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EXPERIENCE REPORT

My time at Harvard

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Opportunity is knocking. Open the door!

I entered Medical School in 2010 and since the very beginning research had captured my attention. Knowledge in medical sciences had been advancing exponentially and I wanted to be part of it. Thus, the opportunity of dedicating one year to research at Harvard University amazed me, not only because of the great medical knowledge I would acquire, but also because of the experience of studying at one of the most outstanding universities in the world.

Studying at Harvard School of Public Health in the year of 2013 was a very enriching experience and definitely played a major role in my graduation. It was at Professor Richard Verrier's laboratory where I got to know the foundations of a great research, the spirit of being part of a team, the responsibilities one must have at work, the cutting-edge knowledge in Cardiology and the hard path through out discovery. Moreover, I had the privilege of collaborating in four projects that turned into clinically relevant published papers in cardiac electrophysiology.

My academic routine was busy and thrilling at the same time. The discovery process would start at Research North, where we did literature review and data analysis and discussed previous findings and future

plans. Professor Verrier would always say: "We have to think hard, because what is new is not true, and what is true is not new". There we learned how to plan and conduct a medical research, which also includes adapting to adversities and recognizing the discovery when it comes to our eyes. Another very important part of our learning process took place at the West Campus of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC), where we attended lectures weekly and got in touch with the most advanced projects being developed in the world. There I not only increased and updated my medical knowledge, but I also dreamed of the physician one day I would become. Finally, the East Campus of BIDMC is where we did our experiments, performing both closed chest and open chest surgeries in pigs, a large animal model whose cardiovascular system is pretty much similar to the human's. The experiments themselves taught us the most difficult lessons, both medically and personally as team work continued to improve daily.

Apart from that, we had the opportunity of helping in practical classes on electrocardiograms, blood pressure and heart anatomy at Harvard College. Most students at that activity were doing non-biological courses such as Governmental, Physics and Arts, which made me

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think of how different education was in the US compared to Brazil. I myself have also attended several lectures, movie sessions and theater performances at Harvard, indeed it is so dazzling for a university to have such a variety of activities for its students. I learned a lot from them all. In all places I mentioned, I had the chance of meeting people from all over the world, which added even more to the cultural baggage I brought back home.

When it comes to Boston, it was a lovely experience. Such a beautiful city, full of life and interesting things happening all year long. It has all one wants from a big city, yet you can breathe fresh air and spend an

evening by the river or at a public park. The neighbor city, Cambridge, with its unique old buildings and picturesque streets, is up to these days one of my favorite places in the world.

Having learned so much during my time at Harvard, I feel very fortunate to say that there are lessons I will carry with me throughout my life and career. I truly hope all my learning can be translated into great citizenship and high standard medical practice in Brazil.

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