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Bond-free scholarship offers full waiver of tuition fees for 'outstanding national athletes'; open to new first-year students



National para-swimmer Yip Pin Xiu now has a scholarship named after her which is open to all national athletes studying at the SMU. Photo: Teng Kiat Teo/TODAY

SINGAPORE — The Singapore Management University (SMU) has launched a scholarship in Singapore para-swimmer Yip Pin Xiu's name, which is aimed at national athletes pursuing their studies at the local university.

Named in honour of the three-time Paralympic gold-medallist, the Yip Pin Xiu Scholarship was announced on Tuesday (Dec 6) by Professor Lily Kong, Provost and Lee Kong Chian Chair Professor of Social Sciences at SMU, on the second day of SMU's Leadership Symposium. Yip, a current final-year SMU Social Sciences undergraduate, was present at the launch.

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The bond-free scholarship offers a full waiver of tuition fees and a Growth Opportunities Allowance for “outstanding national athletes” furthering their education at SMU. It is open to new first-year undergraduate students of all physical backgrounds.

The scholarship, which commences in August 2017, adds to a slew of over 100 already available to SMU undergraduates. However, it will be SMU's first full sports scholarship.

Up to two Yip Pin Xiu Scholarships will be offered each year to Singaporean outstanding athletes who have excelled in their sports at the international level, and with the potential and plans to continue to represent Singapore and achieve further glory can apply. The Growth Opportunities Allowance that comes with the award will allow successful applicants to enjoy a wide range of leadership and personal development programmes offered by the Centre for Scholars' Development at SMU

“Besides Pin Xiu’s impeccable sports achievements, she has demonstrated hard work, dedication, resilience at the highest levels, humility and leadership, both in and out of the classroom,” a SMU statement said.

Yip said in a media statement that she was “very honoured” by SMU's gesture. She said of her university: “SMU has given me the opportunity to train and compete at the highest level while still studying at the same time. Their understanding has allowed me to push sporting boundaries and I hope this scholarship will give others the chance and motivation to pursue sporting excellence.”

Kong hailed Yip as “not only an ambassador for sports, but a role model and inspiration to all Singaporeans”.

“For these reasons, SMU has named a scholarship after Pin Xiu, to recognise her strife and personal journey, work and contribution to her sport, SMU and Singapore,” she said in a statement.

The 24-year-old swimmer is the second Singaporean athlete to have a scholarship in their name in recent times, with Olympic champion Joseph Schooling being honoured similarly by the Eurasian Association two weeks ago.

Yip, who broke a world record en-route to winning two gold medals at the Rio Paralympics this year, also took part in a plenary discussion attended by around 300 student leaders from SMU, as well as various polytechnics and junior colleges.

She was joined by Central Singapore District Mayor Denise Phua, who is also the MP for Jalan Besar, and Jason Wong, board chairman of Focus on the Family Singapore, at the third edition of the symposium, which aims to equip participants with fundamental skills and attitudes to become successful future leaders.