

# The Students I'll Never Forget (and Why)

Published 14 hours ago by [Rei Tang](#)

Working at Seneca Polytechnic for the past 30 years has provided me with countless memories. I have cherished the trips I took with international students and the events my department organized for them. My journey started when I was an international student, and later, I started supporting international students from around the world. I have been shaped by the remarkable individuals I've had the privilege to meet during each event and field trip. Each student brings a unique story filled with courage, uncertainty, resilience, and personal growth. While I have encountered many students, there are a few I will never forget, not because they were perfect, but because they reminded me of what it truly means to persevere and find a sense of belonging.

One student I will always remember is Mr. Zang; he arrived in Canada during the peak of winter. It was his first time seeing snow, and while others found it magical, he found it isolating. He struggled not only with the cold but with the silence that came from being far away from home. He had several friends and good connections but was worried about his opportunities to find a good job. Over time, I saw a quiet transformation. He began asking questions, then participating, and eventually mentoring newer students. We traveled together to the east coast of Canada, and we had a good time getting to know each other. What stayed with me was not just his progress but his courage to push through discomfort. He taught me that confidence isn't something you arrive with; it's something you build, moment by moment.

Another student who stood out for her determination is Ms. Ke. She balanced her studies at Seneca with part-time work while also supporting her sister, who had just arrived in Canada. The pressure was intense, but she remained focused and disciplined in her work across different departments. At times, she felt overwhelmed and questioned whether staying in Canada long-term was the right choice. Instead of giving up, she sought support, improved her time management, and relied on her community. Her success is inspiring and shows that resilience often grows through responsibility, not in its absence.

Then there was the student from Pakistan, Mr. Murtaza, who struggled academically, not because he lacked ability, but because he felt he didn't belong. Cultural differences, unfamiliar teaching styles, and self-doubt created barriers that weren't immediately visible. At that time, the Pakistani culture was new to me as well. It takes time and patience to learn a new culture, but Seneca gives you this opportunity if you get involved with the Seneca Activities. What made him unforgettable was his honesty. He spoke openly about his challenges, which allowed us to work together to find solutions. Over time, his grades improved, but more importantly, so did his sense of self-worth. He reminded me that success is not only about outcomes, but about helping students believe in their own potential. Seneca was the right school for him; he felt at home, and the community was welcoming.

These students, and many others, have shaped my understanding of what it means to support international learners. They've shown me that behind every assignment, question, or hesitation there is a personal story that deserves patience, empathy, and encouragement. I see my own journey in them: the uncertainty of starting over, the effort to adapt, and the determination to succeed.

What makes these students unforgettable is their growth, not just their achievements. Connecting with them at Seneca makes the experience especially meaningful. They remind me why this work matters. Supporting international students isn't only about academics—it's about creating an environment where they feel seen, heard, and valued. It also means helping them adjust to both a new education system and a new life, with the support of the services Seneca provides.

In the end, the students I'll never forget are those who turned challenges into strength, found their voice, and showed me the power of resilience and compassion. Always try to get involved in new opportunities that come your way!

tags : [international-students](#), [international-student-survival-guide](#), [ISS](#)