

Study in Taiwan

The Ministry of Education considers international cooperation and collaboration a cornerstone of its efforts to embrace internationalization, especially for institutions of higher education.

The number of international degree students, language students, and exchange students studying in Taiwan has increased to 64,558 in 2012, a significant increase from 2006, when international student enrollment was only 26,488.

The MOE established the Bureau of International Cultural and Educational Relations (BICER) in 1947 to promote international academic and cultural exchange, along with providing international students wishing to study in Taiwan with assistance, especially with their government scholarship applications and information about Taiwan. In order to promote Taiwan's international education exchange programs and to integrate the cross-strait educational affairs, the MOE has re-organized its former Bureau of International Cultural and Educational Relations, the Mainland Affairs Division and the Commission of Overseas Chinese Education Affair to become the Department of International and Cross-strait Education as of January 1, 2013.

In addition to efforts made to create an internationalized environment for academic study, Taiwan is an ideal study destination for several reasons. According to the Foundation for International Cooperation in Higher Education of Taiwan (FICHET), these reasons include the fact that Taiwan has a highly democratic government within



a Mandarin-Chinese environment, its rich cultural heritage, its advanced technology and its breathtaking travel destinations and sights.

Taiwan can be roughly divided into two geographic sections; the flat, gently rolling hills to the west, where 90% of the population lives, and the rugged, forest-covered mountains to the east. There are eight national parks showcasing the diverse terrain and the flora and fauna of the island.

In addition, Taiwan is rich in the diversity of its biological species, boasting more than 50,000 endemic species, or 2.5% of the world's total, according to a survey released by the Council of Agriculture.

Taiwan and its people are renown for their warm, welcoming and hospitable nature towards international visitors and students. This has become Taiwan's international 'trademark'. On the following pages are two stories about international scholarship students, currently studying in Taiwan.

Scholarships

The Taiwan Scholarship

In 2011, two government agencies, the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), jointly initiated the Taiwan Scholarship Program to encourage outstanding international students to undertake degree programs in Taiwan.

The different types of Taiwan Scholarships include:

A. MOFA Scholarship

- ❖ Recipients are from countries which have diplomatic relations with the Republic of China (Taiwan), or from countries specified as diplomatically favorable by MOFA. The scholarship includes:
- ❖ Round-trip economy-class direct-route international airfare plus a monthly stipend of NT\$30,000.

B. MOE Scholarship

- ❖ Recipients must be from countries other than those specified under the MOFA Scholarship.
- ❖ Waiver of tuition and certain fees if a recipient studies in an "Association of Taiwan Scholarship Program School". The MOE awards each recipient per semester up to NT\$40,000. If the total amount of these fees exceeds NT\$40,000, the remainder of all costs shall be covered by either the recipient, or the recipient's college, whereas over NT\$40,000 are the sole responsibility of the recipient. Tuition and academic fees do not include any of the following: administration fees, thesis advising fees, insurance premiums, accommodation, Internet access, all of which are payable by the recipients.
- ❖ Each recipient will receive a monthly stipend of NT\$15,000 for undergraduate degree studies and NT\$20,000 for postgraduate degree studies.

Huayu Enrichment Scholarship (HES)

The Huayu Enrichment Scholarship (HES) was established by the MOE to encourage international students to learn Mandarin Chinese in Taiwan. While offering language and culture study opportunities for Mandarin Chinese and Taiwanese cultures at universities and colleges with affiliated Mandarin Chinese Language Training Centers, this program also aims to assist scholarship recipients in acquiring Mandarin Chinese language skills and competencies. This, in turn, will increase international students' appreciation of Taiwan. The Huayu Enrichment Scholarship is awarded by Republic of China (Taiwan) Representative Offices or Embassies based on merit. A monthly stipend of NT\$25,000 is offered to recipients for a maximum period of one year. ■



Taiwan: Paradise in My Eyes

Diego Gonzalez, 24
Graduate of Tamkang
University with a Master of
Arts Degree in International
Affairs and Strategic Studies



"Taiwan as a whole is like a paradise to me," says Diego Gonzalez without exaggeration. "Taiwan has many pluses, like security; honest, nice, friendly people; delicious food; beautiful places to visit; and excellent public transportation as well," he said.

The 24-year-old was born in Colombia and spent his childhood in the US and Colombia before settling down in Nicaragua. Inspired by friends' positive opinions on the safety, hospitality of the people, and well-established educational system in Taiwan, Gonzalez started his Chinese lessons at National Taiwan Normal University in 2010, then began work on his master's degree in September 2011.

Having just graduated from Tamkang University with a Master of Arts Degree in International Affairs and



Strategic Studies, Gonzalez considered studying in Taiwan a rewarding experience.

In Gonzalez's opinions, Taiwan is a great place for study. Experienced teachers provide a quality education, and the infrastructure of the educational institutes is great. "Well-equipped classrooms, libraries with abundant collections, private rooms if required, and around-the-clock operation section are all helpful for students," he said.

"The cost of education in Taiwan is the same or slightly more expensive compared to any universities in Latin America, but the quality of education of Taiwan is much higher than in many countries in Latin America," Gonzalez points out.

To balance study and life, the school regularly planned trips for students at a very low cost. "The arrangements gave us the opportunity to know different places, meet new people and have fun in Taiwan," he says.

Gonzalez is now looking for a job. "If I don't get one in a short time, I would like to continue my studies in a Ph.D. program in Taiwan," he says. ■



Taiwan's Well-grounded Educational System Makes it an Ideal Choice for Study

Sharon Chin, 24

Senior, Department of Radio and TV, Ming Chuan University

Sharon Chin, currently a senior in the Department of Radio and TV at Ming Chuan University in Taipei, says she has benefited greatly from the well-founded educational system in Taiwan.

"I was firstly driven by my deep interest in Mandarin to come to Taiwan," says Chin, a Malaysia born overseas Chinese. Grown up in a multilingual environment, Chin had developed a special inclination towards Mandarin and therefore decided to sharpen her proficiency in a Mandarin speaking country.

Taiwan outshone others and became Chin's destination through because of the excellent faculties and the free atmosphere in society compared to other similar cultures, according to Chin.

"We receive very serious training at school," said Chin. "In addition, some courses are even directly taught by

people who are already involved in the industry." Chin is particularly positive about this facet of the arrangement here in Taiwan, saying such a device enables students to know the exact situation in an industry.

In addition to outstanding academic achievement, Chin is also impressed by the care and attentiveness shown by instructors. "Teachers always care for their students, giving them a helping hand whenever it's needed, no matter whether it's about studies or about a future career."

As Chin's Mandarin has improved, her life in Taiwan has also been enriched. It is daily life here that makes Taiwan more fascinating to her. "It's safe and convenient living here," notes Chin, adding that people in Taiwan may not know how precious this is for people like her.

Having gradually built up her life circle here, and with her eyes on the prospect of higher salaries than what she might find in her hometown in Malaysia, Chin also expresses hopes that she might be able to stay in Taiwan after she graduates. "If I could find a job soon, I would love to stay in Taiwan," she says. ■