

A strong identity

Ms Sally Tan Si Qian fulfils a dream to work in an iconic brand with her SgIS Scholarship

by hazel tan

THE thought of tying yourself to an organisation may be daunting, but Ms Sally Tan Si Qian (right) believes she made the right decision.

The Singapore-Industry Scholarship (SgIS) recipient appreciates the benefits of a scholarship. For one thing, she is spared the stress of having to look for a job after graduation.

In addition, she says: "You are assured of a job on graduation, without having to go through the usual recruitment process. You will also be given internship opportunities during studies and ample opportunities to develop yourself professionally."

The 20-year-old is a second-year Business and Economics undergraduate at Singapore Management University (SMU).

"While the idea of serving a bond tends to have a negative connotation of 'being tied down', I am starting to appreciate it. I can pursue my interests in studies and co-curricular activities in university such as an overseas community service project to Africa and a business case club without constantly considering the practical implications of securing a job on graduation," she adds.

Uniquely Singapore

Launched in 2012, the SgIS offers scholars a platform to pursue a career with one of the key organisations in Singapore's strategic sectors.

As an SgIS recipient, Ms Tan will enjoy a head start in an industry of her choice while pursuing her studies. Tailored development programmes are also in place for her during her studies and as soon as she embarks on her career once she graduates in 2017.

Ms Tan has chosen to work in aviation, with Singapore Airlines (SIA) as her sponsoring organisation where she will be bonded for four years.

On her decision to apply for the scholarship and selecting SIA, she says: "SgIS is a unique scholarship as it connects many local organisations and forms a strong network of scholars from these organisations. This is important as there will be greater ease and convenience in potential future ventures that involve partnering with other local organisations.

Ms Tan has wanted to work in a local organisation since her junior college days, particularly SIA, because it is an iconic Singapore company and a brand name she feels especially proud of and wishes to help maintain.

Ms Tan got her first taste of SIA as an organisation during a six-week internship in June 2013, before she started her undergraduate course at SMU. She was assigned to the direct sales department, where she worked



PHOTOS: CHONG JUN LIANG

closely with the team that manages the online booking platform. She also did an analysis of websites of various competitors and a statistical data analysis of transactions to propose improvements to the SIA website.

"At the end of the internship, the greatest takeaway was realising that, regardless of my course of study in university, I should expect to be constantly learning on my job when I enter SIA," she says.

Aspiring scholars should follow one's interest, she says.

"At the age of 18, it might be daunting to decide your future career even before you enter university. However, it is important to recognise that, while an organisation may decide to award you a scholarship, a bond is naturally expected from you as an indication of commitment to this organisation that has decided to place a long-term investment on you.

"Hence, consider the choice of organisation carefully. If it is one where your interest or passion lies, you will, in fact, be more than happy to serve this bond," says Ms Tan.