Publication: The Straits Times, Pg 36
Date: 23 February 2024
Headline: Chasing his dream of a career in finance

Chasing his dream of a career in finance

The SMU scholar has gained valuable experience from his internship with an investment analysis firm and exchange programme at The Wharton School

Looking back, Mr Jordan Lee would describe his 19-year-old self as risk-averse.

"We are a little bit sheltered. We chase the dreams that are fed to us from a young age – not necessarily the dreams that we really want for ourselves," he says.

"When you're just 18 or 19 years old, you don't really have any idea what you are going to do."

While contemplating his course of study, he leaned towards business and finance.

This was his motivation behind choosing Singapore Management University (SMU), where students do not have to declare their choice of majors right away. It gives them ample time to experiment with their course of study in the first two years. This way, they have more breathing room to explore their academic options.

As one who wanted to take a double degree in economics and information systems, Mr Lee valued the freedom and flexibility to decide on a major at the end of his second year at SMU.

Their generous financial aid packages – with close to 40 per cent of its students receiving some form of financial aid – won him over.

To Mr Lee's pleasant surprise, not only was he accepted into SMU but he was also awarded the SMU Global Impact Scholarship.

"SMU taught me to embrace uncertainty, and that there is much to be gained from learning from my experiences and failures," explains Mr Lee, who turns 24 this year.

According to Mr Lee, this outlook has proved useful in solving real world problems – such as in one's career, where rules and assumptions do not hold up as well as in theory.

"These lessons have given me the confidence to think independently and creatively," he says.

In an increasingly uncertain and volatile world, one can have the edge only if they are ready to adapt to new situations, Mr Lee explains.

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>
> **Mr Jordan Lee**
> Recipient of the SMU Global Impact Scholarship

According to Mr Lee, SMU also gave him many opportunities to network and build connections.

It was a place that enabled him to learn from friends and mentors who provided him with diverse and insightful perspectives on life.

For instance, one of his mentors, an experienced entrepreneur and businessman, compared investing to riding a bike.

"Falling down is part of learning how to ride a bike," he says. "You have to accept that you will experience pain."

That piece of pertinent advice made him approach his investments and career with a renewed perspective.

"You can't give up because you had a bad experience, otherwise, you will never learn how to ride your bike, right?

"Likewise with investments, you either make money or you learn something. Life is about growing from your good and bad experiences," he shares.

After having wrapped up an internship with an investment analysis firm, Mr Lee is currently on a semester-long exchange programme at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, where he is keen to gain a broader world view.

"I am excited to learn how people outside of Singapore view risk, specifically those at one of the top business schools in the world. I want to see how risk-takers dare to chase the things they want," says Mr Lee.

Scan for more on the **SMU Global Impact Scholarship.**



Mr Jordan Lee is currently on a semester-long exchange programme at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. PHOTO: SPH MEDIA

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