

Letter from Drew Bridges
Kimberly-Clark Australia Scholarship Winner
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The year has gone by faster than I had expected. Days became hours and hours became minutes. I have learnt a lot of things from my experience. Lessons that you can not teach in school nor by another person. One of the main assets I have gained is I now speak Spanish fluently. I did want more time in Chile maybe another two months or so but in the end I would still have to say goodbye. The last three months of my intercultural experience were defiantly the best. It was summer, we were on school holidays and there was a lot we could do.

The weather in summer in Vina del Mar was almost a constant twenty-five degrees with sunny sky and no wind. Almost every evening I would go down to the jetty in front of my house and catch a bag full of mackerel. I didn't really like eating this particular fish I always gave it away to friends and family.



In the day time I was either shopping for presents for my family back in Australia, sight seeing or just relaxing in the beach. Unfortunately the water at the beach is extremely cold for South Australian standards. So I never really went swimming in the sea. Also the water was very polluted. I always went to the beach with my brother and our friends, the beaches in Vina were like nothing I have ever seen extremely over crowded no room to walk along the beach. We had to use the footpath along the side, Even that was over crowded.

On the weekends we usually did family things like a barbeque in the country or just a get together in my Grandmother's house. My Chilean family was huge and very loving; they always met up at least once a week, almost the whole family. I did alot of horse riding in the country in the summer holidays, that's something I have never done in Australia.

I had my school graduation in December I borrowed a shirt and a suit from my friend, and my girlfriend bought me an orange tie to match with her orange dress. I even got to dance with my host mum for my graduation.



I spent New Year's out on a boat in the Harbour of Valparaiso. We had a spectacular view of the fire works. The fire works went on for half an hour and they were said to be one of the biggest on the world.

Eventually I had my bags packed and I was getting on that plane. It was the hardest thing I have ever done to say goodbye to my family, friends and my girlfriend. This experience has changed my life I know have a different out look on the world, I now except different things alot easier and faster than before.

I'd just like to thank AFS for this awesome experience. It is defiantly worth every bit of it.

Yours sincerely

Drew Bridges