

Testimonial

I interned for the Diplomacy Training Program during the Winter School in 2017. I participated in projects specifically relating to Indigenous peoples of the Asia-Pacific Region. For example, I was involved in helping alumni of the DTP's Indigenous rights stream to network with each other and relevant stakeholders by helping to create a workable LinkedIn group. I was also given plenty of time to read various publications on the rights of Indigenous peoples, including academic articles and documents published by the United Nations and human rights groups, as well as to follow news of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples that was meeting in Geneva.

In addition, I was able to research the state of human rights for Indigenous peoples in nations that were being represented in the DTP's programs. I did this as I was writing the biographies for the participants in the upcoming course, in order that I might gain greater insight into their motives for wanting to participate in the program. This also gave me a better understanding of the plight of Indigenous peoples in places like West Papua and Sri Lanka, of which I had only a rudimentary knowledge previously.

The staff and other interns at the DTP provided a convivial environment in which to work. My supervisor took an interest in my professional development, and I was able to discuss with her the sort of legal career that I might like to pursue following graduation. The commitment of the staff to interns was commendable, as was their passion for training human rights defenders through the courses run by the DTP. Interns at the DTP work behind the scenes in support of the administrators, trainers and participants of the training programs. In this sense, the work is unglamorous, but it is very important nonetheless, and offers many opportunities to learn about empowering people through training them to become human rights defenders in their home communities.

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