

MY TEACHING EXPERIENCE
IN
ST. ALOYSIUS TECHNICAL
SCHOOL
(HSINPU, TAIWAN)

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ABOUT ME

Hello dear reader! Before I talk further about my teaching experience and take you along my journey here in Taiwan, let me first briefly introduce myself. I'm Goutham from India. For those of you who are new to India, let me tell that it is in the southern region of Asia and third largest country in the continent.

I finished my Masters degree in English language from Nizam College, Osmania University, in Hyderabad city, Telangana (State/Region), India. Prior to that, I did my Bachelors from Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Puttaparthi (Spiritual capital of the world), India. I also had teacher training course in English Language from The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, the place I hail from.

After my studies, I went on to work in a company called Golars Networks. Here, I worked as a HR Executive where my work involved Recruiting and Talent Development. I also worked as a soft skills trainer and English language teacher in a school back in my home country. So, that's about my education background and job profession/work experience.

Now, I would like to talk a word or two about my family and personal interests. My family consists of six members: Father, mother, grandma, brother, and sister. I'm the youngest of all. I love my family a lot and I'm ever grateful to my dad, mom, and grandma for all that they did for me so far in my life. My hobbies and interests include dance, singing, music, reading spiritual literature, newspaper, magazines, watching news on the TV and internet, fitness (physical exercise, sports and games), making new friends (socializing), and community development work/service.

WHY AIESEC PROJECT?

Ever since I got to know about AIESEC, I have been very interested to take up Global Community Development Volunteer Program. AIESEC internships have lot to offer. The interns can experience so many new things and aspects in life. For instance, becoming a global citizen, traveling alone, being independent and self-reliant, and impacting new people in a new country in a new situation. Besides

this, one can improve and imbibe skills that are very important in this age of WhatsApp and FB (21st century skills); those skills that I'm referring to are presentation, communication / public-speaking, leadership, interpersonal skills. Above all, the intern contributes service to the society through his/her work in a very small little way possible. It is for the above mentioned reasons that I decided to go for the internship. After all, life is all about living in the present and doing things that you always desperately wanted to do. I believe in this and therefore gave it a shot.

WHY ONLY TAIWAN?

Well, I can only say this. Taiwan has always been one of my favorite countries. There are so many nations in the world but Taiwan has something special to offer and is unique in its own way. I checked up AIESEC website and came across few good internship opportunities available in the field that I'm interested in i.e., education and teaching. I saw the opportunity and immediately without a second thought applied to the project. The EP Manager, Henry from AIESEC in NCTU replied to me back arranging an interview on Skype with Janet, another AIESECer from NCTU. I attended the same and I was selected and given a green signal to come to Taiwan. My joy knew no bounds when I came to know of my selection.

Taiwan, as we all know, is a small nation neighboring with countries like Mainland China, Philippines, and Japan. Its infrastructure is far advanced and the people are very friendly and polite. Though many people do not try and/or dare to speak in English, they do have confidence and are foreign friendly. I have been always interested in Taiwan and very keen in knowing more about its people, culture, food, education system, pop culture and experience everything about this beautiful island nation.

HOW DID I LAND UP IN ST. ALOYSIUS?

So, I arrived in Taiwan on 28th May, 2017. My project duration was from 05/06/2017 (June 5th, 2017) to 14/07/2017 (July 14th, 2017). Frank of NCTU brought me to St. Aloysius School. The first day I stepped into the school premises happened to be assembly day. So, Principal Jerry sir was the first person I

interacted with in the school. He introduced himself to me in his office room. The moment I entered into his office, I felt some kind of unusual feeling-the feeling of happiness-and the air filled with spiritual vibrations. Jerry sir asked me to briefly introduce myself to the gathering (student assembly). I spoke, shared my feelings, and views with all the students and teachers during assembly session on Day 1. I felt so good about myself on this day as I spoke on the dais in front of a huge gathering of about 1500 pupil. I'm a passionate public speaker and love the art of public-speaking. I don't consider myself a great speaker as of today but would like to see myself as a good public speaker one day in the future.

INITIAL DAYS IN THE SCHOOL

I was given a room on the fifth floor of the school building. I really do not know how to thank the administration, especially Jerry sir for all that he did for me. The accommodation room is so clean, convenient and superb. I didn't imagine that I would be living in this type of room. Though it is not as luxurious as one could imagine, it is good and decent enough for any person. And I am personally not interested in luxurious lifestyle but instead love being simple in the way I live. I believe in the saying, "It's not the standard of living that matters but the manner of living", meaning that moral values and ethics are much more important in life than the ephemeral, transient and temporary things. Yes, I agree that good life with good money is undoubtedly important in life but it is not be all and end all. "Money comes and goes but morality comes and grows".

There were two people from Canada with whom I was fortunate to share my conversation classes. Jedrik and Lily were so kind and supportive to me. They helped me in so many ways during the first few days of my stay in the school. I travelled with them to the nearby convenience stores and also to areas/locations near Big City, Hsinchu. We had some real good fun time both in the school and outside the school.

CO-TEACHING CLASS

Co-teaching is a class session where the intern takes the class along with another school teacher. I had my co-teaching classes with teachers Peter, Mike, Cindy, Alice, Danny. I sometimes had my co-teaching sessions along with Jedrik and Lily, the other two interns. The students that I taught were Grade I and Grade II. Co-teaching typically involved teaching to the students about the intern's country. The intern can share everything about his/her country. You can explain to the students anything that you wanted; be it from your local city to the culture to people to food and what not. There is no limit to your teaching. More the knowledge sharing, the better is the experience.

I being an Indian shared all the possible things and aspects of India that I could. I showed them PowerPoint presentations on the screen using the projector. One good thing about the classrooms in the school is that every classroom has internet facility and the intern/teacher can make use of the online digital media to enhance, enrich their class and make it lively and innovative. I also made sure that I talked about myself first in each and every co-teaching class before I shared my knowledge about India, for example, I showed to the students videos of my dance performances (yes, I am a good dancer, by the way) etc. I could see that students were interested to know about me (any interns for that matter, therefore, do tell about you as much as possible). I also asked the students to feel free to pose any questions about India. I presented to them various videos of India covering topics such as its people, culture, festivals, food, symbols and signs, wildlife, tourism, education system, marriage systems, clothing and attire, religion, sports, famous personalities, cinema, art, architecture, paintings, handicrafts, heritage so on and so forth. It was amazing to stand in the front, having headphone mike and deliver a talk about India. I had about ten co-teaching classes overall and each time I felt better in my delivery.

In co-teaching classes, all the teachers were very helpful. They made sure that the students listen to what I said. At the end of each and every co-teaching class, I had photo session with all the students of the class. For all this, I thank from the bottom of my heart, teachers Peter, Mike, Cindy, Alice, and Danny for giving me

the opportunity to share the class with them. I consider it as a golden opportunity.

CONVERSATION CLASS

Talking about conversation classes, I must say that it was one of the best experiences for me to teach English to the students of St. Aloysius, for the students were all willing to attend and interested in talking with me. In the first two weeks of my stay, I had conversation class along with Jedrik and Lily. Jedrik was superb in handling the class. He also helped in drama script. Jedrik and Lily finished their project time and left. We had about two weeks' good time.

In the conversation class, I took help of few good online resources like websites www.eslgamesplus.com, www.thegamegal.com, etc. The former website has variety of English language learning games which students enjoyed. And the latter one has word generator guessing game. The students were thoroughly involved and enjoyed a lot. Also, I always believed that conversation class is meant to practically make them speak/talk. Therefore, I made it a point to see and let students talk about themselves like self-introduction. I asked them to talk about their class, school, friends, family, hobbies, movies, places, food, their favorites, their dream job/profession, and so many other things which were relevant to their age and life. Also as part of this class, I showed them video clippings of some of the popular English serials and online day to day English conversations in life. I concentrated on four skills of the language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. I was happy to see students writing a short note on their favorite topic, which I asked them to do. I made corrections and let them know their errors so that they could improve and not repeat the same mistakes. There is a lot of room for improvement among the students here in learning English and I felt that this internship teaching by various AIESEC interns from different parts of the world is a very right thing and wonderful opportunity for the students to make use of it.

Though it is very hard to not mention all the students, I will just take few names that influenced and left a lasting mark in my mind and heart while my stay here in the school. I am going to remember Toby, Bobby, Angeline, Hun, John, Kevin, Jackie, Joseph, Kelly, and others.

OFF-TIME IN SCHOOL

This writing of mine would be incomplete if I do not mention the things I had done after the school time. 8am to 5pm was the usual school timing. I used to do pull up exercises with the help of the iron bars erected near the tennis court. I also enjoyed sprint round the track on the ground behind the small gymnasium. I also played table tennis with the teachers. I roamed every nook and corner of Xinpu/Neisi Township. Explored different food varieties, drinks, juices, cakes, restaurants, temples nearby etc. Basically, I left no stone unturned finding things here in Xinpu. Washing machine on the very top floor of the building was one good experience which I cannot forget.

PLACES I TRAVELLED IN TAIWAN

Before every intern was shown or provided the school to work with, he/she was placed at EP House located near NCTU in Hsinchu. So, when I arrived on 28th May, 2017, I went straight to the EP House where I met so many amazing people from different countries. Dario, Nougat, King, Unchun, Rachada, Chom, Laure, Ambre, Hannah, John, Alvin, will be remembered forever by me among many others.

It is worth mentioning here some of the popular sight-seeing spots that I visited. One must not forget to see all these when you are in Taiwan. I travelled to TAIPEI 101, Beitou hot springs, Tamsui, Taipei zoo, Longshan temple, Confucius temple, Xingtian temple, National palace museum, library, Taroko Gorge, malls like SOGO, BigCity, Club Myst, Massage Spa.

A special mention about two trips that I had with the school: one was the graduation trip with Grade II students and the other with the teachers. These two trips were some of the happiest and memorable times/moments in my life. I visited Janfusun theme park in Yunlin county, Janfusun prince hotel, Chimei museum in Tainan, Kaohsiung harbor, Old Street, EDA theme park, EDA skylark hotel, Sun Moon Lake, Formosan Aboriginal Cultural Village and so many others

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

It is a very hard task for me to sum up my experience. I sincerely thank all the faculty, non-teaching staff, and students of St. Aloysius for giving me such a life-changing opportunity. I'm going to cherish this for all my life. My special thanks to Isabel, Alice, Anita, Mike, and Peter. Last but not the least, Principal Jerry sir without whose help and guidance, I would not have this long write-up for you, the reader, to leaf through. I do not want to say good-bye but I just want to say "see you later". I love Taiwan. I feel I'm an integral part of Taiwan now. Taiwan is in my heart. Thank you is a very small word but I realize there is no better word than that. SEE YOU ONCE AGAIN MY DEAREST TAIWAN.....KISSES AND HUGS from Me and India.

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