

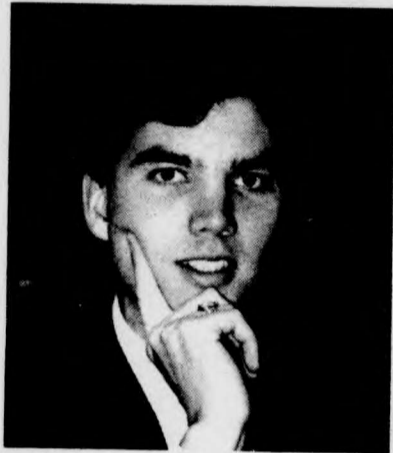
Job experience, travel attracts students to York club

By HOWARD KAMAN

Peter Tierney has been around. Around the world, that is.

As a member of AIESEC York, the York local of the International Association of Students in Economics and Commerce, Tierney has had the opportunity to travel to countries such as Greece and Australia, and still make time to tour Europe. While in the foreign countries, he was employed by major corporations, and gathered extensive work experience to help find a job at home.

Yet, while AIESEC has offered students these fantastic opportunities, Tierney feels that there isn't enough awareness of the organization on campus. As he explained, "That's one of the hardest things with any student association."



ANDRE SORJOLUN

GLOBE-TROTTER: Peter Tierney.

"I felt bad graduating with my fellow classmates," Tierney explained, "... saying, 'I'm going to Denmark to work,' and they're saying, 'I'm still working at Zellers.'"

The world's largest non-political, non-profit, student-run organization, AIESEC celebrated its 41st anniversary last week.

AIESEC is represented by more than 45,000 students in 69 countries. 38 Canadian universities are represented, including York.

The Association was founded in Sweden in 1948 by seven European countries, and the acronym is French. Canada joined in 1958. Since its inception, AIESEC has grown immensely.

Only the well-prepared, experienced student can survive in the competitive international market;

one of AIESEC's goals is to provide that experience.

AIESEC's main vehicle for that experience is its international exchange programme. Through this programme, AIESEC members are offered the chance to work in various companies around the globe.

Tierney has worked in Denmark, Australia, and Greece. He explained that the system works on a credit basis; Tierney spent several years working for AIESEC before traveling on his first foreign exchange.

"I joined AIESEC in 1983 as a general member. During my second year, I became vice-president of finance and then did the accounting and prepared statements for AIESEC," he explained. "In my third year of study, I did the marketing for AIESEC. My studies included marketing AIESEC to companies and doing some fundraising, trying to raise the traineeships."

Tierney said that it was the traineeships of foreign students coming to Canada that allowed him to go on his own exchanges. Because the system allows one Canadian member out of the country for every foreign one taken in, AIESEC members are constantly looking for new companies to support their business students looking for work. Tierney approached companies such as Carling O'Keefe, Molsons, and Sears Canada, about employing foreign exchange students.

After his third year of study and AIESEC, Tierney applied to go "somewhere in Europe." He explained that students fill out an application specifying which places they'd like to go to, and what their area of specialty is and they are "matched" to an appropriate destination.

"There's only so many applicants accepted. We look at people and what they've done for the association.

"It's sort of a credit basis; so if you've raised two jobs here, that's two foreign students coming in — and sure, you'd get it." He also emphasized that other work, aside from "marketing" AIESEC, counts in their credit system.

"You could help out with fundraising or you could help out with the finance."

Once a member has an exchange, AIESEC sets up most of the details.

Tierney describes this as one of the "selling points to the company." "The AIESEC students on the incoming end look after the visa, the accommodations, the transportation to work, and the first-day introduction to the company."

While the student pays for the flight and other expenses, accommodations are often free, as AIESEC members offer their houses for students to stay in.

Tierney says that his experience overseas was enjoyable.

"I arrived in Greece, and the University of Athens greeted me and had me a place to stay."

In Greece during the summer of 1986, Tierney worked for the American Express Bank, verifying account transactions, and corresponding with other international banks.

In 1987, Tierney went on a second

exchange to Copenhagen, Denmark, where he worked for Sparekassen SDS, another major bank. While with the company he wrote a proposal on financial and managerial reporting, and participated in a special one-week seminar in "Internationalization of Financial Services."

Following his trip to Denmark, Tierney travelled through Europe, using AIESEC's "networking programme, where you can basically travel around the world, get in touch with the AIESEC local in any city that you're going to, and say you're with AIESEC from York University. 'I'm showing up on this day. Could you help me get a place to stay?'"

"Nine chances out of 10, they have someone for you to stay with. After the Denmark traineeship, I went to Egypt, all through Scandinavia and Europe, and to Russia."

Tierney, having graduated from York in 1987, is now a member of AIESEC's alumni association, a group he describes as "fairly strong in Canada." He explained that the alumni association's role with AIESEC is to "help find jobs for foreign students in Canada," enabling more Canadian students to travel and work abroad.

But Tierney himself is home to stay. After having experienced the world market, he now seems ready to start a career at home. Since arriving here last Christmas, he's had interviews with several CA firms and banks.

"I've been to around 20 interviews in the last month. The first thing that they say is: 'Quite impressive,' which is nice to hear," he explained. "But the problem is that they don't think I'll be able to settle down."

Bringing student refugees into the classroom

cont'd from p. 7

Fisseha's success at York is a prime example of what Canadian students can provide for refugees who, for political, religious, or ethnic reasons, were forced to discontinue their studies. The real expe-

riences of refugees often go unnoticed. By participating with York's Local WUSC Committee, students can become more aware of refugee situations around the world and can help make a student refugee's academic dreams and visions reappear.

For more information concerning WUSC, please call 739-1697 or stop by our table in Central Square.

Naomi Minwalla is a second-year student pursuing an Honours Degree in economics and political science. She is also Vice-Chair of WUSC's local committee at York.

Torture not restricted to "political stars"

cont'd from p. 7

dictatorship that exists to this day.

Block says the use of torture in Somalia is not restricted to "political stars." The refugees he has treated "are not people that posed any great threat to the system themselves. Frequently they've been relatives of someone who was. Sometimes they'd just be another race that was being systematically oppressed."

Block emphasized that all of the people he saw opposed the dictatorship, and all of them were tortured.

Torture is often used for interrogation, as a means of acquiring information. But Block believes the larger objective "is to just totally break this person."

He says the first step in torture is complete degradation and added that the psychological torture these people are subjected to can be just as

great as the physical pain inflicted on them.

"There's never access to lawyers or trials. There's a complete loss of control. You don't feel that you have

access to the kinds of things we normally depend on to make us feel that our rights will be respected."

Yet, despite the refugee's problems at home, Block also believes that the problems in Canada are also bad.

He said that, in order for refugees to adjust to our society, Canadians have to accept them first.

"If you come to Canada as a refugee," says Block, "you deal yourself a whole new set of problems. You lose your whole culture, your language, your family. You lose any position of status that you had in your own community. You encounter race related problems that you never encountered before. These social problems are really major things."

Block believes that Canadians should "help these people re-adjust, to restore some kind of harmony or sense of balance in their life."



ANDRE SORJOLUN

WENDELL BLOCK spoke at York last week.

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