

PRESS RELEASE



CÉGEP
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Students from France take part in a Vanier College Business Administration International Exchange Program

It was with a heavy heart that students who had spent the autumn at Vanier College, left Montreal in December 2007 to return home to France. Over the past three years Vanier College's Business Administration program, in partnership with Cégep André-Laurendeau, has welcomed eighty-five students from France to complete a bilingual exchange.

This year, thirty-two visiting students came to Montreal to study business from a North American perspective. They studied Leadership and Team Management, Human Resources Management and Purchasing and Inventory Management at Vanier College and took four other courses at Cégep André-Laurendeau. The visitors came from various regions of France such as Troyes, Montbeliard, Belfort, Evry, Grenoble, Chambéry, Le Havre, Reims, and Paris, where they attend one of Vanier's partner IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie) schools.

The exchange has enriched the classroom environment and given Vanier students a different look at the business world, while the Canadian cultural and academic experience has provided a fresh approach to learning for the visiting students.

"Our hands-on, team-building activities in Leadership class present the exchange students with a radical new model of teaching and learning," comments George Dracopoulos, Vanier International Business Exchange Coordinator. The visiting students agree, "It was very interesting to discover a new teaching method. The organization and the course concepts are really different from our experience in France," says one visitor, while another one adds, "We discovered another culture which was very welcoming. Vanier was great; the teachers are more involved and are close to the students here."

As part of last year's exchange, three Vanier Business Administration students went to Montbeliard, France for two-month long internships with multinational corporations and not-for-profit organizations. To meet the growing demand from Vanier Business Administration students, the program will expand in 2008 and six Vanier students will go to France. In the near future, students will also have the opportunity to complete a semester abroad at one of our partner institutions.



“Vanier students return from their internships in France with a new sense of confidence and independence,” says George Dracopoulos. “They earn valuable international experience, make new contacts and learn to work under a different, usually more rigid, organizational structure.” As for the French students, for some the experience is life-changing. “I don’t want to leave Montreal and Vanier,” says Florian Leroy from Troyes. “I’m spending the best days of my life here, and the hockey culture is phenomenal.”

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