Embracing passion, experiencing vibrancy

The National University of Singapore provides an environment conducive for students to pursue academic excellence and extra-curricular passions, as told to Theresa Cheow.

SIKHARAN SINGH

The pursuit of sporting excellence exacts time and effort, and often calls for academic sacrifice. But Mr Sikharan Singh, 16, third-year undergraduate majoring in Chemical Engineering and minor in Design and Environment, says his passion for playing, and winning, makes him know that all the sacrifices are worth it. He is vice-president of the National University of Singapore’s (NUS) Badminton Club and a member of the Centre for the Arts (CfA). Sikharan has received the NUS Music Award for percussion and has performed in the NUS Wind Symphony, the National University of Singapore Dance Blast!, and the NUS Dance Ensemble. He is also a percussionist with the symphony, and has more recently been given the opportunity to lead the percussion section for the first time.

In recognition of his efforts, Singh received the NUSU Colours Award for significant contributions to the union and the students’ achievements.

E TENG

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E Teng, 21, is one such student who seized the opportunity to take on a leadership role and run for president of the students’ union.

A 2007 graduate of the NUS Business School and the University Scholars Programme, E Teng was recognized for her leadership qualities and a current management associate with DBS.

She says: “I was on a leadership course when I was in my freshman year and the lecturer spoke about the impact that student leaders have. I was inspired and decided to run for president of the Union Scholars Programme, and I’m now running for the AUSP.

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SAMUEL LIM

Law undergraduate Samuel Lim, 25, makes the most of his time at the NUS Law School with a travel log that is the envy of any university student. Samuel spent one year in Denmark on an exchange programme at the Arhus University. This was followed by another year in Australia as part of the Expedition project where he helped build a classroom in a village.

He says: “Being able to interact with students from all over the world was something I greatly enjoyed and benefitted from. Spending a year there also presented me with the fantastic opportunity to travel widely across Europe.”

The trip was made possible because of the wide range of opportunities offered by the NUS Law School for students to take part in exchange programmes and international competitions.

A former Law Club president, Samuel led the organisation of a wealth of student activities ranging from debating, modelling, advocacy and paper writing competitions to movie showings, artistic performances, concerts, sports and games. These activities enhanced the vibrant student environment at NUS’ Bukit Timah Campus.

In Samuel’s second year, he participated in the NUS Advocacy Cup and represented NUS Law School at the Australian Law Students’ Association Welfare Examination Competition in 2006.

He says: “I had a brilliant experience swimming with some of the best law students. I was one of two Singaporeans among 403 Australian law students. I drove me to do my best to pit my skills against the others.”

He chose to study at NUS because he had the option to choose elective taught by globally renowned professors.

“Attending seminars in these courses has given me a wider perspective on life—that being fulfilled also comes from giving back to the community.”

LEON TAN

Chemistry, economics, dance and music have all been in common, but undergraduate Leon Tan, 22, has focussed on all three passions into his undergraduate life at NUS. That NUS offers her the unique opportunity to fully immerse herself in her interests is what led her to pursue her education there.

The flexibility of the NUS education also gave the third-year science student the opportunity to major in Chemistry, minor in Economics and gain credits from those programmes while at NUS.

She says: “I enjoy the energy of dance and music, and with proper planning, I am able to balance my studies with the pursuit of my passion.”

The long hours in the laboratory as well as intensive lectures and tutorials at the National University of Singapore complement the flexibility of the NUS education. Leon is able to complete her programme as required, yet not at the expense of her studies.

A research-intensive university, the National University of Singapore (NUS) offers the widest range of undergraduate courses among the local universities. There are vast opportunities for students to pursue their dream courses from 14 faculties and 100 undergraduate programmes.

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