

EU Canada Mobility Program Personal Experience Report

by Csaba Szilágyi

I feel myself very lucky because I had the opportunity to take part in this interesting and exciting exchange program. Fortunately I managed to buy a special plane ticket at the same price as a normal direct Budapest - Vancouver flight. So at the end of the August of 2009 I travelled to Toronto. I met with my high school classmate. He spent the summer in Toronto. We discovered the city together. I had the chance to visit the famous CN tower. Moreover we made a trip to the fabulous Niagara Falls. These 3 days were a good period to accommodate to Canada and this stop helped me to manage the jet lag easier.



In the very end of August I arrived to the Vancouverite YVR airport. I met with one of my university classmate. We called a local number and a very kind and helpful man answered our call. He spoke our mother tongue. Peter my classmate had got to know his wife in Hungary. The man is from the village which is next to Peter's home. This man, László took us to their place. We stayed there for 3 days because we only could move in on the 1st of September. They helped us a lot. László's wife Michelle helped us to find a good place for reasonable price. This meant a lot of us because neither Peter nor I had managed to get a residence so we had to book and find a place by ourselves. This thing is very

hard from Hungary. It is hard to make a deal because the landlords do not want to rent the place without a personal contact. They do not answer the emails and phoning is hard because of the time difference. So Michelle helped us very much. She found a good place with reasonable price and his husband visited the place and convinced the landlord to make a deal. So we spent our first days at László's place. He also introduced us to a 1956 Hungarian immigrant, Miklós who took us to several places and made so easy to start our life in Vancouver. He showed us the way to the university, the best places to shop, the downtown and a few good place to eat. These circumstances made this exchange program very easy. I did not get homesick because I could eat Hungarian food which was made by László's mother Margit. Moreover I also could use my mother tongue sometimes.



Cheaper accommodation meant that I could travel easily because my scholarship was enough. So I visited several places. I saw the Whistler, Victoria and Grouse Mountain. I also entered the European Social Club which was a good decision. A lot of parties and trips



were organized by them. We went to the clubs of the Granville Street two times, we visited a few pubs and I went to Seattle, USA with them. These occasions were very good because I could speak with different people all over the world and I was able to



experience new cultures and habits. I also stopped on the way back to home. I spent 3 days

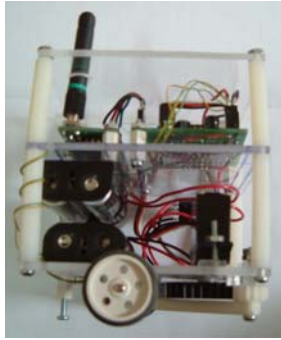
in Montréal. This part of Canada is also interesting. Québec is the only French speaking community in North America. I



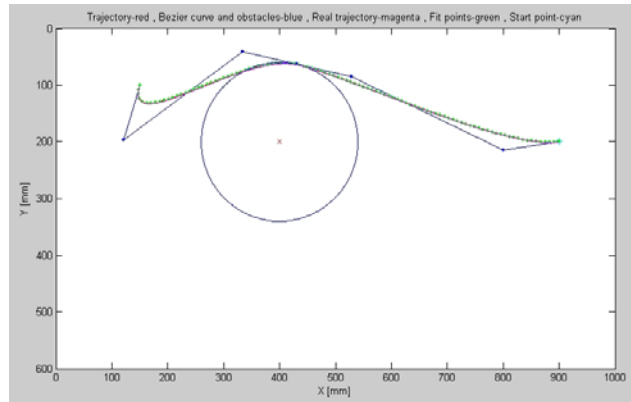
discovered the city and I was able to make a trip to Ottawa so I also visited the capital city of Canada. I was in the Parliament and I got a more accurate knowledge about the Canadian political system. In these 3 days Moreover I could experience the real Canadian weather. It was 20 degrees below zero during the whole day.



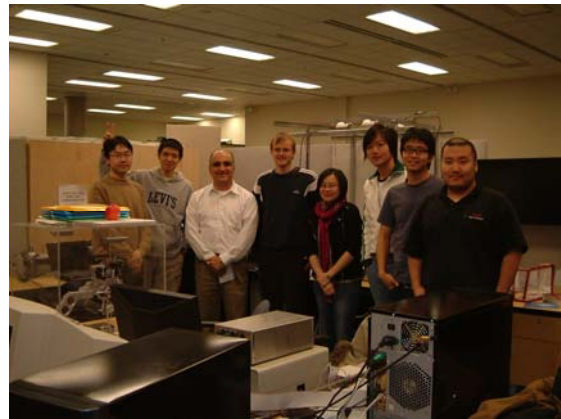
This semester also helped me to improve my English and my professional skills. I took 3 courses. Obviously I spent the most time with the Special Project Laboratory course. Jian Guo and the team of the laboratory helped me a lot so I was able to progress with my thesis well. I learnt a lot of things from these people. The hardware part of the project was more developed on the SFU and I dealt with that so I will be able to accelerate the project in Hungary because this semester helped me a lot. The history course was useful also. My English improved a lot during the essays and the lectures. Moreover my view about Canadians and Canada is much wider and much more accurate. My classmates were very kind and they helped me a lot. I really enjoyed the classes. I liked especially the lessons which were in the last weeks I made very good conversions with my mates. The third course was the Feedback Control Systems. I studied this material on the BUTE before this semester and the level of studies at the BUTE were much higher. Moreover it was more theoretical on my home university. So the course was quite easy for me. However I practiced the material a lot in this course so my knowledge became much more practical and valuable.



During the semester I built two prototypes of different designs of the robots. I corrected the mistakes and made the physical measures more accurate. I also built the PCBs for these two robots. I documented the changes and created a part list for the next builders. I tested the hardware. Moreover I obtained the constants of the robots. I also dealt with the low level programming of the hardware. Moreover I improved the communication structure and implemented a simple Bezier curves based open loop trajectory planning algorithm. I documented these works in my thesis.



I enjoyed working in the laboratory because the team was very helpful and kind. We dined together several times. We visited an Italian, a Hungarian and two Chinese restaurants. I enjoyed the Sichuan cuisine very much. The Chinese guys from the lab helped me to pick a good dish and they introduced me into the Chinese cuisine. We also went to the Cypress Mountain together. I really enjoyed the skiing on Cypress. I was very pleased because the weather was very good for the winter sports. The resorts could be opened extremely early.



I would like to express my gratitude to Shahram Payandeh and István Harmati because they let and support me to participate in this exchange program. I really enjoyed this semester and I think this semester also improved my knowledge about different cultures and countries. I am looking for the next semester because many Canadian students will come to the BUTE so I hope that I will be able to improve my English in Hungary also. Moreover I really hope that this useful and valuable program will be continued and will not be terminated at the end of the next semester.