

2019 Re-inventing Japan Project ( Short-term )  
CIEP, International Students Summit, RJP Program

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The purpose for participating in this event were many, being possible to cite professional growth, knowledge gathering about agriculture in other countries, getting to know other cultures and make contacts/ friends from abroad. The professional growth that was intended to be gathered during the process came from the assumption that there were going to be several oral presentations for the most diverse public, so it would train my public speech (in which I considered myself to be weak at), my presentation anxiety and the way I present myself during presentations. I considered the event as an opportunity to try to be a more sociable person and really know how international presentations were, and if I was prepared for it.

The knowledge gathering about other cultures in the agriculture field is very important to have a more sustainable agriculture due to the many technologies that were created in the past years with the intention of making the production of food with the less pollution and nature degradation possible. The event would be an opportunity to know how other countries deal with the environment problem and, if possible, bring some new ideas to Brazil, and specially the Amazon, since the agricultural areas and sites are growing in extension, and a more sustainable approach is needed so the forest do not suffer in greater ways than it should.

Getting to know other cultures is ideal for when you are trying to grow as a professional and intending, in the future, to work on international levels. As the short term program would present me activities with the most diverse group of people of different nationalities, I thought it would be an excellent opportunity to know to behave in the presence of people that have another culture that it's not mine. Knowing how to respect different religions, beliefs and opinions is very important for anyone, even on a regional level, but when you travel abroad and really communicate with people with very different opinions comparing to yours, the knowledge you gain is immense on how to mingle with other communities that you are not used to mingle.

Making contacts and friends from abroad is a very unique way of growing on life, as a professional and as a person. Contacts on an international level could make some big projects possible, mixing knowledges from different countries and develop great strategies and technologies together. Friends (that are contacts too), represent the best of many international programs, in which bonds are made and people actively try to help each other and get to know their ideas and researches in a more profound way , and try, together, to make projects come to fruition, being wherever they are. I saw the program in which I participated as a way to bond with people and make friends that would help me as a professional and as a person

In the CIEP week, many activities were held in which my objectives participating in the program were met. About the professional growth, the whole preparation for the oral presentation about possible solutions for some very big problems in Japan and Southeast Asian countries, and the oral presentation itself were a very good way to prepare myself for some situations in the future. The presentations were prepared under a very small time and with little direction on what exactly to portray and it made us prepare our work very fast, and even though it was a high stress situation, many works came to fruition due to the use of the problem, objective and solution trees that made us really see the big picture of the agriculture in Asia. The high stress situation in which the presentation were made was very good way to train the students for future situation in a professional level.

The knowledge gathering and knowledge transferring during the CIEP week were very intense. The classes that were held in this week were very important to understand the agriculture, food, environment and agricultural education situations in Japan and nearby countries, making it possible to think of solutions for the problems presented and discuss with the many japanese

students that participated in the program about agriculture in Japan. In the field trips, however, we experienced both a traditional Japanese agriculture situation and a high technology facility with hydroponics and artificial light situation, providing us with the information on how to differentiate both of them, which technologies were used, how they were used, what is the planning when a natural disaster hits, how the production is affected and many other insights of the national production system. Both the classes and the field trips provided the foreign students with many ideas on how to use new technology on their countries and how they could help in the Japan situation, providing a way for different countries to really understand each other's problems and help themselves in a more efficient way.

About the getting to know other countries and making contacts and friends, CIEP helped with that in a maximum efficiency. The separation of groups since the beginning was a very smart way to make people of distinct nationalities interact with each other, and make friends from the very start. Working and having classes together was a great way for people to bond, creating the most solid connections in all of the programs in this event. During the CIEP week, it was clear that the people from the same groups were working together really efficiently, even during the field trips, this being a reflection of the optimal way the groups were handled by the organization party. The strategy of using at least 3 Japanese students per group was an excellent choice, considering that we had to do our presentation about the problems in Japan at the end of the program, and the NODAI students provided us with great insights about their nation and their perspective, really helping us to make the best work possible in a little amount of time. The final celebration and the receiving of the certificates was also a great way to bond between ourselves and try, to the best of our ability, to keep contact overseas.

The RJP Program happened on the Saturday after the CIEP week ended, and it was directed only to the Latin American participants who would present on the International Students Summit (Brazil, Peru and Mexico). The program granted us a considerable amount of knowledge about technologies on fertilizers and composts and then all of the students went on a trip to get to know the Japanese culture through some festivals and some temples. It was really fruitful for the people that were from the very other side of the world to understand how the Japanese culture is.

After the RJP Program, there was a free day, in which we could explore the city of Tokyo by ourselves, communicate with people and really experience the local culture.

In the ISS week, it was the most fruitful period for professional growth, due to the numerous presentations and discussions that were made. Everyone of the forty-four students of the twenty-seven countries that participated presented their work, either on powerpoint (oral presentation) or on poster (poster presentation) and then participated on a group discussion when all presenters of each group presented, and then, on Saturday, there was a conclusion discussion for each group. In each of the presentations, we got to experience an international layout on how to present ourselves, how to talk, how to deal with your insecurities on stage, and it was a sublime experience. The professional growth that was gained during this week will never be lost.

About the knowledge that was acquired during ISS, it was due, for the most part, to the watching of all of the presentations of all the students. Each student made a very good work based on their local problems, and it was very important to see and talk to each one of the presenters, so that any technology or program could be improved and/or be used and adapted to other nations.

In the ISS, before the final conclusion, each group had a reunion in which they discussed what was the situation of each country, what were the problems, the solutions and possible challenges for the solutions to be done correctly. Getting to know the inner challenges for each country in a very diverse nationalities environment made us have a good perspective of the agricultural and environment situation in the whole world, and helped us see that even though developed and underdeveloped countries, have very different problems, some issues can be found in all of them, and all of the students participating had a better understanding on what each part of the Earth is dealing with, and that may build a "gateway" to new partnerships and technologies.

In the first day of ISS, there was a field trip that showed us the Japanese traditional farming on high slope areas. This trip was on the day that we first saw all of the participants that were not on CIEP, but were on ISS, and it was a relaxing experience that we could share together and bond. However, due to the people not really knowing each other and having just one day to get to know

them, we could not form a more solid friendship or contact with almost all of the people that were not on CIEP. The groups that were formed during the CIEP week were a more united circle because of the time we spent together. In the little time of ISS we had, we could interact mostly with our group session participants and chairpersons, as we got to practice and discuss themes and opinions together.

In this program I could learn many things I would not otherwise. At first, in the CIEP week, I learned extensively about Japanese history and how the country developed itself through the years, which type of plants they cultivate, how they produce their plants, how they manage the insects, diseases and weeds, how they irrigate, what kind of products they use to fertilize the soil and make a good nutrition environment for plants in both traditional agriculture and modern agricultural situations. I've learned about the production of hydroponics in high technology organizations, and completely new and innovative methods of cultivating plants in these facilities. Other interesting things I've learned was how fruits like pears and apples were cultivated in Japan, how associations worked in this region and how natural disasters impact agricultural production. Natural disasters made us think a great deal about the whole situation of Asia we could secure more safety in agriculture.

In the classes of CIEP I learned many things regarding environment, education, agriculture, food and soil characterization in Japan. In this period of time I learned how exactly the natural disasters impact life on Japan, about the water usage in the region, about taste modifier and about the economy of agricultural products. These classes were very important to understand the current status of Japan in the farming business and to develop a final presentation that had as a finality, propose new solutions to problems in this country.

Regarding the choosing of the theme the groups would like to discuss, the elaboration of the problem, objective and solution trees and oral presentation of our solutions for some problems we thought were big impediments for a better farming situation in Japan: It was a great professional experience, considering we had little time and almost no previous knowledge of the subject we would like to discuss, so it made us really work hard towards the objective of presenting something good to the people that were advising us. The structuring of the trees were really great and they really made sense when searching for the purpose of our presentation and how it really would solve some problems that happen in the country.

In the ISS program I've learned about many of the projects from different nationalities from both the professors and their students, gathering all the knowledge I could about what might work in Brazil. From the presentation that happened on Thursday and Saturday and the rehearsals that happened in between, I've learned about how to socialize with different cultures and how to respect their beliefs in a more efficient way, besides, there was a great learning about how to present myself better during presentations, how to deal with pre presentation anxiety and how to speak better to a public.

The program shaped my career broadly mainly on the public speaking side. This event forced people to continuously develop their social skills, in presentations or even in informal conversation and, as a normally shy and introverted person, I felt very out of my comfort zone and I gained so much more space to grow professionally. Once I went back to Brazil, I felt the impact of the skills I have learned immediately due to the fact that I had two presentations on the day I went back to my university and my level of confidence in public speaking had changed dramatically. Now I feel prepared for more public roles in society, when before this program I did not.

The experience has prepared me to not only be more used to being in public, but to be able to communicate in international levels, and to represent my university and my country with respect, dignity and confidence. Now, if any opportunity appears to represent my country abroad or participate in any kind of event in another country, I would feel completely confident in my skills and abilities. This event shaped us, even in this little amount of time, in an international level, so we feel powerful enough that we can resonate with the most different people and distribute the most diverse knowledge to the people of our country.

The contacts and friendships that I made in the program were one of the best awards of the entire program, and, hopefully, we can all work together to a brighter and more sustainable future, uniting different ideas and solutions, and putting them to work for a good cause.

Regarding the suggestions to improve the program, there three big ones. The first is that there should be a better choosing of the people in the same dormitory, due to the fact that we should mingle more with people that do not have the same culture as us. My room was composed by one more brazilian and two mexicans, and since our cultures were very similar (we were all latin americans), the international exchange program could not work as efficiently as it could.

In the CIEP week, there should be more time for the people to do their presentation, so they do a better job at coming up with solutions. My group had two days from the making of the problem, objective and solutions trees to the oral presentation that was the conclusion of this first program, so it made us very stressed to have to make such a big project in such a small amount of time. Even though the high stress environment can make some people get better in public speaking, if the purpose of the presentations was to really try to solve problems, we would need more time and orientation to do so.

The last suggestion that I need to make is that there should be no concomitant sessions in the ISS. Many people attending the event wanted to see all of the presentations, and as there were two sessions happening at the same time, it was not possible.