



Press Release

SMU's young law alumni shine at 5th Essex Court Chambers-Singapore Academy of Law International Mooting Competition 2016

Singapore, 13 January 2016 (Wednesday) – Two young law alumni from Singapore Management University (SMU) – Devathas Satianathan (SMU Bachelor of Laws, graduated in 2013) and Yeo Gek Min (double degree in law and business management, graduated from SMU in 2014) – have emerged champions at the **ECC-SAL International Mooting Competition 2016**. Co-organised by the members of Essex Court Chambers in London and the Singapore Academy of Law between 8 and 12 January 2016 in Singapore, the competition is open to teams from Australia, Brunei, India, Hong Kong, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and South Korea.

Now in its fifth year, the ECC-SAL International Mooting Competition is one of the rare moot competitions which is not for students but for young lawyers and legal service officers who have been qualified for practice for no more than three years. The annual competition presents an ideal opportunity for them to showcase and hone their skills as advocates. This year's moot problem involved issues relating to penalty clauses and remoteness of damage, and mooters were to assume proceedings were before the Singapore International Commercial Court.

More than 20 teams representing Singapore, Brunei, Hong Kong, India and Malaysia participated in this year's competition. Amongst the quarterfinalists were seven former SMU international mooters, six of whom continue to be active in international moots as coaches to their juniors at SMU.

Yesterday evening, former SMU international mooters Yeo Gek Min and Devathas Satianathan, representing the Supreme Court Justices' Law Clerks, won the final round, which was judged by Vinodh Coomaraswamy J, Roderick Cordara QC, and Guorab Banerji SA. They were up against Cephas Yee (SMU Bachelor of Laws, graduated in 2014) and Reshma Nair (NUS alumnus) from TSMP Law Corporation. Aleksandar Georgiev (SMU Bachelor of Laws, graduated in 2013) was also named Best Oralist of the tournament.

On his team's victory, Devathas said, "We are proud to have represented the Supreme Court Justices' Law Clerks and are pleased with the result. We attribute it in large part to the guidance and support of our professors and the mooting fraternity at SMU in our time as undergraduates."

This is not the first time the duo are competing together. Gek Min and Devathas were part of the winning team at the 2011 Asia Cup Moot team held in Tokyo, Japan; they also went on to successfully represent SMU in the 2014 Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition and the 2013 Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot respectively.

"For a young law school which graduated its first batch of students in 2011, we are pleased to see that we have done very well in the international mooting circuit. Since our moot training programme started in 2009, we have nurtured many young mooting talents who have gone on to achieve remarkable honour for the University and for Singapore during their undergraduate years. I am happy to see that our moot alumni are applying what they have learnt. Though they represent a different institution now, what they are doing will no doubt inspire their juniors who are still in

school,” said Assistant Professor of Law Chen Siyuan, who heads the International Moots Programme at the SMU School of Law.

As the winning team, Gek Min and Devathas will be offered an all-expenses paid two-week internship at Essex Court Chambers, a leading set of barristers’ chambers, which specialises in commercial litigation, arbitration, public law and public international law. The barristers at Essex Court Chambers advise and act in disputes both in the UK and worldwide, and have a reputation for exceptional talent, top-class advocacy and a client-oriented approach.

About mooting support at SMU

At the undergraduate level, SMU School of Law’s mooting teams have reached 28 international championship finals, winning 14 since the School’s inception in 2007. It has also reached the championship final on its international debut in 11 moots, winning six. This success can be attributed to a structured moot training programme which has been rolled out since Academic Year 2009-2010.

The law school’s notable achievements have garnered the attention and support of the legal fraternity in Singapore. In August 2015, WongPartnership became the official and exclusive partner of SMU’s International Moots Programme, whereby the firm will take an active role in mentoring, guiding, and training SMU mooters alongside the programme’s principal coaches.

About 150 alumni from the first five batches of law graduates who participated in the international moot competitions also came together in 2014 to form an International Mooters Alumni Group, and started a fundraising initiative in July 2014 with the hope to see future generations of SMU international mooters achieve new levels of excellence in the global arena. To date, more than \$90,000 had been raised (including pledges) from SMU law faculty, SMU alumni as well as the law fraternity.

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Enclosure:

- Annex 1: Photographs (with captions)

About Singapore Management University

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 produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning, and for its technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes. Comprised of six schools specialising in Accountancy, Business, Economics, Information Systems, Law and Social Sciences, it offers a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes and is home to 9,300 students. With an emphasis on generating relevant multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues, and being Singapore’s only university in the city, SMU enjoys strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community through its research institutes, centres and labs. www.smu.edu.sg

About SMU School of Law

SMU School of Law proudly welcomed its first cohort of 116 students in August 2007. Taught by a dynamic faculty with postgraduate degrees from renowned universities such as Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and London, the School aims to nurture its students to become excellent lawyers who will contribute significantly to society. Trained with the ability to contextualise legal expertise and to think across disciplines and geographical borders coupled with SMU's interactive pedagogy, SMU's law graduates are confident articulate and analytically agile.

The SMU School of Law offers a four-year full-time Bachelor of Laws programme, a five-year double-degree programme which combines law with Accountancy, Business, Economics, Information Systems or Social Sciences, and a Master of Laws programme. The School has also launched a full-time graduate programme, the Juris Doctor Programme which can be completed within three years, and in some cases, accelerated for completion within two years. www.law.smu.edu.sg

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Photographs of ECC-SAL International Mooting Competition 2016

Photo 1



Caption:

Former SMU international mooters Yeo Gek Min (photo 1) and Devathas Satianathan (photo 2) receiving the top prize from Mr Roderick Cordara, QC (ECC). Looking on are the other judges on the three-judge panel, Justice Vinodh Coomaraswamy, Chair of panel, on left view, and Mr Gourab Banerji SA (ECC) on right view.

Photo credit: Organisers ECC & SAL.

Photo 2



Photo 3



Caption:

Former SMU international mooters Yeo Gek Min (5th from left), Devathas Satianathan (4th from left), and Aleksandar Georgiev (far right) in a group shot with the judges, the Runner-ups and Best Memorandum team.

Photo credit: Organisers ECC & SAL.