

DALConnects▶▶

DALConnects Reflective Assignment 2014-15

Introduction

I came to Halifax from India in the late December 2014 as a winter student at Dalhousie University for my graduate studies. After coming to Halifax I realized that I need to network with people in order to make new connections. I use to meet new people in the university and then someone told me about the DalConnects Program which is very helpful for the students to network with people.

DalConnects provided me with valuable experience both while participating in the workshops and while volunteering in different events. These experiences helped me to build up my skills in many sectors including the leadership skills. I attended 10 workshops and completed 40 hours of volunteering. I found DalConnects to be very helpful to meet people with different cultures, background and views.

Meeting with these people and working with them has provided me with opportunity to learn new things.

Volunteering Experience

In the DalConnects program volunteering is mandatory for completing the certification requirements. I started searching for events on social media and I found one event related to Ice Skating. I inquired with the event coordinator but I found that I was late for registering. Later the event coordinator sent me an email to inform me of a new event they need some volunteers for. It was for an event to protest against the increase in tuition fees. The event was called “ALL OUT-4th Feb”. I set up a meeting with one of the head coordinators, ‘John Hutton’. I prepared some placards, placed some posters and did some talks with many students. While talking to the students I explained why the event is happening, and what might be the benefits if the event is successful. Although the event was for a

serious cause we still had a lot of fun while having meetings, or while placing the posters at university and public places. The event was successful and on the day of event more than 500 students came on the streets to protest with us for the cause.



After this event I also volunteered for TEDxDalhousieU which is a Program designed to help communities, organizations and individuals to spark conversation and connection through local experiences. I was a part of the Promotions team which was led by 'Christina Nahanni'. We were responsible for the publicity for the TED event. We designed the posters, placed the posters at many different places. For promoting the event we also utilized the Dalhousie Tiger Mascot, provided free Redbull energy drinks and popcorn at Dalhousie Student Union Building. The event featured many individuals who has done something for the society. More than 200 people appeared in the main event and again the event was successful.



I also volunteered for Dalhousie Engineering Graduate Society in its two events: DEGS T-room Party and Dalhousie Vs SMU cricket match. The DEGS T-room party was a party organized for the graduate engineering students of Dalhousie. The main idea for the event was to provide the students with a relaxing time before the exams. We planned, managed and organized the event which included some drinks and food. Some special performances were also performed by some of our fellow volunteers.

Workshops

In the DalConnects program it is mandatory to attend the workshops. At first I thought “why do I need to attend these”? But once I attended the first workshop, which was the Dal Leads conference I realized that these are necessary for personal development. At first I thought that I will only attend 5 workshops and finish the program. But as I keep on attending the workshops I got more involved and I managed to attend 10 workshops. In every one I learned many new things including how to manage time, how to become a leader, and how to work efficiently as a team member.



Conclusion

I think that during the year 2014/2015 I have learned so much about myself, life, and what education actually means. Getting a traditional education at a university is important, but you also needs to learn how to survive in the environment where people are not always the same as you are and that is what the DALconnects program has done for me. It has helped me to learn many things, provided me with possibilities and opportunities which I can offer to the University and the community. I am most happy when I am volunteering and doing something to make someone else happy. The volunteering aspect of the DALconnects program has allowed me to become a stronger leader and more outgoing. I hope to use the knowledge I have gained from DALconnects to help the program grow in the next couple of years. Thank you so much for the opportunity to have been a part of the DALconnects Certificate Program.