

culture and ideas of the peoples of ASEAN and in turn ASEAN students acquire a similar knowledge of Canada and Canadians. This undoubtedly has a long-term benefit in strengthening and diversifying Canada's relations with ASEAN.

Anyone intending to study in Canada must obtain a student authorization and in some cases a visa before entering Canada, and many enquiries on how to go about it are received by Canadian diplomatic missions in ASEAN.

Selecting a School

However, the first step on the road to becoming a student in Canada is to choose an educational institution. While Canada's overseas missions provide some guidance in this respect, given limited resources and a large number of applicants, this is not always possible. Canadian missions are able to assist by providing access to university calendars and other general information on course availability, as well as addresses of all such institutions in Canada. At the secondary or primary level of studies, guidance can be given as to whether particular private schools meet the educational standards of provincial departments of education.

While the individual must make his own choice, there are a number of things to be remembered when choosing a place to study. Students frequently have the mistaken belief that graduation from a Canadian secondary school is essential for admission to a Canadian university or other tertiary institution. This is not correct, and students with "A" levels or good "O" levels should also explore the possibilities of going directly to university. Even students who require to upgrade their English can proceed to university directly as some universities have begun English language training courses to prepare students with otherwise good secondary school results in their own countries for university admission.

If it is not possible to proceed directly to university then secondary schools may be considered. Unfortunately, in some case, agents of secondary schools overseas have been over-enthusiastic in their descriptions of facilities, variety of courses and standards of instruction available in the school they represent. Students intending to go to secondary schools should be cautious about the statements of the agent and should insist upon printed material from the school itself describing facilities and courses. Often the agents have not been to Canada to view the schools and may themselves be influenced by the over-enthusiasm of the school administrators and owners whom they have met.

There are numerous private secondary



Before Thai student Deunden Nikomborirak joined the other 11,206 ASEAN students in Canada she was presented with a book on Canada by Andre Simard of the Canadian Embassy in Bangkok. Looking on are former Thai graduates from her new school, Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific, Victoria, British Columbia. Like them, Deunden was selected to study there for two years prior to entry into university. Pearson College is named after the Canadian Prime Minister who promoted its founding as an institute welcoming students from all over the world.

schools in Canada apart from the small number that have appointed local agents and actively recruit in ASEAN. Many of these other schools are long established with proven reputations whereas many of the schools actively recruiting are doing so because they are new and have not yet established a reputation that will attract students. It may be more difficult to gain admission to these older private schools but students who succeed find it is worth the additional effort.

At the post-secondary level of education good standards are maintained by any institution that is a member of the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC). The description "university" is governed by provincial legislation to ensure that it is used only by reputable institutions offering genuine university level and quality courses leading to degrees. The description "college" is not similarly protected and although many post-secondary institutions of a good standard will use this term in their name it is also used by numerous private and public secondary, vocational and trade training institutions of widely varying standards.

Authorization/Visa Procedure

Once a prospective student has selected an institution and an acceptance has been obtained, the student should approach the Canadian diplomatic mission for instructions on applying for a student authorization and/or a visa. It is important to do this as early as possible because considerable time is required to process applications. During the period before the normal commence-

ment of the Canadian school year in September when large numbers of applicants must be dealt with, applications which are submitted without allowing for adequate processing time may not be processed in time for course commencement.

Requirements for Authorization

There are a number of requirements which must be met before a student authorization will be granted, including: evidence of sufficient funds to support the student in his studies without the necessity of working in Canada (foreign students are normally not allowed to work in Canada); a medical examination; and frequently a personal interview. When making application, the student should follow the specific instructions given by the Canadian mission rather than those given by the school's agent. For example, a prospective student should not take medical examinations or appear for interviews until instructed to do so by the mission. In addition, no irreversible arrangements, such as the purchase of non-refundable air tickets, should be made until the student has his student authorization and/or visa.

The student authorization issued will be for approximately the first year of studies (or less if a shorter period of studies is all that is immediately intended). Extensions of authorizations can be obtained at Immigration Centres in Canada.

Fees for education in Canada vary according to the province where an institution is located. Ontario charges the highest general fee and imposes an