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Georgia Southern graduate dedicated to giving back, will join Peace Corps in May

December 14, 2019



Georgia Southern University graduate student Selmman Padridin believes in the importance of giving back, which is why he's using the skills he has learned through the Master of Health Administration (MHA) program and the Army to help others by joining the Peace Corps.

Padridin is a native of Colombia, South America, and will leave for Kosovo in May where he will serve as a community development leader. The managerial aspect of his MHA program and field inspired him to help people develop professionally.

"I'll be able to help people, especially women and young adults, and empower them to seek professional work," he said.

He will also be able to help people find jobs, write résumés, learn etiquette and learn how to dress for professional interviews.

"I've definitely gotten the tools to at least, in theory, run an organization," he said. "I just now need the first-hand experience so I can do just that," he said. "Practice makes perfect. Right now my heart is calling me to serve in the Peace Corps, and that's why I am going there."

Until May, he'll continue his work as a graduate assistant in the College of Arts and Humanities while also pursuing a graduate certificate in gerontology. In addition to enjoying academics and learning, Padridin enjoys the family atmosphere of the Armstrong Campus.

Having enrolled as a student while on active duty at Fort Stewart, he didn't have many connections when he first began. That quickly changed.

"When I first started here, I had no friends, and I started noticing that people were making an effort to say hello and make me feel welcome," he said. "And this wasn't just students, it was faculty, too."

It was very comforting to Padridin to feel so welcomed in his new venture.

"Everyone had this way of making me feel like I was part of their family, and that felt nice," he said. "There is just a sense of family here and I feel like I have gotten to know everybody."

Padridin felt called to get involved with various student and professional organizations including the Student Government Association, Kappa Sigma fraternity, Student Veteran Association and Rotaract, among others. All of these organizations had a service component and provided leadership and volunteer opportunities, but the connections he made through these organizations were also important to him.

"I was thankful I was able to find a group of people who are like-minded, who want to help people and improve some aspect of society," he said.

In the future, Padridin and his brother who is a psychiatrist, aspire to open their own practice together to provide mental health services. The education in the MHA program has set him up for success for that, but right now, his calling is to give back.

“I have been blessed to be given everything that I need and then some,” he said. “This country has done nothing but good things for me, and I feel like the only thing that I have left to do is to give back. I don’t find meaning in just working to make more for myself.”

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution founded in 1906, offers 141 degree programs serving more than 26,000 students through nine colleges on three campuses in Statesboro, Savannah, Hinesville and online instruction. A leader in higher education in southeast Georgia, the University provides a diverse student population with expert faculty, world-class scholarship and hands-on learning opportunities. Georgia Southern creates lifelong learners who serve as responsible scholars, leaders and stewards in their communities. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.