

CASE STUDY

Todd Stevens, JMEC 16

Background

Todd Stevens's first trip to Japan was a quick home stay in 2002 followed by a one semester exchange program in 2006 at Mito at Tokiwa University. After finishing university in 2009 he came back to Japan to work in the wine industry. Stevens recently opened his own bar called Beer cats located up in Ikebukuro and hosted a JMEC Alumni Event and shared his insights to starting a business in Japan.

Reasons for Participating

At that time, Stevens was working for Orca International, a wine company that is a sponsor of JMEC. He attended JMEC under the sponsorship program.

JMEC Experience

Stevens was relatively young at age 23 compared to other participants (the average age is 33). He found the diverse input from the experienced members of Japan's business community extremely useful and enlightening. In addition to making close friends that he keeps in touch with today, he has learned to redefine his values. Defining (and refining) my values has been integral to deciding the next steps to take in his professional and personal life.

Message to Future Participants

His advice to current (and future) participants is that you should not be afraid to be bold with your business plan proposals. The grander and more dramatic the idea the more likely it is to succeed in the program. Outside of this program you may not always have the resources to implement your plans, but a lot of existing companies do. **Also, dreaming big has benefits in real life as well. The easy option is always going to get you average results.**

Time is the single most valuable thing you have- and you don't have a lot of it. It's not wasted if you're using it to better yourself or the lives of others. If you have something that you think about all the time and want to do - then take the first step and do it.