

News Release

International Student Jianglong Huang Finds One-on-One Attention and Leadership Growth while Embracing the Culture at UMN Crookston

By Shawn Smith on Tuesday, February 23, 2021

Independence. It was something taught by his parents to Jianglong Huang during his childhood in Guangzhou, China. They always wanted Jianglong to learn different languages and embrace different cultures from a young age. So when at an international high school one of his classmates recommended UMN Crookston, he jumped at the opportunity.

Jianglong was looking for a school where he could have a small class size because he struggled with concentration and wanted an environment where professors could provide more one-on-one attention. Jianlong was given the individual attention from the start and he has enjoyed his experience at UMN Crookston ever since.

"One of the things I remember the most was when I was registering for a class and couldn't register for it, (my advisor) Megan (Kragness) took a long time to help me and took me to different departments," Huang said. "Because she could have helped me by email, but she went to different places in order to help me complete my registration."

Jianglong, an international business major, has also pursued a music minor at UMN Crookston. He has been offered the same individual attention by his music instructor George French.

"He helped me create a perfect plan in order to be able to finish my minor in one year," Huang stated. "I registered for piano lessons and choir, which I had never done before. I always thought my voice was not suitable for singing, but he told me that there was not a person in the world who could not sing, they just didn't have the confidence. He helped me feel more confident to perform in choir."

Huang's pursuit of music comes back to his parent's. His parents didn't focus on academics, as much as they focused on him and his sister and brother pursuing their interests and abilities.

"They (my parents) didn't focus on my grades, but more on my interests and abilities," Huang said. "Cooking is my favorite thing. I spend two hours a day cooking and I like to make new dishes and try different styles of dishes. I also like to learn and analyze stocks and securities in my spare time, although sometimes they break my heart."

In addition to pursuing his interests in a close-knit environment, UMN Crookston has allowed Huang to grow as a leader. A major reason Huang believes he has grown as a leader is because of Rae French, Learning Abroad Advisor, and Sok Leng Tan, Director of Global Programs, in International Programs.

"If the advisors helped me with my academics, then the International Programs developed my leadership skills," Huang remarked.

Huang is thankful for the opportunities he has been provided working in International Programs. He had his worries that he wouldn't be able to do his job well working in the department, but it all worked out in the end.

"Sok Leng and Rae are the two people I need to thank the most," Huang said. "They have given me the opportunity to work at International Programs and have allowed me to use my strengths to organize events. One of the things that I am proud of is helping International Programs translate the admissions information on the admissions page. At first I thought this might be a little difficult for me and I was worried I wouldn't be able to do it well, but Sok Leng believed I could do it. In International Programs, all you have to do is use your abilities to do it and don't worry about failing, because the solution is found in failing over and over again.

When we have any difficulties, I always go ask Sok Leng and Rae and they always help us to solve them quickly. A few weeks ago, I had some trouble with my taxes and Rae told me not to worry, she would take care of it. After three days, I received the solution and Rae said, 'I told you, everything will be fine.'"

He has thoroughly enjoyed his time at UMN Crookston, and a big part of it has been the role of international programs and the opportunities they provide students on campus. Some of Huang's favorites have been skiing, a cabin trip, and a cooking show. One of his other favorite things has been the community created with other international students on campus at UMN Crookston.

"I get to know a lot of international students when I help organize some International Programs events," Huang said. "We would get together to discuss the next event and share some interesting things. In our spare time, we get together for dinner and hang out."

Huang has loved his experience at UMN Crookston. From the individual attention of his advisors, to the experiences International Programs help to create for international students on campus, to the independence and confidence he has learned. But for Huang the number one thing UMN Crookston has had to offer comes back to a main focus of his parents.

"I think it's about learning about different cultures, and different lifestyles," Huang remarked. "Because UMC is a diverse community, students come from different countries. I have made a lot of friends and have learned a lot from them."

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