



Media Release

Ground-breaking of new building for SMU School of Law

Singapore, 20 January 2014 (Monday) – Singapore Management University held the ground-breaking ceremony of its School of Law building today. The event, which was graced by The Honourable Attorney-General Mr Steven Chong, S.C., was attended by 250 distinguished guests, faculty, students, donors, and SMU’s partners in the legal fraternity.

The new School of Law building will be a distinctive landmark that will contain state-of-the-art facilities used both to enrich the learning experience of SMU law students as well as to involve others within the legal fraternity who are important stakeholders.

A key feature integrated into the 22,000 sqm School of Law building is the Kwa Geok Choo Law Library, named in memory of the late Madam Kwa Geok Choo, wife of former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. The 2,600 sqm Law Library will take on a distinct architectural form that is reminiscent of a pearl. It will sit more than 500 users, and will be fully equipped with modern technology and wired for legal research in the 21st century. Also housed within the new School of Law building are the David Marshall Moot Court, the SMU Pro Bono Centre and other research centres.

SMU President, Professor Arnoud De Meyer, highlighted the significance of the new law school building in fostering closer ties among its law students, and with its alumni and the law fraternity. “SMU’s city campus already enjoys close proximity with the law courts, being less than a kilometre from the Supreme Court. We are also near the offices of many of our partners in the legal fraternity. The new building, with its inclusive facilities, will further promote these links and engagement as it will provide an ideal location for students, alumni and the fraternity to meet and interact.”

“The project team and architects have also done a good job in incorporating design elements that will bring students and faculty closer to the lush nature that embraces the new building. These sustainable and inclusive design elements are an extension of the current SMU campus design, and stand true to the essence of SMU being both a global city university and integral part of the local environment and community,” he added.

Professor Yeo Tiong Min, Dean of SMU School of Law, said, “We believe that the new School of Law building must have the power to inspire. In fact, the Kwa Geok Choo Law Library will be the inspirational heart of the School of Law. The library is strategically placed at the high point of the site next to Stamford Green and is expressed architecturally as a sculptural form to represent an ‘inspirational beacon’ that seeks to illuminate the lives of SMU’s law students. It will be symbolic of a ‘moral compass’ to remind students of the importance of dignity, truth and justice in society.”

The SMU School of Law, which proudly welcomed its first cohort of 116 students in August 2007, will see its tenth intake of students and seventh batch of alumni in 2017, the year in which the new building is slated for completion.

Bringing alumni, the community, and partners closer together

The new School of Law building will house several research centres that will provide relevant research on local and regional legal issues, as well as conduct conferences and seminars. These Centres and the teaching facilities in the building will also help to enhance the School's collaboration with both public entities and private organisations. When the building is completed, the SMU Pro Bono Centre will also be relocated here, and will further the law school's pro bono mission and service to the community.

The increase in space and facilities is an important milestone in the development of the SMU School of Law and will ensure that it is able to continue to provide its growing student body with teaching and facilities of the highest order, as well as to cater to its growing alumni. Besides providing an environment that is conducive for interaction in group study and project work, meeting, networking and events, these increased facilities will also encourage the law school's alumni to return to the School more often, thus strengthening the bond between them and the School.

Currently SMU's School of Law and School of Accountancy share the same building; the offices of some law faculty members are also housed in the business school. The new building is thus seen as an important step for the law school to develop its distinct identity and enhance its recognition and visibility among the public, its supporters as well as local and overseas stakeholders.

Enclosures:

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Annex 2

Fact sheet – Architecture, design and features of SMU School of Law building

Distinctive and eco-friendly in architecture and design

Designed by MKPL Architects Pte Ltd, the new building will be a symbol for inspirational learning. It will facilitate innovation in learning with flexible teaching spaces to support collaborative learning, inter-disciplinary work, intellectual exchange and social interaction. The architecture of the new building is deliberately contemporary in expression, while integrating with the architecture in the historical district in which it stands.

Designed to meet BCA's Green Mark Platinum standards, the new building will boast many sustainable features that will bring about maximum energy savings. Through the implementation of passive design elements coupled with innovative green technologies, the building is designed to reduce energy consumption, whilst achieving the desired occupant comfort.

Some of the key 'green' features include a central atrium that promotes natural ventilation through the stack effect, a vertical green wall that will reduce the urban heat island effect, high-velocity low-speed fans that will bring about greater thermal comfort to non air-conditioned space, usage of green concrete that consumes less natural resources through material replacement, as well as a well-shaded external façade and a high-efficient central air-conditioning system to reduce energy consumption.

Creating a global City University of the 21st century

The new building will also contain a myriad of social and informal learning spaces in the form of a café and through the re-purposing of circulation spaces, which allow learning to take place virtually anywhere on campus. Another interesting feature of the new building is the 'Student Commons' located on the roof, which incorporates a mix of student club rooms and open-air terraces equipped with outdoor seating and social facilities.

The new building respects the urban fabric of the Civic District and builds upon the porosity of the city campus to further promote engagement with the community. For example, a 24/7 public pedestrian access is provided between Armenian Street and Stamford Green which will play a major role in linking up Fort Canning Park with this part of the city. Along this route, users are able to experience and catch interesting glimpses of the activities of the city campus through the Social Terrace and Activity Plaza. The building also blends in seamlessly with the existing Stamford Green to capitalise on the rare accessibility to open greenery within the Central Business District.

Annex 2

Fact Sheet: Kwa Geok Choo Law Library

The Kwa Geok Choo Law Library is named in memory of the late Madam Kwa Geok Choo, wife of former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew.

The 2,600 sqm Law Library will sit more than 500 users, and will be fully equipped with modern technology and wired for legal research in the 21st century.

The Law Library will be a rich depository of knowledge resource and will provide comprehensive collection coverage to support the teaching and legal research needs of the SMU School of Law. It has the capacity to hold 50,000 print volumes. It will focus on developing several special collections on topics such as Commercial Law, Dispute Resolution and Islamic Law.

The Kwa Geok Choo Law Library and the Li Ka-Shing Library will together provide access to over 90,000 electronic resources, including e-books, e-journals and databases, catering for multidisciplinary research and interests. The two libraries will also provide seamless access to information services and resources to the entire SMU community.

Annex 3

Artist's impressions (with captions)

Image 1



The School of Law building form is conceived as a progressive and dynamic design that reflects the bold and inventive spirit of SMU. The architecture of the new building is deliberately contemporary in expression, while integrating with the architecture in the historical district in which it stands. The building façade along Armenian Street respects the urban fabric of the Civic District – it conveys a civic quality while being sympathetic to the scale of the existing conservation shop houses.

- Artist's impression: View of School of Law building façade at the junction of Armenian Street and Stamford Road.

Image 2



The Kwa Geok Choo Law Library will be a distinctive landmark with a strong civic presence. It takes an architectural form that resembles a pearl and will be a symbol for inspirational learning. Located strategically at the high point of the site next to Stamford Green, it represents an 'inspirational beacon' that seeks to illuminate the lives of SMU law students. It will be symbolic of a 'moral compass' to remind students of the importance of dignity, truth and justice in society.

In the evenings, the soft glow of light from within bathes the curvilinear surface and the effect is reminiscent of the jewel-like qualities and beauty of a pearl.

- Artist's impression: Evening view of Kwa Geok Choo Law Library from Fort Canning Park.

Image 3



The Central Atrium of the Kwa Geok Choo Law Library promotes visual connectivity between the floors and bathes the Library with natural sunlight.

- Artist's impression: View of the Central Atrium upon entry into the Kwa Geok Choo Law Library

Image 4



The curvilinear shape of the Kwa Geok Choo Law Library brings a unique spatial experience and provides users with a strong visual connection to the lush greenery at Fort Canning Park and Stamford Green that embraces the SMU School of Law.

- Artist's impression: View of the Quiet Reading Zone on level 5 of the Law Library overlooking the lush greenery in Fort Canning Park and Stamford Green.

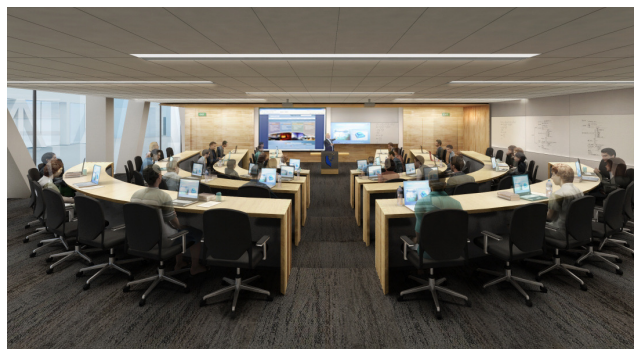
Images 5(i) and (ii)



The David Marshall Moot Court is designed with movable furniture, operable walls and incorporating state-of-the-art information technology and audio-visual infrastructure to simulate a real-world electronic court. Flexible teaching arrangements ranging from a court setting to an arbitration format or gallery for mooting competitions are possible with the built-in, flexible design.

- Artist's impressions:
 - (i) View of the David Marshall Moot Court
 - (ii) View of the David Marshall Moot Court from level 1 foyer, incorporating the extendable viewing / classroom space.

Image 6



The U-shaped, state-of-the-art Seminar Room is a hallmark of SMU's interactive-style teaching and learning. For the School of Law building, SMU will pilot a new design concept for the seminar rooms, which will build upon the existing horse-shoe shaped configuration. The new design serves to enhance greater peer to peer collaboration and interaction by enabling 'turnabout' discussions among students in the seminar room.

Seminar rooms will also come in varied seating capacities to facilitate various types of seminar and programmes, catering to a wide spectrum of undergraduate, postgraduate and research programmes offered by the University.

- Artist's impression: View of SMU's hallmark horse-shoe shaped seminar room

Image 7



The School of Law building will feature a Sky Terrace located at the roof of the building which will offer good views of the City and Fort Canning Park. The space will have an expansive open-air lawn, which serves as a chill-out space, equipped with outdoor seating, barbeque pits and other social amenities that the SMU Community can enjoy. It will also house the 'Student Commons', which incorporates a mix of student lounge and club rooms, further contributing to the vibrancy and energy of the city campus.

- Artist's impression: View of the outdoor seating and social amenities on the roof-top of the SMU School of Law

Images 8(i) and (ii)



The School of Law building builds upon the porosity of the SMU city campus to further promote engagement with the community. A 24/7 public pedestrian thoroughfare is provided between Armenian Street and Stamford Green which will play a major role in linking up Fort Canning Park with this part of the city. Along this route, users are able to experience the vibrant varsity life of SMU and catch interesting glimpses of the activities of the city campus through the Activity Plaza and Social Terrace.

- Artist's impressions:
 - (i) View of the Grand Steps from the Activity Plaza at level 2 of the building;
 - (ii) View of the Social Terrace at level 2 of the building, which offer informal learning spaces and views into seminar rooms.