

Danish Minister of Education gives praise to local student from Kyoto:

World's happiest nation appoints Ritsumeikan University student as Ambassador

Ambassadors are usually appointed among diplomats and it is definitely not common that Ambassadors are young people still attending university. This is however the case with Jun Sakakibara. She has just been chosen as Youth Goodwill Ambassador of Denmark, the small Nordic country often referred to as the world's happiest nation. The job is to advocate student exchange, intercultural knowledge and career opportunities. It is an honor and very exciting, says the newly appointed Youth Goodwill Ambassador Jun.

Jun is a 21 old student of International Relations at Ritsumeikan university. As part of her study she applied to attend a university in Denmark. And just after arriving another application was filled out:

-When I arrived in Denmark, I applied to become a Youth Goodwill Ambassadors of Denmark and I am very excited that I was accepted. The Ambassadors' task is to promote Denmark to my peers in Kyoto, Japan with the overall objective of sharing my personal story about international student mobility to foster intercultural exchange and global career opportunities, says Jun.

Denmark is a small country often recognized as the happiest nation of the world, the high educational level among its citizens, a unique welfare system and a global green leader with a high GDP. Well known companies include shipping giant Maersk and toy manufacturer LEGO.

According to Denmark's Economic Council of the Labour Movement (ECLM), Danish companies will by 2020 be short of up to 21,000 employees holding a higher education. So if Denmark wants to retain its position as a globally acknowledged country of innovation, it is crucial to attract and retain foreign talent.

350 Ambassadors

That is why Copenhagen Capacity, Wonderful Copenhagen and the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation have joined forces to establish Youth Goodwill Ambassador Corps, which now engages close to 350 current and former international students at higher educational institutions.

-With the Youth Goodwill Ambassador Corps we are engaging international talents all over the world. In today's global economy, talent mobility is a huge driver for intercultural exchange, innovation and exports. By working closely with our youth Ambassadors, we are connecting Denmark with the home countries of our youth Ambassadors on a people to people level, which already is showing great results, says Danish Minister for Education Morten Østergaard."

When it comes to studying in Denmark Jun and her fellow international students mention the high quality of life, teaching methods and academic standards of the universities as well as job opportunities as the main reasons to head for Denmark while studying.

-I am glad that I also have an opportunity to learn lots of things about Denmark with the YGWA program, and I know it is maximizing my experience here.

The Youth Goodwill Ambassador Corps is founded by Copenhagen Capacity, Wonderful Copenhagen and the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation. Partner institutions include Copenhagen University, Aarhus University, Aalborg University, Copenhagen Business School and the Technical University of Denmark. The program is supported by the Branding Denmark Fund as well as Karl Pedersen og Hustrus Industrifond and Industriens Arbejdsgivere in Copenhagen, both administered by the Confederation of Danish Industries (DI).