

Media Release

Homegrown University Produces Schwarzman Scholar

Singapore, 5 December 2018 (Wednesday) – Singapore Management University’s (SMU) student, [Toshin Sequeira](#), has trumped stiff competition to be named a [Schwarzman Scholar](#). Competing with more than 2,800 candidates from universities across China, the United Kingdom, the United States and around the world, Toshin is the first student from SMU to secure this coveted scholarship, and one of only a handful of students from a Singaporean university to do so.

Toshin, final year undergraduate from [SMU’s School of Economics](#), will be one of 147 Schwarzman Scholars in its [Class of 2020](#) to undertake the programme in August 2019. With an acceptance rate of less than 5%, the selection process for the Schwarzman Scholars Programme is stringent and rigorous.

“My experiences here at SMU over the last many years have shaped me into who I am today. Without the opportunities that SMU has provided me with, I would not be selected as a Schwarzman Scholar,” said Toshin. “I was first exposed to public policy as a field of study here at SMU and I now intend to pursue a career in it. Additionally, the university has provided me with multiple opportunities to hone my leadership skills, gain international exposure and acquire practical skills throughout the course of my student leadership journey.”

“On the international stage, I’ve had the pleasure of representing Singapore through SMU at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York,” he added. “Next week, I’ll be speaking alongside titans of government and industry including our Speaker of Parliament, Mr Tan Chuan Jin, at the [SMU Leadership Symposium](#).”

Describing himself as an empathetic and resilient team player, Toshin found the scholarship application process to be structured, challenging and well worth the effort. On the obstacles he faced, Toshin said: “There was no point of reference as successful candidates are not allowed to share their application materials. Secondly, I didn’t personally know anyone who had been selected for the programme so it was difficult to get a good understanding of what the application experience was like. I remember spending more than 20 hours at a stretch, on multiple occasions, writing my essays and preparing my video introduction.”

Resourcefulness and good time management skills helped him to overcome such hurdles. Toshin shared, “I reached out to a number of former scholars through LinkedIn, many of whom were incredibly helpful in giving me tips and insights that enabled me to put my best foot forward. At the end of the day, I think there’s no real substitute for hard work, though it’s also incredibly important to be self-aware and work smart. All in all, I learnt a lot about myself through the selection process for the programme.”

Keen to pursue a career path in public policy, Toshin commented, “I’m interested in how we can make our world a better place. My ideal job as of now, is one in which I can understand contemporary challenges and help governments around the world to formulate and execute policies that will enable them to alleviate poverty and maximise the welfare of their citizens. I hope to play a

key role in stimulating international development by leading intergovernmental organisations such as the World Bank in the future.”



Toshin (right) representing Singapore at the West Point McDonald Cadet Leadership Conference 2018. He is pictured here in a candid shot with the former US Secretary of Veteran Affairs, Rob McDonald. Photo: Toshin Sequeira.

Schwarzman Scholars was inspired by the Rhodes Scholarship and is designed to prepare future global leaders to meet the geopolitical challenges of the 21st century. The vision of Schwarzman Scholars is to bring together the world’s best young minds to explore and understand the economic, political and cultural factors that have contributed to China’s increasing importance as a global power, and to make them more effective as links between China and the rest of the world. Scholars chosen for this highly selective program have demonstrated exemplary leadership qualities and the potential to bridge and understand cultural and political differences. They live in Beijing for a year of study and cultural immersion, attending lectures, traveling, and developing a better understanding of China.

Read more about the Schwarzman Scholars [here](#).

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About Singapore Management University

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and to produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU's education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning

Home to over 10,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and post-graduate research programmes, SMU, is comprised of six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in multidisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU emphasises rigorous, high-impact, multi- and interdisciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities around the world, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector. SMU's city campus is a modern facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. www.smu.edu.sg
