

Q P uest for rofession



世界同時不況で国内でも雇用不安が広がるなか、語学習得や「視野を広げる」ためだけの留学では帰国後、就職難に巻き込まれる可能性が出てきました。多くの企業が、採用の際に「留学経験」を考慮していないという調査もあり、留学する際には、キャリアにつながるしっかりした目的意識を持つことが、前にも増して重要になっています。ご紹介するのはキャリアアップや専門知識の取得を目的に留学した人たち。後悔しない留学の手がかりが見つかるかもしれません。

Japanese Students Head Abroad to Become Doctors

小児科医を目指し、ブルガリアの医科大学で学ぶ若者



世界中から医師志望の学生が集まる、ブルガリアのプレーベン医科大学での解剖学の実習の風景＝2008年10月 撮影：鈴木史郎

日本では狭き門の医学部受験をあきらめ、海外の医学部を目指す若者が増えています。中でも途上国の医科大学は、学費が安く入学も比較的容易なため人気に。ブルガリアの国立プレーベン医科大学2年生の鈴木史郎さんは、世界中から集まった学生と机を並べて「泣くほど厳しい」勉強に励む、充実した日々を過ごしています。

students are waiting to be admitted into Suzuki's university this spring. "Despite repeated failures to enrolling in Japanese medical colleges, I could never give up my dream to become a pediatrician," said Suzuki, who started his sophomore year in the school's English-only course this month.

medicine in developing countries, including Bulgaria, Slovakia and the Dominican Republic.

But once enrolled in a foreign program, students realize how difficult the discipline of medicine is, paired with the further burden of studying it in a foreign language, Suzuki said. Classes run from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays, and Suzuki said he must study four to five hours each day after his classes.

"The encouraging thing is that the tough discipline creates strong fellow feeling among foreign students from across the world, and it has certainly enlarged my horizons," Suzuki said.

帰国した医学生を阻む壁

While Suzuki said that all his classmates are highly motivated to complete the program, it remains uncertain if they can eventually practice medicine in Japan.

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare sets stringent licensing criteria for those who have completed foreign medical schools or obtained a foreign medical license.

Of applicants with degrees from foreign medical schools, only 30 to 40 percent are allowed to directly take the national exam for medical practitioners, a ministry official said.

Others are required to first pass a preliminary examination, an extremely difficult pathway.

"From my own experience, I would advise my juniors not to go to overseas schools if their final goal is to practice medicine in Japan," said Chiaki Moriya, 45, a pioneer of the alternative path to becoming a doctor.

As one of the first Japanese students to enter a medical college in a developing country, Moriya enrolled in a Dominican Republic medical school in 1984 after years of failing to pass medical school exams here. Facing various obstacles, such as temporary closure of the school, it took him 12 years to earn his diploma.

While he worked as an intern physician in Dominica for a year, he has never taken the national exam for doctor's licensing in Japan.

"I am not certain if the highly respected medical circle here would accept someone with an extraordinary career like me," he added.

He is now studying in a language course at a Chinese university and hopes to eventually practice medicine in China or elsewhere.

In Bulgaria, Suzuki remains undaunted by his uncertain future. "I believe medicine is a profession to serve patients wherever there are people in need," he said.

By Hiroshi Matsubara
Asahi Weekly

A decade-long quest to fulfill his calling led Shiro Suzuki, a 30-year-old Osaka native, to a country that he had only known by the brand of a popular yogurt and the sumo wrestler Kotooshu.

Seeking to become a child health care professional, Suzuki, a former cram school teacher and law school student, flew to Bulgaria last spring to enroll in a national medical college.

At Medical University Plevan in Plevan, Bulgaria, Suzuki studies medicine with seven other Japanese students. An increasing number of doctor-wannabes are bypassing highly selective and expensive medical schools in Japan to enroll in medical programs in developing countries. Some 10 Japanese stu-

With the school's diploma, students can obtain a medical license in Bulgaria, which allows them to practice medicine in some European Union countries, said Hiroyuki Takagiwa, the college's Director of Admission in Japan.

Still, the school's admission process is far less stringent than its Japanese counterparts.

Students who have earned above average scores in biology and chemistry in high school, and have passed the Level 2 "Eiken" English proficiency test, may enroll if Takagiwa deems the applicant motivated enough to complete the six-year course.

In addition, the school's tuition is only about ¥500,000 a year, and about the same amount is needed each year for living expenses.

"Med schools in many developing countries now see foreign students from developed countries as a precious source of earning foreign currency," Takagiwa said. "It is now recognized as an alternative and cheaper path to achieve a dream to become a doctor."

Takagiwa estimates there are about 100 Japanese students studying



解剖学の授業を受ける日本人留学生＝09年2月。中央が鈴木史郎 写真提供：鈴木史郎

fulfill his calling 天職に就く	medical license 医師免許	英検2級	highly...circle 社会的な権威のある医療界
country...by ～でしか知らなかった国	Director of Admission 入学審査官	precious...currency 貴重な外貨獲得の手段	remains...by ～にもひるんでいない
child...professional 小児医療の専門家	stringent 厳しい	fellow feeling 仲間意識	
Level...test	enlarged my horizons 視野を広げてくれた		

TIPS disposable (自由に使える) は、disposable income で「可処分所得」の意味になる。米国では景気後退の影響で可処分所得に占める貯蓄額が上昇しているという。Reuters 通信の記事が、Personal savings surged in December to 3.6 percent of disposable income from 2.8 percent in November. と伝えていた。