

The Adventure of a Lifetime

Andrew Chupp

Traveling abroad was a foreign concept to me until I realized how easy Purdue makes it through their exchange programs and scholarships. I left America on an adventure that will have an impact on my future and my outlook on the world. The people I met, places I visited, and classes I took have taught me more than I could have expected. If I would not have left my comfort zone and traveled to New Zealand, I would have missed out on an important part of my collegiate experience.



During my freshman year at Purdue, I grew a lot as an individual doing things for myself and not having parents to take care of life situations as much. Going to New Zealand gave me a lot of independent experiences, as I had to learn how to travel by myself and solve problems on the fly without the guidance of my family. It was up to me to book all of my travel and get the things necessary to live in New Zealand.

Although it may make you anxious, I was comforted by having other students with me who were going through the same transition as I was. After I arrived in New Zealand, I met up with two other Boilermakers, and we traveled for a week prior to the university's orientation. Not knowing them very well, I was able to create two great friendships that will continue long after we have returned from the trip.

Perhaps the most beneficial thing I did while I was abroad was get involved with campus organizations at my host university. I join the Massey University Alpine club, which turned out to be a good way to meet other international students and kiwi's alike. We went on many diverse



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hiking and camping adventures throughout the semester for a very affordable price. I made lifelong friends through this club and was able to see some pretty awesome parts of New Zealand. I also joined Massey University Christian Fellowship (MUCF). It was very encouraging to meet others who had the same beliefs I had and were pursuing it in college just like I had been back at Purdue. I made some of my closest friendships through this organization and was able to take a lot away from it. Through MUCF I met Kees, who took me out to the dairy farm he worked on and showed me the trade. We covered silage piles, shot rabbits, and had an overall great time in the process.

During the mid-semester break of the semester, I set off to travel the South Island with two friends. We rented a camper van and set off to travel the beautiful landscape of New Zealand. We spent a lot of time hiking through mountains, visiting glaciers, and camping. We met up with friends throughout the trip and made the most of the time we spent in the South Island to see as much as we could. The South Island is known as one of the most beautiful places in the world, and I would have to agree.



I had the opportunity to visit several farms during my time abroad and the best one was Nickel Grain and Produce in the Taranaki region. I met them through a mutual friend from my hometown in Indiana and set up a weekend to visit the farm. They took time to show me their corn, barley, and wheat operation and all their fully restored International tractors and trucks. I was blessed by their generosity and the time they took to show me the ins and outs of their area in New Zealand. They introduced me to many of their friends and explained the culture and traditions of New Zealanders. After visiting for a weekend, they invited me to come back anytime, so I took them up on the offer and stayed with them for a few days before returning the states. The people of New Zealand modeled the same generosity and kindness that the Nickel's showed to me. I left the country with a great appreciation for the people of New Zealand.