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Miss Tay Jing Jing Perlyne with her Quantedge Foundation Scholarship certificate. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY



13 undergrads receive full funding under SMU's Access scheme

## She can now focus on her studies

● JULIA TAN

When she was accepted into the Singapore Management University (SMU) this year, Miss Tay Jing Jing Perlyne, 20, considered giving up her place.

She was worried that she would not be able to cover the tuition fees for her four-year School of Information Systems course due to her family's financial difficulties – her mother is a housewife and her father owns a stall selling household goods at Bendemeer Market & Food Centre, sometimes earning barely \$50 a day.

Now, Miss Tay can set those worries aside.

She is one of 13 recipients from the inaugural batch receiving the SMU Access scheme, which ensures eligible candidates full funding for a maximum of four years of university studies.

The scheme was launched in March, and funding is made possible through government grants, external donor gifts and internal resources.

There are no academic requirements, but the candidates have to meet certain household economic circumstances, such as per capita income and housing type.

All 13 recipients were also granted the Quantedge Foundation Scholarship, a new initiative from local philanthropic charity Quantedge Foundation, which seed-funded an endowment of \$8 million to SMU Access. The incoming students received their scholarship certificates at a ceremony on Monday.

Mr Suhaimi Zaimul-Abidin, a board member of the Quantedge Foundation, said: "The most important thing is to make sure the message goes out to all Singaporean (students) that so long as you can qualify for a university education in SMU, you should not have to think twice or feel shy about your plight, because your fees will be taken care of."

Miss Tay, who graduated with a diploma in digital forensics from the School of Informatics & IT, is happy and grateful as the burden of school fees was something that weighed on her and her parents' minds.

In her second year at Temasek Polytechnic, Miss Tay, who has a brother a year younger in Republic Polytechnic, worked part-time as a retail assistant to save money.

She was planning to do the same after her first university semester.

But now, she only works only during semester breaks.

She said: "It is a relief, I feel I can really focus on my studies now."

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