

Beyond the books

The Lee Kong Chian Scholars' Programme enriched SMU scholar Goh Yu Han's life and gave her many learning opportunities

CHRISTINA CHING

FOR Ms Goh Yu Han, university is not just about pursuing academic excellence.

The 24-year-old Singapore Management University (SMU) alumna is grateful that she led an enriching student life, thanks to the scholarship awarded to her by the university.

On the Lee Kong Chian Scholars' Programme (LKCSB), Ms Goh graduated last May with a Bachelor of Business Management (Magna Cum Laude) in Operations Management & Marketing and a Bachelor of Social Science (Magna Cum Laude) in Psychology.

She is currently working as a charterer at Shell Eastern Chemicals. Her job involves taking care of shipments within the region that take chemical products from the Singapore petrochemical plants to different parts of the world.

After being admitted into the Lee Kong Chian School of Business (LKCSB) in SMU, new undergraduates, who meet the requirements, are invited to apply for scholarships.

Ms Goh says: "I decided to take up the scholarship as it meant I got to pursue my undergraduate studies without financial burden to my family, and I would have valuable opportunities as a scholar."

She had set her mind on SMU not just because of its ideal location right in the heart of town.

Great branding

"The branding as a different university, with an outgoing, outspoken and fun culture was a strong selling-point," she says. "Students are able to take charge of their own learning, and have many opportunities to organise non-academic activities — where a lot of learning takes place too."

When she was not buried in her books or attending classes, Ms Goh was actively involved in SMU's Business Society, Bondue. This committee took care of the welfare and needs of the LKCSB students.

Together with the team, Ms Goh or-

ganised large-scale events for business students, including orientation camps for 600 students, an annual charity fashion show, networking events and welfare drives.

She also organised many other ad hoc activities, such as community service projects.

For one project, volunteers from the LKCSB visited a seniors' activity centre to paint with the elderly folk on a bi-weekly basis.

Another was an art project for primary school children who were at risk of straying — the students' final artworks were displayed at SMU's annual student art exhibition.

She even performed with a band as a keyboardist for two of the university's end-of-semester parties.

Enabling programme

The LKCSB also exposes students to overseas community service projects. One such project Ms Goh participated in was to develop India's Kolakham Village in the Himalayas region using tourism as a source of income. The team helped to build education facilities, improve the healthcare system and shared entrepreneurial skills.

SMU also offers global exchange opportunities. In her third year, Ms Goh went for an international student exchange programme at HEC Montreal, a university business school in Canada. The LKCSB chipped in to provide allowances as well as advice on suitable schools to apply to.

Says Ms Goh: "The scholarship gave me more time to try out other things as I did not have to fund my own studies."

Through its scholars programme, LKCSB aims to encourage more holistic undergraduate development and experiences. Recipients must pursue a double degree, with Business Management as one of their two degrees.

Students will have an even wider range of degree programmes to choose from, including new majors that will be

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launched by SMU this year, such as Entrepreneurship, offered by LKCSB, and Politics, Law and Economics, offered by the School of Social Sciences.

The scholarship covers full school fees, allowances for one international exchange or study programme, an allowance for an international learning trip, one international community service project with the LKCSB community, as well as allowances for miscellaneous academic materials.

"Without the scholarship, I would probably have had less meaningful and highly-involved experiences in SMU, making fewer friends and learning fewer soft skills outside of the academic context," says Ms Goh.

Most valuable to her are the friendships she fostered in SMU.

"Some of the best friends I have are from SMU. These are friendships that will last a lifetime," she says.



Ms Goh feels that SMU's convivial campus atmosphere inspired independent learning.
PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG