



TWO NIU UNDERGRADUATES LEARNED THE MALAY LANGUAGE AT UMP

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Two undergraduates from Northern Illinois University (NIU) in the US - Matthew Ropp, 21, and Derek Koegel, 22, were so proud to be able to speak better Malay after undergoing a six-week Malay Language programme for international students (BMfIS) that focused on authentic communication.

The programme was managed by Modern Language and Human Sciences since May 28, 2012.

According to the centre's dean Professor Dr Abdul Jalil Borham, the programme was the second held after it was introduced last year and it emphasised on authentic elements.

He said the teaching and learning resources were those already commonly used by local people in going about with their daily lives.

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as the people are multi-racial, multi-religion and multi-cultural.

"The participants are also taught about more challenging topics such as the automotive industry, history on local warriors and the formation of Malaysia after British colonisation," he said before presenting certificates to participants who had completed the programme at UMP Chancellery banquet hall in Gambang on July 6, 2012.

He added that the programme gave the opportunity to UMP undergraduates to share ideas and cultures as well as promoting the university, globally.

He hoped that programmes such as this, which was a result of cordial cooperation between UMP and NIU, could be continued in the future.

Mathew described the learning process as fun for him and his friend, Derek, for they had the opportunity to learn about Malay wedding in Penang and visited former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's home in Kedah.

Mathew lived with an adopted family in Felda Lepar and it gave him the opportunity to mix with locals.

He also took part in 'kenduri' activities and celebrations as well as farming activities.

Derek said the experience in meeting and talking with many people had helped towards improving his communication level more effectively.

The team who had developed the programme and searched the materials comprised NIU Professor James T. Collins and three of the centre's academic staff - lecturers Dr Nik Aloesnita Nik Mohd Alwi, Dr Zailin Shah Yusof and language teacher Siti Muslihah Isnain.

They were assisted by five facilitators.