

Marshall Feels Like Home

“About 7,000 miles away from West Virginia is Osaka, Japan, my hometown,” said Ryohei Fukuda, who goes by Joe because he could not pronounce his name as a child “I started telling people to call me Joe about four years ago when I started learning English seriously. I usually give them two options for people to choose by saying, ‘if it’s easier, you can call me Joe.’”

Studying his second year in the Lewis College of Business’ Master of Business Administration program with a finance concentration, Joe will graduate in December of 2019. Uncertain of what his exact plans are, he wants to serve others.

“‘Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile’ is a guideline for my life and was said by Albert Einstein. Through volunteering for children in an impoverished area in Cambodia, working at the Harmony House for local homeless people (in Huntington) and my experience as a teacher at Marshall, I have realized that when people live not for themselves, but for others, they become happier and exert their full power,” said Joe. “I have been fortunate enough to be able to pursue my master’s in the U.S. and have been able to do what I want. Therefore, I feel that one of my missions in my life is to serve others in hope that I can help them achieve their own happiness.”

Joe was studying academic English and taking courses in psychology and anthropology at NIC International College in Japan, a prep school for Japanese who would like to study abroad, when he learned about Marshall University. He saw a brochure for Marshall on the table at NIC, did some research, watched We Are Marshall and his interest grew.

“I wanted to learn business in America and Marshall has its M.B.A. program and Japanese language program, one of the most popular language programs here, and I thought I could make a lot of friends. I also wanted to be immersed in American culture,” explained Joe. “Coming to Marshall has been the best decision I have ever made in my life, for sure.”



Fun Facts

Class of 2019

Major: Master of Business Administration

Hometown: Osaka, Japan

Favorite color: Gray

Favorite thing about Huntington: The People

Favorite spot off campus: I like to be in nature, so I love to run at Ritter Park.

Textbooks or eBooks: Textbooks! I love to have tangible textbooks and flip through them.

Marshall Feels Like Home (continued)

Serving as the president of Marshall's Japan Club, Joe organizes and oversees four events each semester. He is a member of Marshall University's World Council, a group that has approximately 20 members from more than 15 different countries and strives to create an inclusive learning environment for international and domestic students and faculty. Joe is also a member of the Marshall University chapter of Society for Advancement of Management (SAM) to expand his knowledge of business management. Additionally, he works as a graduate assistant in the Dean's Office at the Lewis College of Business.

His favorite professor is Dr. Ben Eng, whom he met at an event on campus.

"I was told I could get some free food at the event, so I decided to attend.... However, the event was over when I got there, all I saw was just himself (Dr. Eng) and free food. Then, we started chatting.... He shared about his experience and classes... I immediately decided to take his advanced marketing class, where I learned a lot about marketing. What I like about him is how passionate he is in class and that he cares how his students and Marshall grow."

Joe likes to sit on the bench beside Prichard Hall to watch people on their way to class or near the freshman residence halls and the Rec Center to see nature. His favorite season is winter, because he plays hockey, and believes the most special thing about the Huntington campus is the Memorial Fountain, as he remembers seeing it in the movie and the moment he knew he wanted to study at Marshall.

"I really feel like when walking on the Marshall campus that it's like coming home and that I am kind of reuniting with my family," said Joe, adding that what he likes about Huntington are the people. "When I first got here in Huntington, I went to the supermarket and the cashier said to me, 'have a good day, honey,' which made me confused. I thought the person liked me or was trying to get my attention because the person said, 'honey' to me, which I thought was only used for people you love. Afterwards, I found that it was just a greeting. I like the fact that a lot of people are friendly and nice."

As an international student, Joe aspires to see an increase of internship or practical experience opportunities at Marshall.

"It was not until I became a Marshall student that I realized that I would like to give back to my school. My feeling at the moment is that one of the ways I could show my appreciation towards Marshall that has significantly affected me is to give back. I want Marshall to stay as good of a school as it is, or even better going forward."