

Opening Power to Diversity



Mandy Lau

Placed with Eamon O’Cuiv TD from September 2012 to March 2013

Biography

Mandy Lau moved from Hong Kong 23 years ago and is now a naturalised Irish Citizen. Fluent in English, Cantonese, and Mandarin she volunteers as an interpreter with Crosscare Migrant Project. Mandy also teaches English to members of the Chinese community in Ireland via the Chinese Gospel Church in Dublin. Mandy has a degree in Political Science and Business Management for Trinity College Dublin. She has extensive business experience and is currently the manager of her family run restaurant in Kildare. Mandy believes that there is a need for greater involvement of migrants in the political sphere and her ultimate goal is to promote the participation and integration of the Chinese community in Irish society.

Diary

“From the bottom of my heart, I feel so proud and so lucky that I am one of the chosen ones. I am really looking forward to the rest of my internship with Deputy O’Cuiv.”

First of all, I would like to say there are no words to express how grateful I am to be part of the OPD programme, and it is my honour to be able to shadow Deputy Eamon O’Cuiv the West Galway TD and also the spokesperson on Agriculture Policy for Fianna Fail. It is my privilege and honour to have a chance to follow him everywhere he goes!!! It’s only the fourth week of the programme, but I have already found the experience to date inside Leinster house with Deputy O’Cuiv to be very exciting and beneficial.

I was very impressed by the other team members on the very first day of my arrival. I met Kevin, Eoin and Patricia. They are full of energy, smart, very friendly and kind, and full of experiences. They have all made

me feel really welcome!

My schedule for the first four weeks with Deputy O'Cuiv was quite intensive. As a spokesperson for Agriculture Policy, Deputy O'Cuiv was responsible for organising the Ploughing Championship in Wexford. I not only had the opportunity to attend with him, I also had the opportunity to see him being interviewed by many different media outlets both local and national. In one of the main interviews, he was asked by an RTE presenter to discuss a few popular topics such as the Septic tank issue and the McCarthy's family issue with a few other TDs from opposition parties. It was very interesting and exciting.

As an intern, I have the opportunity to attend various meetings and conferences with him or on behalf of Deputy O'Cuiv. During these meetings, I am not only able to receive first-hand information on new government policy; I am also filled with plenty of new knowledge. Sometimes I am touched by the different real-life testimonies I witness. I also had an opportunity to attend the Leaders Questions section at the Dail; it was just like what I have seen on TV. It was eye opening. I am also responsible for some administration work like filing, conducting research and readings. I am also amazed and shocked by his crazy schedule and answering thousands of phone calls every day from people with different problems.

I am impressed not just by Deputy O'Cuiv's family background and his popularity, it is his knowledge and his past experiences as a former Minister of so many different governmental departments that really blew me away! Every conversation between us is very insightful and valuable. We share our thoughts on politics, it's just fantastic!!

I also greatly appreciate his kindness, his willingness to teach, and his encouragement. Since working with Deputy O'Cuiv, he has changed my preconceptions of Irish Politicians completely. Irish politician are hard-working, helpful and approachable.

From the bottom of my heart, I feel so proud and so lucky that I am one of the chosen ones. I am really looking forward to the rest of my internship with Deputy O'Cuiv and I am willing to learn and I am happy to assist him in every way!!



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