

Korean Exchange Brings Global Lessons

April 25, 2011 10:45 AM Michael Celone
newwave@tulane.edu

Tulane sophomore Tasneem Chowdhury was one of 75 university students who went to South Korea for a week of lectures, tours and cultural programs through a scholarship from the Council on International Educational Exchange.



Tulane student Tasneem Chowdhury meets with traditional Korean folk musicians at the Korean Folk Village. Their performance includes dancing, drumming and singing, with the performers always in constant motion. (Photo provided by Tasneem Chowdhury)

Chowdhury, an [international development major](#), said that her time in South Korea was an enriching experience that exposed her to different perspectives on cultural practices and international relations.

The students who were selected for the South Korea Scholarship Program, held March 18â€“26, were hosted by Yonsei University in Seoul, the oldest university in that country. The purpose of the program is to foster understanding and diplomacy between the United States and South Korea.

“As an international development and international relations major, I believe it is pertinent to expose myself to different cultures and learn from those cultures,” Chowdhury says.

The experience also gave her a unique insight into the opinions and ideas of South Korean university students, with whom she interacted during her time at Yonsei. The students shared ideas on education and culture that are not always apparent to an outsider.

“Discussions with the Korean university students and the lectures opened my eyes to new perspectives in areas such as education, U.S.-Korea relations and cultural norms,” Chowdhury says. “I was really impressed by their commitment to education and the lengths to which they go for education, but surprised as well by many of the students' dissatisfaction with their current education system.”

Tasneem believes that her experience in the program succeeded in promoting awareness and understanding between American and Korean students.

“I believe this program really helped open the way for dialogue and collaboration, which are both imperative with the current advent of globalization,” she says.

The program is in partnership with the Korea Foundation, a nonprofit organization aimed at enhancing friendship and good will through international immersion programs.

Michael Celone is a sophomore student at Tulane majoring in public health.