

Publication: The Straits Times Online

Date: 8 May 2021

Headline: Meet the trailblazing SMU graduates creating meaningful impact in Singapore, and beyond

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In the last 21 years, Singapore Management University has seen over 27,000 graduates pass through its doors – 20,000 with a bachelor’s degree, and more than 7,000 with a master’s degree.

However, the numbers do not tell the full story of the impact SMU graduates are making in their organisations and community. Many excel in their industries, and make significant contributions in their fields.

Some have started their own businesses and carved a niche in their areas of expertise, while others manage to make time to contribute meaningfully to the community despite their demanding careers.

Lim Kexin is one example. As SMU’s first female valedictorian, her achievements as a tax expert and her contributions to the community are impressive. Hers is one of many stories that continue to inspire others.

The diverse profiles featured here are testament to the strong foundation an SMU education gives to every graduate that will help them thrive and excel in their career and make a meaningful impact in the community.

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A formidable track record in tax consulting and a heart to serve

Ms Lim Kexin is a tax partner with PwC Singapore's Entrepreneurial and Private Business Practice with strategic, yet hands-on, experience in Singapore, London and Jakarta. She stands out with her market-leading tax insights on the dynamic Singapore-Indonesia corridor.

As a multilingual global citizen with deep local experience, Ms Lim advises leading Asian and global entrepreneurial-driven groups, multinational corporations, next-generation business leaders and business families on their key shareholder, investor, management and stakeholder considerations.

An active community leader since 17, she was named 'Rising Star' in the Financial Times-RBS Coutts Women in Asia Awards 2010, 'Young Accountant of the Year' at the inaugural Singapore Accountancy Awards 2014, and one of Singapore's 2015 '40 under 40' to watch by Prestige magazine.

The youngest governing Council Member in the history of the Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants, Ms Lim is also a former Council Member of the National Youth Council, and a mentor to fast-growth entrepreneurs for Endeavor.

She now serves as the first alumna appointed to SMU's Board of Trustees.

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Combining career success with advocacy for peace and harmony

Mr Mohamad Irshad has worked for a start-up, joined his family business and launched a non-profit organisation and interfaith peace organisation Roses of Peace. He is now the Head of Corporate Affairs for ASEAN at global information technology firm, Tata Consultancy Services.

Through Roses of Peace, he passionately engages youths and has dedicated his life to civic causes advocating a harmonious, cohesive and resilient Singapore.

In recognition of his exemplary contributions to the community, he was awarded the President's Volunteerism and Philanthropy Award and the MUIS50 Inspiring Youth Award in 2018.

In that same year, Mr Irshad was appointed a Nominated Member of Parliament, and has spoken on issues ranging from racial and religious harmony to the Gas (Amendment) Bill and food security.

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A leader and entrepreneur committed to making social impact

Mr Tong Nhat Duong is a social entrepreneur, start-up mentor and advisor. Armed with everything he had learnt in SMU, he co-founded Homage, a Singapore-based health technology company and social enterprise that raised over US\$15.35 million in funding from major venture capital firms in Singapore.

Mr Tong was a 2018 Forbes' 30 Under 30 honouree (Healthcare and Science category) and a recipient of the Gold Award - Open Category of the 2018 National Youth Entrepreneurship Awards.

A business and start-up mentor at Singapore Management University, Republic Polytechnic and Action Community for Entrepreneurship, he is committed and passionate about using technology and innovative product design to maximise social impact.

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A high achiever who makes time to help others achieve

After graduating from SMU, Ms Shao Feiya went on to pursue an MA and a PhD in Economics at the University of Michigan, USA. Following career stints at Google and Facebook, she is currently a data scientist at communications technology company Zoom Video Communications in San Jose, California, USA.

Her responsibilities at Zoom see her engaging with cutting-edge video communication technology that has experienced an unprecedented surge in use globally, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ms Shao also volunteers her time as a mentor for the Data Science for All Empowerment Programme which focuses on training under-represented minorities for a career in data science.

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Her passion and compassion empower women in underprivileged communities

Ms Vanessa Paranjothy co-founded an organisation called Freedom Cups that delivers reusable menstrual products to women working on a 'buy-1, give-1' model. This is a sustainable way to provide for women in underprivileged communities with little access to toilets, clean running water or period products.

Through her innovative social enterprise, thousands of women around the world have benefited from cleaner and greener periods.

Ms Paranjothy has been listed on the 2017 Forbes' 30 under 30 list, awarded the Commonwealth Youth Award representing Asia, and was in the inaugural class of Obama Foundation Scholars at Columbia University.

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An aspiring international lawyer with a heart for social good

From the Legal Vice Presidency at the World Bank in Washington DC to the Civil Division at the Attorney-General's Chambers in Singapore, Ms Chow Zi En's career path reflects her passion for international law and her desire for her work to have a meaningful social impact.

During her time at SMU, she went beyond the classroom and wrote a Directed Research paper on international refugee law which was later published in the Singapore Academy of Law Journal. She also represented SMU in numerous international law moots, including the prestigious Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court competition in 2017.

Her experiences at SMU provided her with strong foundations in legal research, writing, and advocacy.

At the World Bank, Ms Chow worked closely with an internationally diverse group of colleagues, many of whom are experts in their fields. This broadened her perspectives on international law and development. She was also involved in COVID-19 workstreams such as analysing potential legal issues arising from vaccine development and distribution.

Ms Chow holds a master's degree in law from New York University, and is qualified to practice law in Singapore and New York. In her present position as a State Counsel with the Attorney-General's Chambers, she hopes to apply her skills and perspectives to serving the public good.

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SMU welcomes motivated students who will embrace our approach to education and take advantage of all the resources that SMU offers so as to make an impact in their careers and in society.

Accept your offer by clicking [here](#).

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