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Headline: Undergrad eyes future in trading commodities

[me & my money]

Undergrad eyes future in trading commodities

SMU student made stock trading debut last year, uses tuition income for investments



Rachel Scully

Ms Chui Simin's investment journev got under way as a result of loss - the death of her maternal grandfather about a decade ago.

For many years, the family was not sure what to do with the \$50,000 worth of shares he left behind in small and mid-sized stocks, as they knew little about investing.

Then Ms Chui enrolled at the Singapore Management University as a business student and picked up some investment knowledge at its student-run EYE investment club.

And so, last year, at the tender age of 19, she was able to solve the family's dilemma - and make her own stock trading debut.

"While settling my grandfather's shares. I created an account to trade as well, which allowed me to put what I'd learnt from the investment club to use," she said.

The eldest of three children had been interested in commodities trading since her primary school days while listening to stories from her dad and godfather, a family friend and oil trader, about their involvement in the oil industry.

Now 20, she is undeterred by the fact that this is one of the most male-dominated sectors of the financial sector.

"I benefited greatly under the mentorship of a female trader, who urged me not to lose hope," she said. The number of female commodities traders in Asia has not been rising as quickly as in other parts of the world, she said.

Nonetheless, she aspires to work as a trader in a commodities house so she can see physical and tangible goods being moved around.

Her father, 48, works as a front-line supervisor at ExxonMobil while her mother, 45, is a housewife. Ms Chui has two younger siblings, aged 10 and 18, who are still

Q: Are you a spender or a saver? I'm definitely a saver and buy things only when I need to and can afford them. Even when I had to buy assessment books or school stationery, I tried my best to pay for them on my own.

Q: How much do you charge to



ST PHOTO: DESMOND LIM

Ms Chui Simin, 20, aspires to work as a trader in a commodities house, even though she says the number of female commodities traders in Asia has not been rising as quickly as in other parts of the world.

WORST AND BEST BETS

Q: What is your worst investment to date? It would have to be my investment in Noble Group earlier this month. When I saw that its price had fallen to its lowest in several years, I bought it because it was relatively cheaper.

But one should not base an investment decision solely on the equity's price. Instead, I should have considered the likelihood of its share price

I sold it a few days ago at a 20 per cent loss.

Q: What is your best investment to date? It happened during the Muddy Waters and Olam saga late last year when the event caused Olam's share price to drop

drastically to about \$1.37. So I waited for an entry point. After Temasek Holdings stepped in, the stock price rebounded, and I bought into

Olam then I held the stock till May this year when the equities market was bullish and made a good 30

future money. Besides, not having

line spending and saves me a lot of

Q: What financial planning have

a credit card helps control my on-

per cent return from it.

you done for yourself?

our credit cards every month? I have no credit cards, debit cards or Internet banking account. I'm proud to say that I have only an

I never saw the need for a credit card and don't believe in spending vestments in trading equities on the Singapore Exchange. I hope to save and earn enough through investments to pay my parents back for my tuition fees.

I foresee that my siblings may want to further their studies abroad, and do not want to deprive them of that opportunity.

I will also consider buying invest-

I give tuition part-time and appor-

tion the income for savings and in-

ment properties in future when the

Q: Moneywise, what were your growing-up years like? I had \$40 a week from my parents

in secondary school, which also covered my travelling expenses.

But I grew up in a rented flat with my grandmother as both my parents worked. So while other children my age were playing with toys, I chased pigeons around the Chinatown area.

My parents made a point not to spoil me and taught me that one had to work hard to get something

For example, I received my first MP3 player and mobile phone because of good grades - a meritocrat-

Q: How did you get interested in commodities?

I'd been exposed to the oil and gas industry since young because of my father and godfather. I'd look out of the car window and admire the oil refinery's facilities when we picked my dad up after work.

My godfather, on the other hand, is an oil trader and taught me trading techniques and survival skills in a big corporation.

Such exposure to the oil refinery and trading sector got me hooked on keeping up with news regarding the energy market. I even have a simulation account where I get to try trading with future commodi-

Q: What is the most extravagant thing you have bought? It would probably be the \$3,000 I'd.

spent on ballet lessons in my late

I always had a passion for dancing but my parents never liked the idea of it as it would not make a viable career. So I saved up enough to pay for the classes, shoes and attire on my own

Though it did burn a big hole in my wallet, I never regretted it be-cause dancing helped me to

Q: What's your retirement plan? Retiring will happen a good 40 years or so from now. But I hope to have built up enough investments in stocks and property to keep my mind active and earn a passive in-

The money from it can act as a life buoy for emergency purposes like hospital fees or be inherited by my children in future.

If I've time, I'd also consider starting a business so I have something tangible to pass on to the next generation.

Q: Home is now...

A five-room maisonette in Choa Chu Kang with my parents, sib-lings and grandmother.

Q: I drive...

I don't own one, but once in a while I'll drive the family car - a seven-seater Toyota Wish.

INSIDE INVEST



SMU undergraduate Chui Simin, 20, has wanted to be a commodity trader since her primary school days.

Trading hopes

Undergraduate Chui Simin has dreamt of being a commodity trader since her primary school days. Now 20, she is still undeterred by the fact that this is one of the most male-dominated sectors of the financial sector.