

5<sup>th</sup> February, 2007

Dear grandparents,

How are you? I wish that I could be with you for Chinese New Year and tell you about the happy times I've had in the UK over the past four years.

You remember when I left home to go to University of Wales, Bangor (UWB)? My English was poor and everything was new, so I joined the Badminton and Mountain Walking clubs and this was the start of my colourful and enjoyable life in the UK.

After the Foundation Course (I got a Distinction), I began my BSc Psychology at UWB. I wanted to help local people and communities, so I joined Student Volunteering Bangor (SVB) and I've been volunteering for three years. I really love this work. Some of the work was with Club Spectrum, a project helping autistic children through games, arts and crafts, and in 2005, I became coordinator. I've also helped elderly people in the community and patients with mental illness in a local hospital.

You can see I've been very busy, but I like this. There're so many interesting things going on around me, and I don't want to miss out on any. You know I love designing things since I was young. Well, here I got a great chance to develop this; in 2005, I took over the position of SVB Publicity Officer for a year, designing many different publicity materials and most were used around the campus. I loved this job because I could use my little talent to promote volunteering work. This was a great time for me and I feel I've matured a lot from my experience. Many friends back home say I've changed a lot, but I'm still Yusi!

Of course, here I felt lonely too, especially at the beginning, so I understand how other students feel when they leave home. In 2005, I became a Peer Guide to freshers in Bangor and gave advice and support.

My volunteering work has been very satisfying and I even received UWB and community approval. In March 2006, I received Bangor University Honour for Outstanding Contribution to Student Volunteering and was congratulated by the Vice-Chancellor. I was so happy to find the story was published in local newspapers and I'll post you copies soon.

I've made many international friends and joined many international events. It has taught me a lot about cultural diversity. I've taken up Welsh Dance and celebrated Scottish Burns Night, British style Christmas, German style Easter, Welsh St David's Day and Irish St Patrick's Day. Also I'm a member of the Japanese society and go to their language class every fortnight. I've even sung a Japanese song with a friend on stage!

Don't worry. I haven't forgotten home. I celebrate Chinese New Year with British people here and last year I hosted a party for my international friends. This year I'll be Master of Ceremony for the Chinese New Year Celebration for all the Chinese at Bangor, and something great is I'm setting up a cultural-awareness volunteering project in Bangor, so Chinese and British students can work together teaching local children Chinese language and its culture. What's more, at a University

International Evening I read a Chinese poem and told people about Chinese traditions. So you see I'm really proud of China.

Actually I tell many people about home. Here there's an organisation of business and professional people called the Rotary Club; I met one of the members a year ago, a very nice person and he invited me to give a talk about China. The Rotary International motto "Service Above Self" inspires me, and I've been actively involved with this club since. I applied for their Ambassadorial Scholarship to do more good. Believe it or not I won this scholarship! Of course, it means I'm going to Australia in 2008 to study Cultural Heritage at postgraduate level, and teach about British and Chinese culture. I really look forward to it! I'm getting used to working abroad now; you remember in summer 2005 I went to the USA to work as a Camp Counsellor to help people with physical and mental difficulties.

Maybe you think I have no time for myself, but I'm very happy. I also have a regular part-time job as Mac Lab assistant in the Psychology Department, and teaching assistant of Psychology Information Technical Skills class. In 2006, I even worked as Social Organiser for UWB English summer course for students from 30 different countries.

All these experiences have made me more positive, interested, enthusiastic, open-minded and tolerant. I've really grown up in these four years. Studying and living here has taught me so much about what is possible in life, and I'm enjoying every minute. Now I'm even more ambitious.

I'm looking forward to getting my degree this year, but after four years, I really don't want to leave my second home immediately. I'm planning to study French here for another half a year after graduation. Then I'll take lots of experience and memories home with me that I'll keep for the rest of my life.

Dear grandparents, I hope you have enjoyed my story in the UK. I miss you, but I'll see you soon.

Love,  
Yusi