

Goodbye Summertime , Hello Fall !

It's back to school for us folks after a 3 month long summer vacation. I am all geared up and ready to face the new challenges in the upcoming fall semester. For the past three months , I had a well-planned summer in my hometown (halfway across the globe in China) living on the seventh floor of my parents' apartment (excuse me , there's no such thing as an elevator back there where I live .) serving my community by volunteering with a group of local university students at an orphanage. I also had the chance to watch the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics 2008- live on television .The astonishing event which attracted people from all over the world just to travel to Bei Jing for this once in every four year event. To be honest, I am proud to be a Chinese this very moment even though I am studying in another country.

Enough about my hometown and the past summer events, now about Fall- Orientation for the New, Transfer and Exchange students on Monday , August 18th. Welcome breakfast was served , I could see the proud looks on the parents' face as their children walked up to the sign-up tables. Though the crowd started getting big , the orientation leaders managed the crowd swiftly and took care of the situation in a flash. I must applaud the orientation Leaders in being very helpful and kind in every way, they were there to explain in depth to each new student at the check-in counter the events that were being held that day.

I volunteered for Ruth Robison, the International Student Advisor, to help out in the International Student Orientation. I was anxious to meet new faces from other countries, I started out on Tuesday , 19th August at the Student Services Center arranging important documents and inserting pamphlets into folders for the students to get familiarized with the campus. I was focusing on getting the documents in the right order when all of a sudden I heard a loud laughter . Coming towards me was a lady dressed in a pink mu'mu dress carrying a matching neon-pink water tumbler. Her short navy-cut enhanced her features and great smile. She sort of reminded me of Wilma from The Flintstones. Robison came out from her office as she too had heard the laughter , introduced me to Dr. LuoLuo Hong , UH Hilo's Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Dr. Hong's gave me an impression that this semester would be filled with fun and meaningful activities!

The next day , I was all ready to meet the international exchange students or international freshmen coming into UH Hilo , I was told that there would be at least 120 international students flooding our campus this semester. It was a huge number compared to last semester. Students from the Pacific Islands, Korea, The People's Republic of China, Japan , Ethiopia , England and Hong Kong ! Although I had just come back from China , it feels wonderful to be studying in an environment with schoolmates from all over the world , of different race, different culture. I am proud to be a student of UH Hilo , and a resident of Hawaii- one of the nation's most ethnically diverse state !

Aloha Hawaii ~

By : Gladys Tong



International Students Orientation at the Campus Plaza.



Thanks to the helpful volunteers, we were able to successfully hold the orientation.



Korean and Japanese Students waiting anxiously .



Say "Arigato" to Yuki from Japan/



Tristan with his ghostbuster T-shirt .