

Arya Widia Putra

**Universiti Teknologi
Malaysia, Malaya**

Informatics- Batch 2020

aryawidiaputra2002@gmail.com

The Unexpectedly Warm Journey

I chose UTM mainly because the courses given were in line with my current major. Interacting with the locals and exploring the culture was not what I thought I would do so excitedly when going there. It turns out that I had a great time getting to know the locals and their culture.

There were many exciting, unforgettable experiences. My IISMA friends and I interacted with the local food vendors like we had known each other for many years. They asked about what we wanted to drink or eat like we were relatives. It makes me feel more welcomed! Other than that, I like to travel to Johor Baru. I recall being amazed by the diversity of cultures and religions in the area, evident from the variety of places of worship there.

My journey was not all sunshine, though. I contracted COVID-19 and had to spend a week in quarantine. I was tested and given medicine for free by the university medical center. Fortunately, my fellow IISMA awardees were always there to help me buy food and medication. They also helped me to catch up with the academic materials. It wasn't a pleasant experience, but the support made it less stressful!



In short, my IISMA experience has allowed me to experience the warmth of the people in the country I visited. It has given me a new perspective on the country. Although I encountered several issues, support from fellow IISMA awardees and the campus resources helped me to resolve them.

