



PHOTO: TAY KAI WEN

The world is his oyster

The SMU Global Impact Scholarship Award leads Mr Ethan Loh to widen his social network and gain new perspectives

BY MICHELLE CHIN

In three years, Mr Ethan Loh has gone on learning journeys to Philadelphia and Silicon Valley in the United States, and Jaipur in India.

From learning about the intricacies of managing businesses to teaching impoverished women how to manage money, these trips not only broadened his worldview, but also strengthened his resolve to pursue academia.

The third-year Singapore Management University (SMU) undergraduate is a recipient of the SMU Global Impact Scholarship Award.

Mr Loh, 23, is now pursuing a four-year Integrated SMU Bachelor-Master programme that includes a Bachelor of Accountancy and a Master of Science in Quantitative Finance.

He found the scholarship's Global Learning Opportunities Worldwide (GLOW) grant of \$14,000 helpful as it funded the overseas learning trips.

The bond-free scholarship aims to nurture scholars into leaders who are committed to solve global and local challenges to make a positive impact.

Under the programme, the scholars will hone their leadership skills and capacity for critical, creative and innovative thinking, and develop a global mindset.

Overseas experiences

A two-week Overseas Community Service Project (OCSP) in Jaipur in Dec 2017 where Mr Loh taught impoverished women personal financial management concepts and ways of income sourcing had a powerful impact on him.

It strengthened his resolve to teach; he wants to become an accounting academic and divide his time between research and teaching.

SMU Global Impact Scholarship Award

CRITERIA:

Be a Singapore citizen; possess outstanding A levels, local Polytechnic Diploma, International Baccalaureate Diploma, NUS High School Diploma or equivalent qualifications; demonstrate strong leadership capabilities and potential; possess excellent record in co-curricular and/or community activities; be applying for admission to a full-time undergraduate degree programme at SMU

VALUE OF AWARD:

Tuition fees coverage (after MOE Tuition Grant subsidy); \$5,000 annual living allowance; \$1,800 one-time computer allowance upon enrollment; \$14,000 Global Learning Opportunities Worldwide (GLOW) grant to fund part or combination of the following: Overseas Student Exchange/Summer Programme, Overseas Community Service Project, Overseas School Study Missions and/or Overseas Case Competitions and presentations at Conferences; an optional concurrent or sequential SMU Master's programme up to \$40,000; up to \$9,000 for on-campus accommodation at the SMU Prinsep Street Residences in first year of studies

BOND PERIOD:

None

Terms and conditions apply

"The main takeaway I had from the OCSP was discovering a desire to serve through teaching. I noticed that the acts of giving and nurturing provided me with a sense of fulfilment that I had not experienced before," he says.

In May last year, Mr Loh also attended a 10-day Business Study Mission to Silicon Valley where he visited the offices of tech giants and startups. The visits broadened his worldview, and he learnt what it takes to become an entrepreneur.

Last semester, Mr Loh was on a semester-long exchange at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in the United States, where he took modules on astronomy, Asian religions and R programming.

He says: "Taking a diversity of courses without the stress of grades inspired me to be even more inquisitive and develop a more curious mind."

Local participation

Besides gaining overseas exposure, Mr Loh also participated in local SMU-X programmes where the students partnered with corporate, non-profit or government organisations to explore how to execute real-world changes.

His team collaborated with an info-communications company to study how smart home solutions can benefit the elderly, and also partnered with a healthcare organisation to think of ideas on how to increase the uptake of women's regular breast cancer check-ups.

Be it international exposure or local experiences, the scholarship added depth and flavour to Mr Loh's life at SMU.

He says: "I'm always striving to maximise the opportunities presented, and I try to be purposeful in choosing which opportunities to pursue."