

## **Nguyen Le Tuong Vi – Graduation Speech 19.12.2014**

Dear everyone, it's my honor to be here today, in front of you – teachers, graduates, fellow students, families and friends – it is really a great honor for me to stand here at this moment, to share with you part of my feelings when I and many fellow students here, graduate from our studies at Lapland University of Applied Sciences.

My full name is Nguyen Le Tuong Vi, I am from Vietnam, a beautiful and friendly country. I came to Rovaniemi more than 3 years ago to start my Bachelor study in Tourism Management. The journey from my home to Rovaniemi was quite a long one, if we count from door to door since I left my home in a small village in central Vietnam until I arrived at the DAS student apartment, I had to take 4 times taxi, 4 different flights, 1 time by bus and 3 overnights in between. The total distance that I traveled was more than 13000 kilometers. I was certainly very well prepared for this journey – long and far away from home.

On the last flight from Helsinki to Rovaniemi, when the flight was about to land, I look down from the airplane window, I saw nothing but forests and lakes, and for a moment I said to myself – what kind of place is this? However, it was right on the first day when I knew that I like the place, especially the beautiful landscape. I soon realized that people are so friendly, helpful and special here. I had no problem in adapting to the life here during my study time. I believe that for me, as it is for many international students like me studying in Rovaniemi, we had the first chance in our lives experiencing the snow, northern light, mid-night sun and polar night.

My 3 and half year study here has been a rich and interesting experience. Almost everything was different from my home country. I think that everything was very open in promoting for the best self-development of every individual student. The school infrastructure is excellent and we students are well-equipped with all what it takes to study efficiently. I enjoyed very much the intimate and relaxing relationship between teachers and students. I liked the versatile teaching and learning methods. The combination method of studying and working life allowed me to get to know the local working life through field work and practical training. What an experience for me when I worked as a trainee in a popular hotel in downtown Rovaniemi! My study

period has been a continuous process during which I also spent one semester for study exchange in Germany. The study process has confirmed with me that if we worked hard, there is always a good chance to succeed. I have been able to learn so much regarding the professional and practical knowledge in the tourism field. I also got to know Finland, Finnish people, culture and nature, and partly about Europe. For me, these last years have been really rich in terms of knowledge and experience. I can say that I have been well-prepared enough for the working life – wherever it might be. As for the long term in the future, I plan to start my own business in the tourism field. I believe that all the knowledge and experience that I have gained from this school will accompany my future career journey.

Dear all, at this special moment of my graduation day, I would like to send my most sincere and deepest gratitude to Finland, to Rovaniemi, to Lapland University of Applied Sciences, to all the wonderful and wholehearted teachers and perhaps to many more that I can't name here for all that they have done so that I can be here today and become as I am today. These past three and half years have been a wonderful and life-lasting journey for me. After graduation, I will not stay in Finland, but for the long future we never know. There is one thing that I am sure – Finland and Rovaniemi would always be in my heart. After my hometown in Vietnam, Rovaniemi is the second place where I feel home. I am very proud to have known this place, and I will continue to talk about this place to people that I know with a great pride and admiration.

Thank you once again for all. I wish you all a special day and a wonderful continuation. Kiitos!