

Shipping business student wins Shipping Australia prize!

By JIM WILSON, Shipping Australia

Juan Rodriguez Ortega, a postgraduate student at the Australian Maritime College, has won a \$750 prize from Shipping Australia for high achievement in his studies.

Shipping Australia sponsors the Shipping Australia Prize at the Australian Maritime College, part of the University of Tasmania, in support of maritime education in Australia.

"Shipping Australia warmly congratulates Juan on his fantastic achievement and we wish him all the best in his future career. Shipping Australia is delighted to sponsor the Shipping Australia Prize at the Australian Maritime College as part of our commitment to, and support for, the Australian maritime industry and maritime education in this country," said Shipping Australia CEO Rod Nairn.

Lee-Anne Britcliffe, the AMC's Student Experience liaison manager, praised Juan for his high performance

throughout the course of the Shipping Australia prize.

"Juan has performed very well throughout the course and he is a very worthwhile recipient of the Shipping Australia Prize. AMC is grateful for the generosity of Shipping Australia in supporting this prize that recognises the outstanding efforts of our students. The prize money helps tremendously with expenses such as text books and it is invaluable on a student's CV".

Juan is in the second year of the AMC's Master of Business Administration (Advanced) (Maritime and Logistics Management) degree.

We chatted with Juan about his outstanding achievement.

SAL: Congratulations on winning the Shipping Australia Prize 2020! It's a great achievement. How do you feel?

Juan: It's always good to feel that your effort is rewarded! It's great news!

SAL: So, what will you do with the prize money?

Juan: It's for my migration into Australia. I'll use it for paying for my skills assessment. It's a good use of the money. I want to stay in Australia for at least a couple of years. I'll try to find my first job here. I don't know what my dream job is yet. Any maritime-related job really!

SAL: How did you end up studying a maritime MBA in Australia?

Juan: I'm a civil engineer by background, working in dredging. I have a Bachelor of Civil Engineering



from the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. I won a sponsorship with PIANC [the international association focused on waterborne infrastructure] in Argentina, and I went to Cairns on a technical visit to PIANC's 6th Technical Biennial Conference 2017, which was held in June.

The sponsorship covered flights, accommodation and the event. The sponsorship was based on academic merit and the work I was doing at the time. I spent time in a lab in Manly, Sydney, in White Bay, and I flew to Cairns and visited the Great Barrier Reef. It was pretty awesome! The great value was in networking with engineers from around the world. I still talk to them today.

SAL: What attracted you to civil engineering?

Juan: I always knew I would study it. Maybe because it's a family tradition.

SAL: What do you most enjoy about civil engineering?

Juan: It's creating something and building it. It's seeing the project come true. It's something the community can benefit from. I've

always been interested in ports and maritime structures too... don't ask me why!

SAL: There are lots of places around the world that you could have studied a maritime-related MBA. So why Australia?

Juan: I always wanted to experience study abroad. When I came to Australia on my sponsorship, I learned about the enormous maritime potential here. So I thought it was a good place. I did my investigations and I also wanted to do something that was not technical because I already had that background. The AMC is a well-known institution and Tasmania is a good place to study. There's a great migration programme and Tasmania is affordable.

SAL: What have you most enjoyed about Australia?

Juan: The peacefulness in Tasmania. It's quite a change from a big city like Buenos Aires. But I haven't much enjoyed the cold! The Uni has always been very good for me. The people are warm and friendly. I've enjoyed travelling around Tasmania and going

to Sydney, where many Argentinians are based.

SAL: What do you do your spare time?

Juan: I love diving! I had always wanted to go the Great Barrier Reef! It's so famous and so bio-diverse. There were turtles swimming just next to me. It's awesome! You can't believe it until you're actually there. I got into diving in Thailand in 2013 and I did my open water course. I try to dive when I can. It's one of the most beautiful things – it's like you get to see a whole new world. In Tasmania, I like kayaking, trekking, driving to the beach and to the mountains. There are lots of climates in a short distance. I go to the gym, run, and hang out with friends.

SAL: If you could travel in time, where would you go and what would you do?

Juan: I would definitely go back to the times when I trained and played tennis competitively. Tennis is my other passion and I look forward to start playing again! ▲

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