

30 STORIES OF SERVICE

JOINT JAPAN WORLD BANK Graduate Scholarship Program

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How has the JJWBGSP help you contribute to your country once you have completed your program?

Architecture and Urban Planning appeared to me once I was talking to my dad how I could make a living through my hobby: drawing. [...] I grew up in Brazil, a country with a lot of inequalities and social injustice. So I realized that through my profession I could contribute to make peoples' lives better. After finishing my studies and working for some time in the private market, I started working at the Social Housing Company of my city. Working there put me face to face with my city's urban problems, slums and poorness. But I could finally use my knowledge to improve my city's development. A couple of years later, I was invited to work at the Institute for Research and Urban Planning of Curitiba, developing solutions for the city's mobility issues, mainly the public transportation. Throughout the last six years, I worked in social and urban projects that made difference in the lives of many people from my country. For me, working in public sector applying my knowledge to further development of society is gratifying.

Why do you think you were awarded a JJWBGSP scholarship?

I believe I was awarded because of my commitment to my country's development, expressed in my work experience and continuous willing to improve, to learn more. Maybe it was because I realized that in order to do more, I needed to learn more from the world, from other realities. In order to be more creative and develop innovative solutions, it is necessary to step aside



a little to open your mind and exercise thinking outside the box. I think that that's what JJWBGSP looks for. People that are willing to study and improve to make a difference for a better world.

Thus far, what has been the most rewarding and challenging part of your study abroad experience?

I think that the most rewarding part of my study until now is the contact and culture exchanging. Besides the experts I am learning from, I got to know people who work with urban development from all over the world. These people come from different countries, realities, legal frameworks and also different fields of work! There are architects, engineers, social workers, economists, environmental professionals, social scientists and others. These exchanges give me new perspectives and show me new inputs! It really helps you see the world with a totally different eye, I would say, much more inclusively and comprehensively.



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The most challenging part, besides adapting to a new country and fighting the distance from home, is the program itself. It is very intense and complicated, demanding a lot of focus, persistence and self-organization. However, every step you complete from the course is extremely rewardable and gratifying.

How do you envision the JJWBGSP will help you contribute to your country once you have completed your program?

The Joint Japan World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program provided me an unique opportunity to come to Europe, to a different reality and study in one of the best Universities in the world related to Urban Management and Development. This opportunity put me in contact with experts in the area and is letting me learn from their real experiences and the most contemporary theory.

This will improve my skill set and my way of viewing development, enabling me to see creative solutions where I could not realize them before. I expect to be able to apply the tools I am learning in the development of my city and country, helping it to advance, overcome its challenges and diminish its inequalities. Moreover, the professors in the university of my city, with whom I keep contact, may benefit and help me to spread the knowledge I am acquiring to new generations of professionals.

Not only is the financial aid of the Government of Japan important, but knowing that I am being supported by such an important institution gives me even more energy and enthusiasm to experience the program at its most and then bring the knowledge to my country fieldwork.

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As a recent scholar, what advice would you offer to others who are considering applying for the JJWBGSP?

Prepare yourself far in advance, organize your information and work hard to express your expectations, your experience, your role in the development of your country. Have a defined goal, choose wisely your university, the country you want to learn from.

And most important for you and the world to move forward: believe in yourself and do not give up your dream!



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