

# 30 STORIES OF SERVICE

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## JOINT JAPAN WORLD BANK Graduate Scholarship Program

**MEET ROBERTO PRADO DE VASCONCELLOS, BRAZIL**  
LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS  
(2005), UNITED KINGDOM

**What motivated you to pursue a career in a development-related field?**

My passion for the legal profession and a strong willingness to challenge myself intellectually in ways I had not tried before. For lawyers, studying abroad helps you think outside the box and makes you feel more confident to deal with the constant changes in the law as it rapidly develops.

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

I have been able to pass on much of the international learning and skills in a profession many still believe to be mostly local. Brazil is in need of global professionals and the dynamic of the modern world and its economies makes people with international degrees and/or experience a must. Three years after receiving my degree from the London School of Economics, I further enhanced my international credentials and experience in the tax field by pursuing the international tax program at New York University School of Law. Today, I feel I am able to quickly spot issues and get comfortable in analyzing and understanding the increasing complexities in my practice. Hence, the amount of knowledge and experience I am able to share with others has only grown with time.

“ .....  
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**What was the most rewarding and challenging part of your study abroad experience?**

The most rewarding part was learning from the best how the English common law works. It was a privilege to be in a position to finally understand the hierarchy of the courts in England, the role caselaw current plays in the English legal system, and also be able to acquire from the best professors and lawyers in the UK a deep specialized knowledge of the law in the courses I registered.

The most challenging part was the need to getting very quickly used to reading many hundreds of pages of legal articles and law books every week about a legal system I had never been exposed to. Although it was challenging in the beginning it was also a great rewarding experience when you feel confident and comfortable in doing this so often.



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## **Why do you think you were awarded a JJWBGSP scholarship?**

I guess I matched many of the JJWBGSP requirements in my year by making my academic plans and professional goals following my graduation very sincere and clear.

## **What role did your family, friends, and/or employer played in your study abroad experience? How has this helped or hindered your journey?**

My family has always motivated me to broaden my horizons with international legal education. Thus, I have always had their full and unconditional support and was never hesitant before, during or after I finished my studies in London.

## **What did you learn about yourself during your experience?**

I learned that I love finding out the common tastes and personalities in people who were born and raised in environments completely different than the one where I was brought up. It is fascinating to meet other people from other parts of the world who share so many common traits with you. I believe that learning from so many different and interesting people (professors, colleagues etc) made me learn a lot about myself as well.

## **What was the best part about your university?**

The learning and the people I met. Once classes start, everything is new and you should never take anything for granted. Every year, the London School of Economics offers its current students opportunities to attend many amazing lectures from renowned people from all around the world. They go from former and current presidents, prime ministers, famous journalists to Nobel prize laureates. So much to learn from and so little time. The experience was very unique in many different ways. Additionally, some of the friends you make may last a lifetime.

## **As an alumnus, what advice would you offer to others who are considering applying for the JJWBGSP?**

Study the program requirements with attention to every detail and think about how your academic and professional plans can match the JJWBGSP goals. Sometimes, this will not come immediately to you and it may require you to pause for a moment to think about how to prepare a powerful application. You should only complete the JJWBGSP application form after careful consideration and when you can clearly see how your plans and values will match the program's goals and values.

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