Lee receives 2013 Henry Fong Award.



In Washington, D.C.