Everyone belongs to many different communities and/or groups defined by (among other things) shared geography, religion, ethnicity, income, cuisine, interest, race, ideology, or intellectual heritage. Choose one of the communities to which you belong, and describe that community and your place within it. (max 1500 characters)

As an incoming freshman at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), I joined my first community: PPIT, an Indonesian Students’ Association in China. Its close-knit community helped me feel comfortable despite the challenges presented during the pandemic. Although we have never physically met in person, I’ve always felt that they’re always there for me emotionally. Every night, our vastly diverse community members would share bits and pieces of our cultures through video calls.

For instance, we’d share the bizarre foods and unusual local festivals that each region has. Some of our members come from cities that I’ve never even been to or heard of. Despite the differences in accents and habits of this multicultural community, a feeling of unity is always felt whenever we e-gather daily, making them just like my family. Because of this, I became so immersed in the diverse Indonesian culture. This made me want to show off our diversity to the world. Thus, I volunteered to lead in marketing PPIT’s e-cultural events in CUHK.

My first task is to understand the CUHK community and how we can penetrate into their minds, which led me to the toxic 996 work culture in China: working from 9 am to 9 pm 6 days a week. Realizing this could be a penetration point, I leveraged Indonesia’s harmonious, chill, and socially-invested work culture. It worked well! Our first media campaign for our first 2022 cultural event was a success, garnering many positive feedbacks.

The deeper understanding of Indonesian culture through my second family, PPIT, confirmed my aspiration in cultural advocacy. When I transfer to UMich, I will continue to become an advocate not only of Indonesian culture, but also of other cultures.