

## Scholarship Report of 1st year at Harvard Business School

After three years of consulting with BCG and one year with the World Food Programme in Laos, I started my first year at HBS in September 2010. My main motivation for coming to HBS was to further strengthen my leadership skills, to determine the next steps towards my long-term career vision and to meet new inspiring individuals. After having completed my first year, I am convinced that HBS is the ideal place to achieve all three of these objectives.

The case method proved to be a powerful tool to further strengthen my leadership skills. Training on a daily basis to quickly aggregate and interpret information, form an opinion, and defend that opinion in front of an excellent professor and 90 talented individuals was enormously helpful to systematically increase one's ability to "know what the right thing to do is and have the determination to do it" (as one of my professors defined leadership). Further, the school's strong emphasis on values and making a difference in the world can be felt in every interaction and is something which will guide me throughout my future professional life.

HBS also proved to be a great environment to reflect on my career vision and determine which steps could take me there. Most valuable in this regard was certainly the daily interaction with fellow students from countless countries and professional backgrounds. The cases also provided interesting insights into different industries and HBS career services provided various valuable information and coaching opportunities. With an interest in impact investing, I decided to conduct my summer internship in private equity in Frankfurt (after many discussions, I decided against mixing the social impact and for-profit components during this internship). While the past year helped me obtain more clarity about my career vision, potential next steps, and trade-offs to be made, I have not yet finally decided on my next job and am looking forward to using the next months at HBS to reach a solid decision.

Next to dedicating time to academia and career development, social interaction played a major role during the first year. I am very impressed with the individuals I have met at HBS so far and find the bonds I was able to form both personally and professionally very enriching. Within our section we conducted multiple social events on a weekly basis which allowed us to get to know each other well and ensured a dialogue beyond individuals you would usually spend most of your time with. Engaging in various clubs (Social Enterprise Club, Venture Capital and Private Equity Club, and Entrepreneurship Club) and cross-section sports activities (soccer and basketball) were not only fascinating learning opportunities and a welcome change from academia, but also a great opportunity to meet many interesting students outside my section. During the breaks I was able to further strengthen the bonds formed at HBS by visiting classmates in Palestine over Christmas, in Brazil over Spring Break, in Stockholm over summer and recently showing some HBS colleagues around Berlin. Especially these international experiences made me realize how much I can learn from the diversity present at HBS.

While I have certainly learned a lot over the past year, I feel that a second year at HBS will be highly valuable in terms of further personal development and I am looking forward to returning to campus in a few days. In addition to continuing working on the objectives described above, I will focus the second year on my leadership role in the Social Enterprise Club and will continue working on a few entrepreneurial ideas. In addition, I am particularly looking forward to the Immersion Experience Program in January 2012, which will allow me to explore China for three weeks together with twenty fellow students under the guidance of an HBS professor.

I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to study at HBS, to meet so many fascinating people and to be able to grow further as an individual. I am aware that this privilege comes with the responsibility to make a meaningful contribution to society, something I am highly committed to strive for in my future career. Also, I am aware that the ability to study at HBS is certainly not my achievement alone, but that many individuals have contributed to this. In this regard, I would like to particularly thank the Harvard Business School Association of Germany for providing me with this generous scholarship.

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