McMaster Trip ECE Capstone

I really did enjoy going to McMasters Capstone Expo. I felt that we saw the university students at a time when they were not to stresses. Everyone seemed calm and happy and they were all very excited to explain their projects to us. The group that I spoke with used pupil movements to control a remote control car. Their goal was to make a technology that could help kids with limited ability. I was really impressed with this group because I feel that even coming up with this idea could have been tricky. Especially since so many of the projects were about recycling and the environment. I really did like the fact that most of the university students admitted that coding wasn't their favourite nor was it something they were any good at. But they researched what they could and used their previous work experiences to complete their projects.

Most of the groups projects did surprise me, considering the fact that they were able to pull it off with little assistance from professors. I also liked how groups talked about each other having very different skills and each person used their skills to help complete the project. It did not scare me because everyone looked happy and excited to be their. They were not stressed or freaking out which usually scares me the most.

For all the questions that we asked to students they definitely had a lot to say. They also had many answers to the last question, 'What would you do differently if you could start over?' which made their presentations to us seem more realistic. They were never trying to show us how hard they worked and why they deserved a good mark on their project. But they were open about the entire process which I really appreciated.

When you say I need to learn the soft skills, to me that means people skills which include being able to communicate effectively. Soft skills can't be learned by studying a textbook or by memorizing what to do. One of the most important things that employers look for is if you can work well with other people. Meaning you participate, comprise, explain your ideas and listen to other people. To develop soft skills just takes practice. For the Capstone Expo, students could not just start explaining to me how they did it, but they had to explain to us what they actually did. Using soft skills you can explain your experience and expertise to anyone. The technical skills that the students have is how they completed their projects. Like which codes they used and how they connected their wires, and how they fixed their circuit board. If they only had technical skills, they would not be able to explain to me what they did.

In order to prepare for my final year capstone project, I would definitely start in first year by getting to know as many people as I could. There is no way any of these groups would have been able to pull off their projects if the were working by themselves. Finding many people that you work well with is extremely important. Second, I would pay attention to everything I learn. These students were using material they learned all throughout their university career and their work experiences. In University, they do not

study to get a good mark, but they study so that they can understand how things work and they add this new knowledge to the knowledge that they already have. Of course this is the complete opposite of how we learn in high school, because we study and do whatever we can to achieve the highest marks and averages possible. Our education system is not built for us to learn, but for us to pass. The third thing I would do is try to improve my working with others skills as best as I can. Sometimes, you can't always work with people that you like and that like you. Working with complicated people is a skill you need for life. Most of the groups that we talked to didn't have big arguments or disagreements, but there is always the possibility of that happening.