

Kurucz Marie

DSS Scholarship Report

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On July 7, 2017 I had the privilege of winning the Cleveland Debrecen Panel Scholarship to study Hungarian Language and Culture for two weeks at the beautiful Debrecen University in Hungary. My stay at Debrecen was a dream come true because I was going to learn my late father's native language and more about the culture that formed him and made him the man he was.

In my Hungarian language class there were six individuals from different countries (Canada, Turkey, Israel, Thailand, Finland, and Germany). This made the experience more enjoyable and interesting. My teacher András Veréb, was very professional and well prepared. He made the class entertaining and varied the instruction with games and chats. At the end of the course he said it was his first time teaching this course. I would have never guessed it. He was always on time, with a good attitude, and always providing great support to all his students. I really enjoyed the games, and the opportunity to put into practice what we had learned with other classmates. These two weeks were very intense! However, being in class three times a day during 90 minutes wasn't. Every class there were new challenges to encounter. At nights I had to study and practice what I had learned every day, otherwise, I would fall behind. At times I felt I was not going to grasp the language, but I never gave up. I was determined not to quit! At the end, I was successful and took with me what I call the basic understanding of the Hungarian language. This new knowledge has been extremely helpful. It has triggered my desired to continue studying the language and learn more.

Once back home, I have continued to listen to some CD's I bought at a bookstore in Debrecen and work on some books I bought at the University. I have also received as gifts some books from other people who have studied Hungarian. My brothers and sister are very proud of what I have learned in such a short amount of time. They all wish they had the time to go during the summer to learn Hungarian.

I am so thankful that during my stay I had a place to live, wonderful food to eat, tours, cooking lessons, and amazing people to share this experience.

Another of my favorite parts of this course were the Folklore nights. I enjoyed the authentic regional Hungarian food, the singing, and the dancing. During this time all students came together to enjoy the happiness dancing brings to the soul.

My desire and hope is that next year I will be able to attend the four week course and advance my Hungarian a little bit more. In the meantime, I will continue to work on my own.

Thank you so much for this wonderful and life changing experience!

Köszönöm szépen!