

# gh AIESEC eyes

not uncommon to go out for the evening with about 14 people and not one of us would be from the same country.

A typical day consisted of going to work for 9 AM, lunch at twelve, work until 2:30-3:00, come home, lay out in the sun until about 5:30, then go windsurfing, and finally go out for supper and the evening. It was light out from 3:00 AM to 1:00 AM, in other words there were only about 2 hours of darkness during the middle of summer. By the time I left there were about 5 or more hours of darkness a night.

Every week there was a theme party on Wednesday night with trainees from particular countries taking turns in organizing the party with the theme of their country. On the weekends, a variety of activities was organized. I travelled to many areas in Norway on the weekends. One special event was Midsummer's Night, held on the longest day of the year. It never gets dark. There is a special party on that night. Everyone goes down to the lake and builds a big bonfire. You party all night and have the following day off.

You make many lasting friendships while on a traineeship as you all are sharing the same new experience. If you think you have a lot of letters to write now, you should try a traineeship. You'll have a never-ending supply!

Deanna Porter is a 4th year BBA student from Amherst, Nova Scotia. She has been involved in AIESEC since she started university.

## David

To try to put down on paper my experiences as an AIESEC trainee is very difficult. There is just so much to say, and so much that can't easily be put into words.

From June to December of 1986, I was an AIESEC trainee in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. At first, I was doing market research projects for Van Ommeren B.V., a

large multinational shipping company with corporate headquarters in Rotterdam. It proved to be a very interesting experience, as I was given a lot of responsibility and respect. This was my first "white collar" job, and it showed me that office jobs don't have to be boring. Everyone at work was very friendly, and quick to answer all of my endless questions. I never did learn much Dutch, as we worked in English, but when I tried I always got a smile in response.

An AIESEC traineeship is a complete cultural experience; work is only one part of it. I was given the opportunity to live in a foreign culture, not as a tourist, but as a guest. It's the small things that stick in your mind, like when an older gentleman tells you about the war and being liberated by the Canadian Army. He still loves Canadians for something that happened over 40 years ago. It's sitting around a cafe with Dutch students, comparing the similarities and differences in our lives. The most rewarding experience is the weekends when you get together with 25 trainees like yourself from more than 15 different countries. When I was in Holland, there was more than 50 trainees scattered around the small country.

When you have an AIESEC traineeship overseas you get the unique opportunity to really talk with people from other cultures. How many people can say they've talked at length with Poles, Hungarians, Africans, Asians, West Europeans, even South Africans? AIESEC is apolitical, but it still doesn't prevent you from discussing socialism with a proud Marxist-Leninist from Hungary. How else could you discuss the situation in South Africa with a white South African who is against apartheid?

I enjoyed Holland so much that I decided to stay longer. I was able to get another traineeship in September, this time with Shell-Netherlands, in their finance department. Now I was a member of a financial appraisal team, monitoring the activities of Shell in Holland. It was a demanding job, involving the production of a Management Information System (MIS). I became a computer hack, spending most of my time in front of a terminal. The experience and confidence I gained was immeasurable. There is nothing quite like being singled out for praise from your boss, is there?

I finished my traineeship and reluctantly headed home last December, only to return to Europe in March. Yes, another traineeship, this time in Rouen, France with Shell Research as assistant to the finance manager. This job gave me a great deal of responsibility and independence. I found myself dealing with a different culture, struggling to remember my long forgotten French.

Immersed in the culture of Normandy, eventually I became a proud defender of all things Norman. There were the weekends spent in Paris, Bordeaux, Metz, Belgium, and Holland. There were the little things like sipping coffee at an outdoor cafe, fresh bread from the boulangerie, the infamous French pastries, the good French wine. The best way to learn about any culture is to live it. When you are working, you deal with people as friends or colleagues, not as a tourist or "foreigner." Again it was with reluctance that I came home at the end of July, to prepare to go back to university once again.

The most lasting impression of my year spent overseas is my renewed love and respect for Canada. It's the old adage that you don't realize how lucky you are to be a Canadian, until you leave the country for a while. Everywhere I went in Europe I was treated with the greatest respect when people discovered I was Canadian. We live in a great country, and you only really appreciate it when someone else tells you so.

David Kilfoil is a 5th year student from New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. This is his third year in AIESEC.

International Congress  
Quebec City, Canada  
February 1989

AIESEC-Canada will be the host for the largest event in the history of the International Congress, to be held in Quebec City. IC will have over 500 student delegates from 64 countries. The goals and objectives of AIESEC. It is at this time that the goals and objectives of AIESEC are matched by computer to their international counterparts.

The cost of hosting an IC is comparable to winning the lottery. The last time that IC was in Canada was during the 1967. AIESEC-Canada began studying the possibility of hosting this world-class event in 1984. This year, after an exhaustive review of the possibilities, AIESEC-Canada submitted a proposal to host this world-class event in 1989. This proposal was a strong AIESEC-France proposal, giving Canada a share of the \$600,000. The event is entirely student-organized, and it is one of the largest student events in the world.

Students from all around the country will be working together to make this event a success. Anyone can play a part in this event. By joining AIESEC, you get an opportunity to work towards showing the Canadian students can do. The office is located in Room 30 of the SUB.

