

ALUMNI VOICE



Otchere, Gilbert Onesimus



GSIR(IDP) / Class of 2013 /
Organization : Ministry of Finance and
Economic Planning, Government of Ghana



Short Career

I studied at the University of Ghana in Accra. I then had the opportunity to serve as a national service person in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in Accra (now Ministry of Finance). Later on, I was moved to the Economic Planning Division (now Real Sector Division). In 2011, I gained admission into International University of Japan (IUJ). After IUJ, I have been working on agriculture, agribusiness, extractive industries transparency initiative, and economic policy analyses in the Real Sector Division of the Ministry.

Why IUJ and IDP ?

Dr. Suzuki of JICA had a good idea of the best universities in Japan which could serve my interest as economic policy analyst in the Ministry of Finance. According to him, IUJ was a place of serious business but with limited city life. Thus, he wanted me (us) to marry my (our) books throughout my (our)

stay in Japan without compromising on my (our) social life. In fact, a scan through the program showed that IDP (International Development Program) had all that I wanted to read to become one of the top economists in Ghana, Africa and the world. I was particularly enthused with the university's slogan: IUJ – Where The World Gathers. Thus, I was going to meet students from different countries even in the same classroom which had been a dream for me. Besides, there were some IUJ (IDP) alumni in the Ministry of Finance and elsewhere in Ghana's public service who were doing extremely well. Hearing of and meeting some of them gave me a great focus and confidence to join IUJ. I have never regretted studying in IUJ. You need to try it too!

Memorable IUJ

The IUJ Faculty were very encouraging and supportive. Though academic life was important, they also stressed on having a good social life while in IUJ and Japan. The faculty was ready to assist students anytime. At least, their credentials alone motivated me to learn hard to become like them one day. Though most of them were Japanese, they had great common on the English language because most of them had schooled in top universities in USA and UK. The patience with which they impacted knowledge was almost utopian. Thus, all students were able to follow through even the difficult subjects in IDP and other programs such as PMPP, MBA and E-Biz.

Present Post

The IDP offered me a lot of exposure to theories and practice of economics and economic policy. I am able to understand the complexities of economic management in which government strives to lift people out of poverty, grow or expand the economy, maintain a stable macro economy, and serene environment for private investment in Ghana. Many variables in the real sector (in which I have been working), monetary sector, financial sector and external sector work together to achieve the above-mentioned government development goals, among others. With the knowledge obtained from IUJ, I can contribute effectively to the kind and level of public investment as well as policies required in the agriculture sector to support especially smallholder farmers to produce more to feed our country and export. With this, they can have a better livelihood while contributing to economic growth. With my aspiration to become a renowned economist, IUJ has been a great school to be. Again, the cultural exposure in IUJ made to develop a good personal and working life which is critical elements to my personal development.

Short Career

My career prior to IUJ was in the non-profit sector. I had spent some time working in a youth-run organization called Grow 2 Lead as well as a non-profit based in the U.S called Catholic Charities of the East Bay.

Why IUJ and IRP ?

My decision to come to IUJ was rooted in the cultural diversity that the university provided. I chose the GSIR program and IRP because of my desire to learn and understand International Relations especially in this interconnected world we live in. IUJ had one of the best programs in terms of the courses available as well as an opportunity to learn and discover how different people from different countries think.

Memorable IUJ

Throughout my IUJ life every lecture and class debate has been memorable. It is hard to choose just one lecture. The professors have all encouraged us to go beyond what we read and see and challenged our opinions and beliefs. Every class has been a challenge and moment to expand my knowledge and understanding both about what I am learning as well as why I think the way that I do.

What experiences and knowledge at IUJ are important to you now ?

The experiences that are most important to me are the discussions and interactions that we have both in and out of class. Having served in the GSIR Council I was constantly trying to interact with students both in an academic and non-academic environment to learn how they think and the experiences they are having. It has been incredible discovering how our backgrounds and cultural identity forms so much of who we are and how different yet so similar we all are.

Message for future IUJ students

My message for future IUJ students is to seize the opportunity and remain open minded. This is the only university in the world where you are able to "travel the world" without physically going anywhere. The people you meet and the network you will have is unique to IUJ so seize the moment and go beyond your comfort zone, you will not regret it.

The professors will provide you with all the support you need to make it in the challenging environment of IUJ. The standards, quality and level of excellence required of you will only push you to give your ultimate best in everything you do. You cannot enter IUJ and leave the same, everyone will leave an indelible mark in your life and change it for the better.



Nzima, Buyisile Zinhle
GSIR(IRP) / Class of 2018 /



New Graduate



Kipkoech, Robin Pik
GSIM(MBA) / Class of 2016 /
Organization : NEC Africa



Short Career

I was in Strathmore University, in Nairobi Kenya.
Job after IUJ - NEC Africa.

Why IUJ and MBA ?

IUJ was quite diverse; I wanted to meet people from different parts of the world, interact and learn new things both intellectually and culturally. The program was quite aligned with my objectives and goals in the future. I did a MBA, and its curriculum and courses presented a chance to learn different ways of thinking, business wise and also technologically.

I strive for access to success; IUJ presented access to an environment where I would learn of many success stories from people all over the world; This to me, serves as a motivation, and a way to work hard to achieve success in whichever field I get into in my carrier path.

Memorable IUJ

IT project management lecture; we spoke of technology regarding Africa Sea Ports , and specifically Kenya - 2 years later, I got a chance to work at the Kenya Ports, IT related work.

Niigata; a very beautiful place, it is not a big city but the scenery is something worth experiencing. I don't miss Winter season at IUJ hahaha :) but I miss snowboarding.

Present Post

I work in a Japanese company and the meeting Japanese people in IUJ helped me to understand some important Japanese work ethics.

The MBA course at IUJ had very intuitive courses such as strategic management, negotiation strategies, project management among others. Such knowledge learnt through interactive lessons not only helped me to apply it at work but also in my real life situations. My skills at negotiating on a day to day basis have improved; Reasoning before any decision I make has also improved as I can think based on knowledge I learnt during my time at IUJ.

Moreover, I work in a Japanese company, and the fact that I met Japanese people in IUJ helped me to understand some important Japanese work ethics. For instance, it was quite easy for me to fit into NEC since I had already learnt the customary code of polite behavior in my Japanese companies or among members of a particular profession or group.

Most important of all, I learnt that that 'All work and No play makes Jack a dull boy' - It is always good to know when to work and when to relax; stress is a thing that can lead into depression, and one needs to unwind, relax and rest. This is a thing not taught in IUJ courses, but taught in the IUJ nature and environment.

Short Career

Before joining IUJ, I was working for Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Senegal, as a program assistant. I recall the Japan Embassy calling me for an interview as I applied for a scholarship months earlier. Senegal is a developing country where the Japanese has been supporting the population through education program, health and many other activities... It is under the education program that I have been selected. After the interview, the person in charge of the cultural affairs contacted me and said we have selected IUJ for you. IUJ?! Okay, let's look at their website. Now, I am working as a Procurement assistant in another international agency; thanks to the cultural exposure I had while studying in IUJ. Furthermore, I have been well prepared to work in a multicultural environment.

Why IUJ and MBA ?

Back to IUJ website, the curriculum and nature attracted me so much. I am a person who likes challenges and studying in Japan was a big shift in career as I was leaving the security of a job well paid for uncertainty. However, the MBA program was right program for me: robust modules with topics new to me. The fact that the entire program was taught in English was also non-negligible as I come from a French speaking country. Definitely, I cannot tell whether I chose IUJ or IUJ chose me; but it was the best decision could have taken at that time.

Memorable IUJ

I have met nice people from everywhere. I met brothers and sisters for life, since they were the only family I had while in Japan. As all students, we were ready for all adventures and eager to discover the Japanese culture from restaurants, to sake plants, not to mention our dearest ice-cream place, the hot springs, the snow festivals; the Indian ,Cambodian, Indonesian nights to name a few ..., and the simple leisure of biking through the mountains to smell the fresh sakura perfume of rejuvenating nature after winter.

I encourage my French speaking folks to study in IUJ. It's natural Japan, traditional and modern Japan, it's culturally colorful Japan, it's high standards quality studies, it's life changing!

After IUJ, be ready to come back to your country well prepared to engage in challenging development issues, and create a better living for your people, for Africa.

Present Post

In my job right now I know how to interact with people from different background and respect cultural boundaries. IUJ MBA program has not only modeled highly professional students but leaders with high emotional quotient. In work today I communicate mainly in English, on top of the abilities to provide valuable advises related to Business and market analysis. Nonetheless, sport, yoga and meditation at IUJ have trained me to be a resilient professional and a calm person.



Dos Santos, Marie Helene

GSIM(MBA) / Class of 2012 /
Organization: Amsa Assurance



Company in SENEGAL