

# KOÇ UNIVERSITY

## Exchange Newsletter

May 2008

Issue 10

### Editor's Note

While the summer and the time to say good-bye to the incoming Exchange Students of Spring 2008 is getting closer, it is such an excitement to bring you the 10th Issue of the Exchange Newsletter as the last issue of this academic year.

This time we had the chance to hear from one of our old friends, Federico Ortu from Italy who have spent a year at Koc University in the academic year of 2006-2007, and could not help but stay in Istanbul for a little longer...

Other two articles are covered on a line up of a devastating story of one of our outgoing students of last year who had returned with a scholarship from Georgetown & a little brief on Bond University.

In the meantime I wish you the best of luck with your finals!

And make sure to be safe on your way back home!

Onur Ayan



The Pool is ready to  
WELCOME  
the Summer of 2008

**ARE YOU?**

# TO BE ABLE TO SAY



ME-  
CI-  
DI-  
YE-  
KOY

Two years ago (2006) I had a great opportunity to choose a country as the destination of my Exchange Programme (in my case "Erasmus"). Luckily, the country I chose, was Turkey. I immediately got really excited about it, but after two days, a person from an office told me that going to Istanbul was not possible. Three days later another person told me "yep, of course it is possible!" The day after, a professor told me "Look, we don't have any relations with any Turkish universities." Three months later I was in Istanbul. Because in Italy everything is clear.

I've studied at Koç for two semesters and the experience I gained, has been incredibly useful. I've seen a great country and its most populous city. I've had the opportunity of knowing nice and smart people who helped me in the every-day life and in understanding new point of views. I've had the opportunity of seeing and comparing the Italian system to the Turkish one. I had the opportunity of learning and speaking new languages. In short, I had the opportunity of a lot of things.

Now, two years later, I'm back in Istanbul. I'm trying to learn Turkish and, now i can say "Tesekkür ederim" as a Turkish mother tongue person, but I still have problems in saying "Sagol" and "Hayir". Also, I know the numbers and how to say the time, but when they ask me "saat kaç?" it takes time to answer and the person usually leaves me or, if I'm lucky, understands that I'm a yabancı (ama komik yabancı) and patiently they wait for my answer (and I hope they're smart enough to understand that since I'm really slow they have to add around 5 minutes to the time I say. Therefore if I say 17.30 it means 17.35...).

I'm also working. I found a job as an Italian teacher. There are a lot of people who want to go to Italy and I help them in learning the language. It is a really nice experience and it is giving me the opportunity of testing myself in teaching (sometimes I forget that it is a classroom and I behave as if I were a one-man-show...but when they don't laugh I immediately realize that I'm in a classroom and I'm probably not such a good one-man-show) and to enter more deeply in the two cultures.

I'll stay here until August and then I'll go studying (hopefully) somewhere not in Italy.

In the end, what I can say about the experience is that it literally changes my life:

-I didn't have idea of TOEFL, GMAT, GRE and bla bla bla...

Now I do;

-I had never thought about continuing my education abroad... Now I do;

-I had never talked to a Turk before...

Now I do;

-I didn't think it was relatively easy studying abroad...

Now I do;

-I had never seen thousands of taxis before...

Now I do;

-I was not able in saying words like Mecidiyekoy...

Now I (more or less) do;

-I thought I was completely open-minded...

Now really I am.

Studying abroad is an occasion. If you like it, you'll have fun and your options will increase. If you don't like it, you'll be back in few months.

Federico Ortu

## EXCHANGE JOURNEY LEADS TO PhD

I have been in Georgetown for one semester. Although the prospect of leaving Turkey was at first, a little frightening, the encouragement of my instructors, friends, family and several grad students changed my ambivalence to excitement. Before going to Georgetown, I talked with some of the professors at Koc University and got their advices about which courses to take. I have to admit that I had some difficulties while getting into the courses because the ones that I would like to get enrolled was full. I had some troubles when preparing my schedule however these small hurdles added excitement my exchange journey.

I was playing football at Koc and I had the chance of joining the team at Georgetown as well which enabled me to make lots of friends. I guess I do not need to talk about how I learned different cultures and so on.

I have to confess that my exchange experience offered me great academic experiences as well as social experiences. This year I applied for Georgetown Economics PhD Program and I got accepted with full scholarship. I got one of my recommendation letters from Georgetown and that was absolutely helpful to get me in.

I strongly suggest everyone to witness this experience; I assure you that it will definitely help you improving your social and academic life.

Yasin Kursat Onder

## Memories from Australia

I don't know where to begin... There is too much to tell, too many good memories in Australia. When I first saw that there is an exchange program to Australia, I had no question in mind that I wanted to go there. And I'm glad that I did.



Bond University is just a happy place to be. Everyone is smiling, friendly and makes you feel like home. There is a wide range of activities and student council organizes many parties and trips around Australia that you shouldn't miss. Australia, with its beautiful nature, weather and people, in my opinion is one of the best places to live in the world. Playing beach volley at university's white sand courts, swimming in your free time between classes, surfing, traveling and partying at Don's on Thursday nights or at Surfers Paradise are just few of the things to tell about what to do in Gold Coast. Still there is too much to tell... I've spent the best times in my life there as an exchange student, made many good friends, and definitely I want to go back there once again in my life.

Aysu Bilgin