

FROSH WEEK ROCKS

Engineering student shares her experiences and enthusiasm

BY HUDA IDREES

Before school even started, I was faced with the dilemma of whether I should attend Frosh Week or not. On my blog, I remember saying I purchased the ticket, right after I listed reasons I shouldn't — but right now, I want to say this to every person who might be thinking of going to the University of Toronto: if you're an engineering student — DO FROSH! It honestly is the best week ever!

On Sept. 2, we printed out our tickets at FedEx Kinko's (which is right around the corner from me) and headed off to Con Hall. Approximately 1,300 first years were enrolled into the engineering disciplines at the U of T St. George campus. And these 1,300 people were divided into 14 groups named after the Greek alphabet. And I must say, no matter how mushy or clichéd it sounds: that the group I was in was like the neatest, coolest, funnest little group ever. What was it, you may ask? Kappa.

So on Sept. 2, 2008 I was officially made a Kappa and according to our Frosh website, Kappa is Kommitment and Kappa is Kourage and I honestly did enjoy every single nanosecond of the time I spent with my Frosh leaders and everybody in my group. No, I did not go for the full body dye but I did dye my arms and parts of my face. For those of you who don't know: purple dye signifies Skule Spirit. The more purple you are, the more spirited you are known to be!

We started off with cheers outside Con Hall on King's College Road and learned the Kappa cheer — something I couldn't get out of my head for days! I absolutely loved all of my Frosh leaders, from the head leader, who reminded me of Casper the friendly ghost, to all the helpers whom I cannot remember the names of — they might not know it but they made me belong! Belong to a community I was apprehensive to approach. They made me feel like I was part of them, and that's saying something!

Proceeding into Con Hall, we were taught how to protect our hardhats from the evil Artsies and we heard brief speeches from our Head of Frosh year, the president of the Engineering Society and various other prestigious speakers that I'm honoured to have heard. And I know what most of you might be thinking: she'll hate them all once school actually starts. Well, I have one thing to say to you all, I won't be starting school, since its officially known as "Skule" here at the engineering faculty. And yes, I might hate it and pull all-nighters once in a while, but I will always feel very lucky to be part of such a diverse student body that brings together people from 160 different



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countries in the world.

Frosh Week took us from campus tours and dye stations (there was actually a kid in my group who dyed his teeth purple. You read that right: teeth!) to the picture session where all the students were arranged on school grounds, our seating arrangements made to look like 1T2, since we're the class of 2012. No one knows how the picture turns out till we get the Skule book.

Speaking of Skule, we got our Frosh kits when we entered Con Hall. And it never really stopped surprising us! Included in it were two T-shirts (one of which I was very quick to don), a USB storage device, key ring, water bottle, agendas, a copy of the *Toike Oike* (engineering student-run newspaper) and so much more! And I know it felt like such a huge amount when I was paying for it, but it was honestly worth it! Even if I starve for the next month or so due to financial deficiency, I will never regret paying that money for this oh-so-memorable week!

We then proceeded to parade around the streets of downtown Toronto, blocked roads, jeered at the Ryerson students on their own campus, cheered random people on the streets and what not! Being in that parade was a lifetime experience, but I know I would love to be a spectator someday and look at a parade of engineering students dyed purple and wearing yellow T-shirts and hardhats walking around and stopping traffic! We even went through the Eaton Centre, got told off for being way too many people at one point and then chanted, "Eaton Centre sucks!" while we exited.

The next part was probably the most fun I've ever really had. Accompanied

by two newly made friends, I exchanged my Merrel's for flip-flops found in my Frosh kit and walked right into the Nathan Philips Square's fountain. And although my flip-flops broke and I don't even know where they are, I had the best time in a really long time as people doused me with cold water from head to toe. And yes, I probably couldn't breathe for a while but it was all worth it! And when I walked into my residence, people stared at me like I was crazy since I was dripping from head to toe but they had no idea what they had missed out on. And all those times I thought about going back on my decision to pick engineering paid off. All of it. At that point in time, when I had donned my precious yellow hard hat, dyed myself purple and put on a fresh Frosh shirt and paraded around with 1,300 students who looked just like me — I didn't want to be part of any other faculty at any other university or in any other city. I would gladly exchange a Harvard position for this very thing. Honestly ...

The second day of Frosh landed us on the Yonge and Dundas "scramble" intersection. We pretty much stuck around for three hours, asking people to donate money for a certain children's foundation that our university supports. So there I was, hard hat in front, with my mouth bone-dry, persuading people to "spare some change" as "every little bit helps." We would go up to cars at the red traffic signal, ask for change, target all the posh cars and men in suits — all for one cause. Just being part of that group was such a bonding experience. Granted, this was the second day we were with each other and I was still calling that kid in the white shirt in front of me "the

purple-teeth kid," but we were all in this together and we were loving it.

When the signal would go red, six of us would run and make a pyramid smack in the middle of the intersection. I wasn't one of those six ever, since I am mortally terrified of street cars and moving cars in general — so I have a very high level of respect for those kids who put their lives in danger doing this. It was done to gain the attention of the crowd and collect more donations than any other group on all the other major intersection in the GTA. We went to the extremes of strapping two of our group members to poles on the sidewalk and called them "the floating people" — you just had to be there to appreciate the level of funny that was! People gave hugs in exchange for donations and pretty much everything else. This whole process was known as the Charity Buskerfest and it honestly tested us to our limits. I was fasting, so I couldn't even replenish my body's water storage! Yep, quite a challenge, I know.

Everything I mentioned above doesn't begin to cover everything we did during Frosh Week, but those are some of the highlights. If I were to talk about every event in detail, I'd go on forever! Anyway, lectures have begun and the mechanics prof is already a favourite of most — in my class at least! I'm just hoping to be able to keep up with everything I've committed to and Skule. All I want is to be able to absorb all that I can without overdoing it and pass with flying colours!

Wish me luck!

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