

30 STORIES OF SERVICE

JOINT JAPAN / WORLD BANK Graduate Scholarship Program

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

Time inconsistency is inseparable part and the main reason of public policy failures in every and specifically developing countries. It is either too good to worry about policy reforms or too bad and “not the right time” to design and implement them. Economic policy in developing countries is mostly by more short-term goals yet lacking institutionalization. Development of public institutions and structural reforms in economy are the key factors to succeed in transforming their growth models into more sustainable one. 2020 forced the globe to rethink its actions and pushed everyone with pursuit of change-making and improvement to rethink their role in the latter. I was not an exception either. I quickly realized that the enthusiasts should do much needed strategic structural reforms in Armenia, at the same time, taking into consideration the fact that those reforms require stable macroeconomic environment at first place.

What has been the most rewarding and challenging parts of your study abroad experience?

I want to emphasize numerous factors that I found rewarding when choosing the MPA in Economic Policy Management at Columbia University. The combination of analytical techniques, policy analysis and the opinions of leading academics in the areas of public policies and macroeconomic management are among them. Furthermore, studies of international aspects of public policies provide an opportunity to get insights and best examples of other emerging and developing countries, as well as their policy reforms, success stories and failures. What I find the most rewarding, is people you meet during the time of your studies. This is not only about professional network that you will be able to always rely on during your professional career, but also true friends that have been with you in the happiest, yet most challenging times of the studies.

How will the scholarship help you to advance in your professional career?

I believe that education gained from Columbia University thanks to the JJWBGSP will add the missing part to my education and work experience to create fundamentals required for policy reforms in Armenia.

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

I would advise applicants to be honest both in their application and most importantly to themselves regarding their future plans and professional career paths. I guarantee that after having a clear picture of what their professional career will look like, they will be more confident in choosing the program and completing the application.