

SMU Alumni Awards 2014

1. SMU Rising Star Award

1.1 Lim Kexin Bachelor of Accountancy, 2005

Kexin has been featured on SMRT train doors, published in newspapers, co-opted as the youngest council member in the Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants' (ISCA) 51-year history and invited to the US Department of State's premier International Visitors Leadership Programme for emerging world leaders. Her list of accolades goes on but Kexin's proudest achievement is staying the course to make a difference, one day at a time.

Kexin's dynamic PwC tax career in Singapore, London and now Jakarta, has spanned advisory, compliance, thought leadership and transactions work over the last 9 years. With over 15 years of volunteering experience under her belt, this energizer bunny has also played a wide variety of hands-on to strategic advisory roles, be it with the YMCA, People's Association, National Youth Council, PwC's Corporate Responsibility Steering Committee for China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan, Initiatives of Change or many more.

SMU mates remember the Valedictorian as an indefatigable officer of the Rotaract Club, running an English program for underprivileged children at the Sembawang Family Service Center, a passionate SMU Ambassador (which she still is) and a constant presence at the university's initiatives even after graduation.

Widely profiled in the media, Kexin has been named one of Singapore's 50 most inspiring women under 40 (Her World magazine), "Rising Star" (Financial Times-RBS Coutts Women in Asia awards 2010) and most recently, 'Young Accountant of the Year' (public practice) at the inaugural Singapore Accountancy Awards 2014.

For all her globe-trotting adventures and well-rounded achievements, "SMU has given me the confidence to live life to the fullest as well as supportive professors and lifelong friends who have cheered me on. SMU will always have a special place in my heart. Thank you!", says Kexin.

1.2 Kaushal Dugar Bachelor in Business Management, 2006

Credited in a New York Times article as one of India's new crop of tea entrepreneurs responsible for "bringing the sector into the modern era via his online tea retailing startup, Teabox," Kaushal cut his teeth early when he founded a business that provided affordable refurbished computers for India's lower income groups.

After a stint in the corporate world with KPMG, Kaushal took on the 200 year-old Indian tea industry when he leveraged on innovations in technology and supply chain to start Teabox from scratch with a vision to build India's first Billion Dollar global tea brand.

Even though Kaushal has caught the eye of high powered investors such as Silicon Valley-based Accel Partners—the first Indian tea company to ever do so—his sense of social mission is never far behind.

“The essence of SMU is about creating graduates who are equipped to make a difference. The university promotes professional excellence, thrives on versatility, and always challenges its students to raise the bar. Kaushal Dugar is a representation of this SMU success formula,” offers Ivan Low, Associate Director of SMU Alumni Relations Office.

Kaushal is inspired by the work of Cambridge University physicist Neil Turok, who founded the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences to promote education in Africa. Wanting to increase literacy in underprivileged communities, Kaushal co-founded Books to Read, a non-profit aimed at helping young children in developing nations gain access to books.

Kaushal is also a founding member of Sandbox Network, a global community of young achievers and innovators committed to transform ideas into action.

1.3 Calvin Quek Shao-Ming MSc in Wealth Management, 2006

Banker turned environmentalist, Calvin brings his depth of business knowledge and savvy to head Greenpeace’s Sustainable Finance Program in East Asia, and is based in Beijing. Cited by the press as one of the environmentalists who “will save China,” Calvin is an authority on the environmental and energy challenges confronting China, and is regularly sought by major research firms for his analysis and insights.

Prior to his career with Greenpeace, Calvin carved a career in banking with Citibank in Singapore for nearly a decade. Even at Citibank, Calvin felt the call for corporate social responsibility. Between 2008 to 2009 he was the voluntary head of the Citigroup Citizenship & Volunteerism Committee where he galvanized some 2,000 employees to contribute 5,000 volunteer hours and US\$150,000 to organizations such as Care, YMCA, and Operation Smile.

Thoroughly committed to the cause of a greener, cleaner future, Calvin today serves on the board of China Carbon Forum, one of China’s leading non-profits leading action on climate change, and was the first executive director of Beijing Energy Network, one of Beijing’s largest environmental and clean energy communities.

“When I did my MWM in 2005, my SMU professors encouraged and fostered my interest in socially responsible issues. From my SMU research work on philanthropy and socially responsible investments to my professional involvement in social causes today, working towards a sustainable future has been a continuing theme, deeply rooted since my SMU days,” says Calvin.

Calvin graduated from Carnegie Mellon University in 2000 and, also completed an MBA from Peking University in 2010 where he founded the university’s Green Business Society.

2. SMU Pride Award

2.1 Tim Mou Hui Bachelor of Social Science, 2012

“Mou Hui has been a strong advocate for SMU and especially for the School of Social Sciences. From the introductory class I taught him in 2008 to the senior thesis I worked with him on last year—now in press with a top peer review publisher—he is truly a go-to guy, and completely tireless in his support for his alma mater,” says John A. Donaldson, Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Political Science at SMU.

Mou Hui blazed the trail by organizing the inaugural Social Sciences Conference in 2012 with former Singapore President S R Nathan as the keynote speaker and over 250 pre-university students in attendance. The conference is now in its third year.

Giving back to the community was also in Mou Hui's heart. In 2013, Mou Hui rallied the SMU community to establish a textbook fund to disburse short-term assistance to underprivileged students at SOSS to help them cope with education expenses. Between 2010 and 2011, Mou Hui chaired a fundraising drive to raise funds for ShareURmeal Singapore's food distribution programs.

In 2012, Mou Hui's commitment to SMU values was recognized with an SMU CIRCLE Award.

Continuing his lifelong passion to serve, Mou Hui joined the Public Service upon graduation and today works on leadership development policies and programs at the Public Service Division of the Prime Minister's Office.

2.2 Wong Hur Ming **Bachelor of Business Management, 2005**

Despite his youth, Ming is a veteran of the SMU Alumni Association, having served a total of seven years since graduation in various capacities including two terms as President.

During his tenure as an office holder, Ming recruited fellow alumni to serve and expanded the Exco and sub-committees to more than 30 members strong. Together with his team, he also led the fund-raising efforts of the SMUAA Scholarship Fund, initiated fireside chats, launched interest groups and overseas chapters, and numerous other programs to increase alumni engagement.

Another key achievement during Ming's tenure as SMUAA President was the launch of the Alumni Mentoring Program, which he personally supported by becoming a mentor for three runs.

As Head of Retail Sales at Henderson Global Investors, Ming today contributes his investment knowledge by heading the SMU Mutual Fund Interest Alumni Group, which consists of more than 30 fellow alumni working in the mutual funds industry. "I am honoured to receive the SMU Pride Award," says Ming. "SMU has played a formative role in who I am today, and is an association I will always be proud of. I share this award with the team members whom I had the pleasure of working together with in trying to grow the alumni network."

2.3 Nadir Zafar **Bachelor of Business Management, 2004**

Nadir's heart beats SMU. Not only was he among the first to enrol at SMU when it was Singapore's newest university, he was a founding member of the SMU Alumni Association in 2004 and led the mission to raise funds by setting up the Alumni Scholarship Fund for his juniors. Another little known fact is that in early 2008, during a short gap period before embarking on an MBA, Nadir worked as a consultant in the SMU MBA office, where he helped to launch SMU's first MBA program.

Today, Nadir is based in Dubai, and he continues his service to his alma mater by leading the UAE chapter of the SMU Alumni Association – a role he has held since 2010. "In the UAE, Nadir serves as the point person for all SMU activity here and helps to promote SMU

interests. He regularly hosts students from SMU study trips, and has facilitated networking among faculty, staff and students with his connections in the UAE,” recalls Elain Sim, Senior Assistant Director of Office of Global Learning.

When SMU President Arnoud De Meyer visited the UAE in 2013, Nadir helped organize several meetings with business and political leaders to raise the profile of his alma mater in the region. Today, whether it’s helping SMU students secure internships or linking the university with potential partners, Nadir continues to serve with pride.

3. SMU Spirit Award

3.1 Melissa Ho Mei Xuan Bachelor of Accountancy, 2010

Melissa is a respected alumnus and mentor to members of the SMU Climb Team. She continues to give back even after graduation. The SMU Climb Team organizes overseas trips to KL every semester, and once when Melissa learned that the leaders were busy with internships, she volunteered to take her juniors on the trip on her own time. While at her previous employer Euromonitor, Melissa would also look out for internship and part-time employment opportunities for her juniors.

Today, Melissa has turned her passion for climbing into a business, partnering with another SMU Climb Team alumnus to operate a new climbing gym in Singapore. Despite the demands of running her own venture, Melissa continues to be a constant presence at SMU Climb Team’s major events and certification courses to coach the younger ones.

“Often, undergraduates seek her help and advice in terms of finding internships and jobs, and Mellissa is always there to lend a listening ear or helping hand,” says Jovyne Chua, Secretary of the SMU Climb Team. “With her smiling and helpful personality, Melissa has contributed greatly to the SMU Climb Team, which she so loves.”

Melissa’s commitment to SMU and her passion for climbing is an inspiration to many.

3.2 Nicholas Poon Guo Kun Bachelor of Laws, 2011

Part of the pioneer intake of the SMU School of Law in 2007, Nicholas was the coach of SMU’s LawAsia Moot team between 2011 and 2012 and SMU’s Willem C Vis East Moot team between 2012 to 2014.

His dedication to helping aspiring legal professionals at SMU realize their potential has put them on the world map: Two members of the 2011 LawAsia team went on to represent SMU in the Jessup Moot in 2013 where they swept all prizes for the national round to reach the international final in Washington, DC, trumping 630 teams including Oxford and Columbia in the process.

Now a Senior Justices’ Law Clerk in the Supreme Court of Singapore, Nicholas co-teaches International Commercial Arbitration at his alma mater and will be the coach of SMU’s Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot team from 2014 onwards.

Despite his demanding career in the highest court of the land, Nicholas has over the years personally overseen hundreds of practice rounds with various SMU international moot teams and vetted dozens of drafts of their written arguments. He is also one of the representatives of his cohort who is in charge of coordinating fundraising and networking activities of the SMU International Moots Alumni Group.

“I consider it an honour to be able to give back to my alma mater in this way. With their tireless efforts, my professors are a source of personal and professional inspiration, and I consider being able to serve my juniors as one of the most meaningful ways to contribute to SMU,” reflects Nicholas.

3.3 Sim Chin Ta Bachelor of Accountancy, 2010

It may have been four years since Chin Ta graduated from SMU, but his heart remains with the SMU Caderas Latinas (Salsa Team).

Over the last four years, he has directed several shows including the SMU Salsa Festival in 2012, 2013, and 2014 in conjunction with the SMU Arts Festival. In addition, Chin Ta sacrificed his own time to develop and teach numerous choreographies that have won top prizes at the Dance Grand Prix Italia 2012 and the Inter Tertiary Salsa Competition between 2010 and 2012. His efforts helped propel SMU Caderas Latinas to become one of the most recognized salsa teams in Singapore.

In addition, Chin Ta is the chairperson and lead choreographer of the Caderas Latinas Alumni Team, which mentors, coaches, and inspires the full-time students of SMU Caderas Latinas. Chin Ta’s dedication played an integral role in helping SMU Caderas Latinas achieve Arts Excellence status among the Arts Fraternity CCAs over the last four years.

Chin Ta’s contributions to his beloved alma mater extend beyond the dance floor. “Chin Ta has also participated extensively in the alumni activities organized by the School of Accountancy. He has returned to share his knowledge over his career in PwC with current students, volunteered to interview prospective students, and returned during SMU Open House to give a speech on his experience as an undergraduate. Chin Ta’s contributions are greatly appreciated by the School of Accountancy and has helped to further the mission and values of SMU,” says Gary Pan, Associate Dean and Associate Professor at School of Accountancy at SMU.