

## My incredible experience in Yamagata

It is well known that learning another language can help us to understand better, not only people's different points of view, but also their traditions and customs, as well as increases our own way of thinking. I had that in mind when I decided to study at Yamagata University through the Double Triangle Program (DTP).

In September 2018, with a fairly basic knowledge of the language, but with a great desire to experience closely the lifestyle of a society so different and fascinating as the Japanese society, I travelled to Yamagata to begin one of the most incredible adventures I have ever had.



One year later, I can happily say that being part of Yamagata University's Double Triangle Program (DTP) has been, by far, one of the most enriching experiences of my life.

During that time, I had the opportunity to study not only courses related to my university career

(economics), but I also took classes in Japanese language and culture, which were very helpful in understanding more about the differences between Peru and Japan.

My stay in Yamagata was memorable from beginning to end: every day there was something new to learn and I was always more surprised about Japan. Starting with public safety and respect between people, or greetings and punctuality, all of this allowed me to compare and get to know much better the reality and problems of my country.

Since Yamagata is a rural city, it was very difficult to find people who spoke Spanish and even English. This allowed me to put into practice the Japanese I was learning in class. I was also able to witness the daily life of a traditional Japanese citizen, as well as the customs of the Tohoku area. Similarly, I had the opportunity to visit other Japanese cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Hiroshima, among others. I was able to fulfill a dream I had since I was a child: to know the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. I was dazzled to see historical places which are so important for the world's history.





As a student at Yamagata University, I was able to take courses not only related to economics (eg. environmental economics, mathematics for economists, among others); I was also able to take classes like shodo or Japanese calligraphy, Japanese society and culture, gastronomy, the traditional art of tamasudare, and kokeshi doll making.

Regarding my economics classes, I learnt more about the

opinions of professors and students about the economic problems, both in Japan and in other countries. At the same time, I was able to expose the main problems of my country such as illegal mining, pollution and other issues, so I could analyze, with the help of my classmates, the effects on the Peruvian economy.

At the same time, I had the opportunity to do an internship in a software-making company, located in Yamagata, where I could learn more about business management in Japan, the lifestyle of a worker and the functions they perform, as well as interact with the members of the company and learn more about their experiences.

These classes and internship have definitely helped me to broad my knowledge of economics and get a clearer idea of how economics students learn in Japan.

Thanks to the Japanese culture class, I was able to participate twice in the final concert where I represented my country by dancing Peruvian traditional dances. It was an unforgettable and fun experience that I will remember forever.

Similarly, I was able to make friends both Japanese and from other countries, with whom I lived incredible experiences that helped me to prove that no matter where you come from or your cultural, ideological, religious differences, etc.: friendship and respect are the most fundamental thing, thus forming interpersonal relationships that not only help you grow as a person, but allow you to see your reality from another angle, eliminating existing stereotypes or prejudices that "make us different" and learn that we are all equal and deserve the same treatment. All this, attained thanks to the daily coexistence and the common interest to learn a language.



As it was the first time I had travelled alone to another country, this exchange was an excellent opportunity to grow not only academically, but also as a person.

That's why every moment spent in Japan, especially in Yamagata, has made me have a special feeling for Japan, its culture and the wonderful people I met there. I have very good memories that I will never forget.

I want to thank everyone who made this dream come true and always supported me unconditionally.

To my parents, sister, family, friends and DTP members, **THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**

皆さんへ

本当にありがとうございました。

