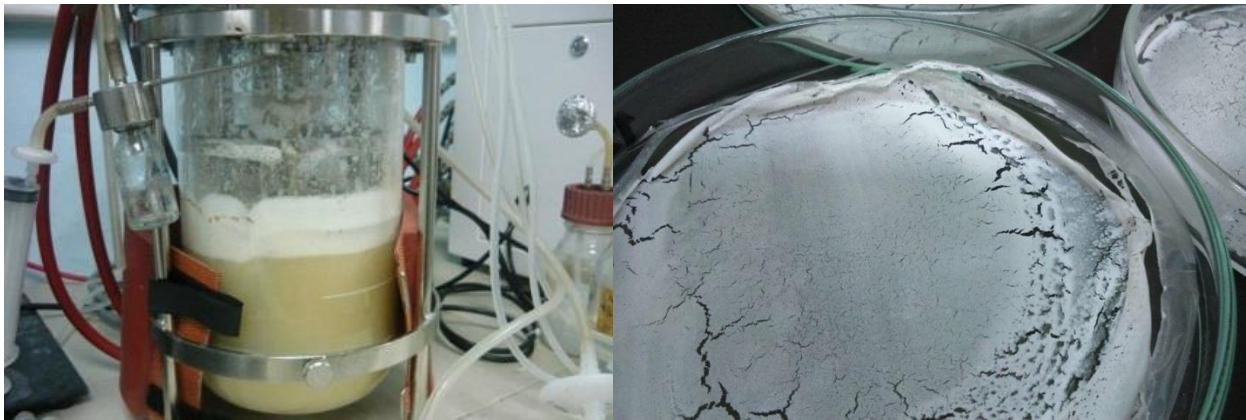


Nguyen Dan Van - Khon Kaen University - Thailand

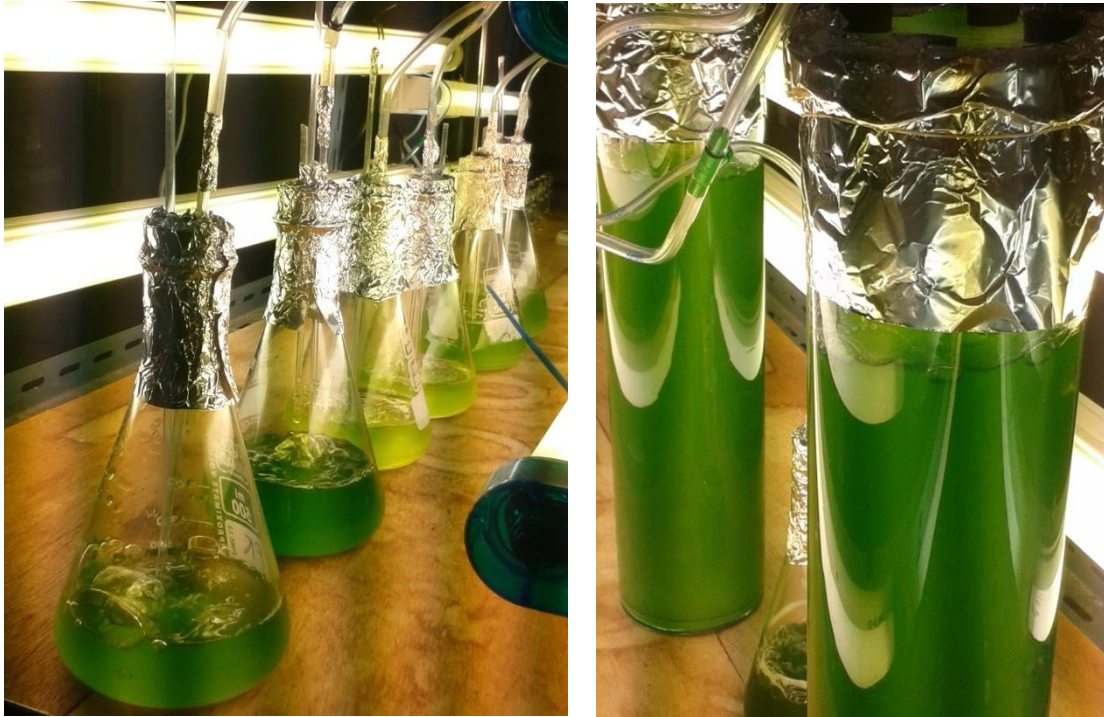
As you choose for studying abroad, it means you have just turned your life into new direction with a lot of surprising doors! For me, some doors have opened while the rest still close with me, but I think it is enough interesting things for me to share with you about my life in such a new country after nearly 7 months!

My name is Nguyen Dan Van and I was a student of the advanced program of Biotechnology, course 33 at Biotechnology Research and Development Institute. Now I am pursuing Master Degree at Faculty of Technology, Khon Kaen University, one of the biggest universities of Thailand. The faculty I am studying consists of 4 main departments: Geotechnology, Production technology, Food technology and Biotechnology. Following my bachelor thesis, I chose to continuously work with microalgae and biodiesel in Biotechnology department. The greatest research aspects of this department are fermented foods, ethanol production and renewable energies. Furthermore, in the laboratory I am working, there are outstanding researches of graduated students related to polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHA) – such linear polyesters produced in nature by bacterial fermentation of sugar or lipids – used in the production of bioplastic. Molecular techniques, especially cloning techniques and transgenic engineering, are also in study by staff members, graduated and under-graduated students.



Fermentation process and PHA product

Moving back on my thesis, the topic strongly focuses on the co-immobilization technique using for microalgae. Thanks to the previous researches in this department, I acquired important insights about microalgae and immobilization and have been supported as many equipment as I need.



Growing up scale microalgae

Beside study time, I also took part in sport days organized by Biotechnology department and faculty of Technology. It is one of the best ways to keep me healthier and stronger



Playing volleyball and football

Moreover, I had chance to visit some of famous places in Thailand such as Nong Khai, Chiangrai and also Northeastern mountain of Thailand. As taking part in these trips, not only did I study much about language, culture and special foods of Thailand, but also I had more time to do social activities for supporting children and poor people living in mountain. Moreover, trips gave great opportunities for me to make friends and practice my English speaking skill.



Field trip to Chiangrai with teachers and under-graduated students



Children living in the Northeastern mountain of Thailand



Offering new bags to children and repainting the swing

During 7 months in a new country, not only did happiness come to my life but also some challenges in study, cultural differences and especially home sickness were introduced to me. Thanks to these challenges, I have grown up thinking and created my own journey with a lot of beautiful memories that, I think, will make my life more wonderful.

Writer and pictures: Dan Van