

C&Cof MARS – Student exchange in Canada

My name is Vitális Dániel, and I am a BSc. student of Budapest University of Technology and Economics. I got the opportunity to participate in the Control and Coordination of Multi-Agent Robotic Systems program. This student exchange program to Canada was one of the best experiences in my life what I will never forget.

The flight to Winnipeg took a lot of time, so my new Hungarian friend and I were happy to take a rest in New York after 9 hour of flying. I met with my good friend there and we discovered Manhattan. We tried ice skating in the rink front of the Rockefeller Center; we visited some pubs and enjoyed the nightlife.



Next morning our flight continued to Minneapolis where we unfortunately missed the transfer flight to Winnipeg since our plane to Minneapolis late 2 hours. At midnight we finally arrived to Winnipeg. My very first impression was the really cold weather and the kindness of everyone. We stayed on campus in University College Residence. It was my first time in my life to live in college and I

really enjoyed it. When I felt lonely I just went to the main room where I had a lot of fun with the Canadians. University of Manitoba is separated from the city, so the place where I lived was really a city of youth.

The university is beautiful in daytime and in the evening as well. Castle like buildings and modern architectural structures can be spotted.



On the first day we met with our professor Dr. Nariman Sepehri, and with our new friend from Transylvania.



The professor was always really kind and helpful. I was working on time-optimal path planning for omni-directional robots in the whole term and I got every resource I needed for my work. I also took a course about Canadian history, and digital control course just for practice since I already took that course in my home university. At the beginning it was hard to concentrate on courses in English but later I got used to it and it was no longer a problem for me.

It took me a couple of weeks to find the best places and times to eat on campus. I liked the canteen and Degrees in University Centre the best.

I can't live without sports. The sport center on campus is simply amazing. For a cheap price you can use the huge gym, swimming pool, sauna, badminton courts, tennis courts, hockey arena and a lot of other rooms as much as you want. In the first weeks I bought a pair of ice skates and hockey equipment, I joined the badminton club and I started to use the gym and pool every second day.

I took my inline skates with me and every night I was able to practice some extreme freestyle slalom skating at my college.

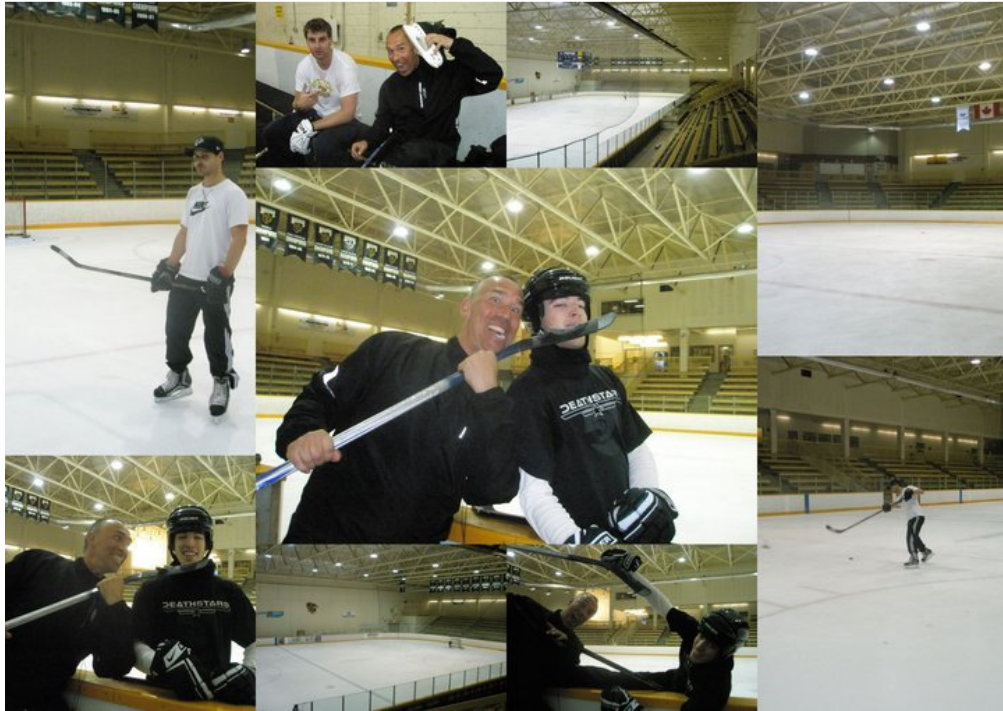
I got in touch with ICS (International Centre for Students) and with my new friends we applied for skiing on Holiday Mountain. It was rather a valley than a mountain since whole Manitoba is a flat place, but we enjoyed it a lot.



We discovered downtown as well. Here you can find the world's longest naturally frozen ice track (8,5 km long) the so-called River Trail. We skated along the whole track, where charming tea spots waited for the frozen ice skaters.



Maybe my favorite place on campus was the hockey arena. I practiced three times a week hockey skating. It was really challenging to play matches against Canadians however I could only score when they let me. I made good friends there.



I was in every day contact with the guys from my floor and we had a lot of fun. We had pancake breakfast together, card games night and a lot of parties. Once we went playing bowling where we had a lot of fun also.



Every Thursday there was country night at Wise Guys on campus which is the most popular event here.



The weather we had was very unusual. In the middle of March every snow melted and the weather became warm, so we were able to see a real spring in Manitoba. That was the time I was able to skate outside and I visited the huge park nearby.



We got in touch with the roommate of one of the Hungarians who visited Winnipeg last year. He took us to an Aboriginal ceremony what was very interesting and unique. He also took us to his parent's farm where we were canoeing in the Red River and cooked bison on bonfire. These were priceless memories.



We spent our last days with sightseeing where we visited the most famous building in Winnipeg, the legislation building.



After we were done our exams, professor Sepehri invited us to a lunch where we had a great time.



On my way back home I was able to meet with my friend again in New York and we had an amazing night. After 30 hours of not sleeping I gathered my remained energy and I went to the central park and to the top of the Rockefeller Centre where I enjoyed the view.

After 40 hours of wakefulness finally on the way back home it was the time to sleep on the airplane.

I can say we had a wonderful time in Canada and I'm looking forward to the next opportunity to go back.