

The Stairs of Life

One would think that first steps are always the most difficult to take, especially if you have a long journey. There we were, a couple of unrelated international students who'd just arrived in Taiwan. We couldn't think of anything better than visiting our college: Ming Chuan University. I never would've thought that my next steps in life would ironically start by climbing actual stairs, just like in "Rocky" the movie.

As simple scholarship students, we were strangers to the world; but as soon as we started taking the stairs, words were flying around and conversations were getting easier between us. As expected, the first set of stairs was difficult to climb; but joking about it and making fun of our tired faces made us laugh, connect, and feel the steps go by quicker. Next thing you know, after getting to the 7-Eleven, we all felt that we knew each other for life. It's interesting to see how a set of boring, never-ending stairs could end up helping me make new friends and have a good time, even before classes began.

Ming Chuan University isn't all about stairs... Once classes had already started, thoughts came to mind about how I stopped doing things I enjoyed before. Since high school, my dream is to compose music. Music has been around for most of my life; I learned the flute in Preschool, learned guitar in fourth grade, and in sixth grade I joined the school band to play percussion. I really missed playing the drum set, and it was hard for that feeling to go away. But one day in Ming Chuan, hope came to my door; a stand beside the 7-Eleven had the word "music" on it, which caught my attention. I immediately asked for information about the music club, but there was a language barrier with the people in the stand, which discouraged me a bit. Anyway, I decided to go and check out the music room. As I was getting closer to the room, I could hear the drums; and when I finally saw them, I felt as if my eyes smiled. You would think that I ran to play them, but I was so happy that I just kept staring at them as if all of it was a dream. Have you ever heard the annoying sound of fingernails scraping a Chalkboard? Well, that was me starting to play the drums. I guess my mind was too busy enjoying the moment that it wouldn't let my ears realize how bad I was playing; though a bit of practice could take off the rust from almost being a year without holding a pair of drumsticks.

During the second semester, I had the opportunity to meet another part of the big MCU family. At that time, it wasn't weird to see students dancing everywhere; they were practicing for the cheerleading competition (Held in MCU Taoyuan Campus). I guess they left "High School Musical" for college. Eventually, I decided to participate and convinced two of my friends to join. The thing is, we were the only ones from our branch disposed to participate, so we had to team up with the IC students from Taoyuan Campus. Of course, we practiced separately, but we should go there one day before the competition. As we practiced; soon we'd noticed we weren't the best dancers, but we had the spirit and lots of fun. Soon we were practicing with the IC students from Taoyuan, and all of them were extremely friendly and outgoing. We had to stay there for two nights; and even though we were sleeping in a classroom, there was a very warm environment that made me and my friends feel at home with a second family.

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What started from something that most of the students dislike, climbing Ming Chuan's stairs, has lead me to unforgettable experiences and started the path that could fulfill my dreams. Eventually, I did lose the rust from playing percussion; as a matter of fact, my friend and I performed for a Christmas party and it went great. As of the Cheerleading competition, we got an 80.1 which was great all factors considered. All in all, it's impossible to conclude without giving special thanks to all the faculty, classmates, staff, and laborers since they also have a significant influence in my overall college experience. Not to mention the friendly face of one of the guards that greets me daily, which proves how every single member of Ming Chuan shapes an enormous family.