



This is the 17th in the series where SIM Global Education students write their own stories with the help of The New Paper

■ Mr Vernon Chia and Miss Wong Hui Min are currently pursuing their degrees at SIM Global Education (SIM GE).

# Getting real life exposure

## Internships help SIM GE students get a good foundation for their future careers

REPORT AND PHOTO BY PHAM MINH NGUYET

### UNIVERSITY is about more than attending lectures and highlighting passages in textbooks.

At SIM Global Education (SIM GE), students get a strong theoretical grounding and on-the-job internships.

Third-year students Wong Hui Min, 22, and Vernon Chia Feng Hao, 24, found their internships challenging, interesting and enjoyable.

Although Miss Wong – currently studying for her Bachelor of Business (Accountancy) awarded by RMIT University, Australia – had not studied the Audit module in her course yet, she did auditing work at a well-known auditing and accountancy firm during her internship from May to July last year.

She had a good idea of what accounting was like and wanted to gain more exposure in the field of auditing.

Not every student would work on something that they have not studied before, especially when the standards are high and the requirements demanding.

But as she says: “Believe in your own abilities, and the sky’s the limit.”

She travelled all over Singapore for her job and worked with clients from different industries including transport and telecommunications.

Throughout her three-month internship, she learnt a great deal about auditing and accounting, and also learnt to maintain a professional demeanour when dealing with clients.

Miss Wong also received training from senior

colleagues, got to know fellow interns from other universities and expanded her network extensively.

She also saw how classroom theories were put into practice.

Besides teaching her the importance of team synergy and having faith in her performance, Miss Wong’s internship has laid a foundation for her to realise her aspiration to achieve Certified Public Accountant status and become an expert in the field of accounting and auditing.

Mr Chia – who is studying for his Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Computing and Information Systems, awarded by the University of London – had an internship with Thatz International, an IT outsourcing and consulting company, from July to September last year.

Dealing with people from various backgrounds made him see computers and technology in a different light.

### SIM Internships

SIM’s internship programme supports undergraduates who wish to gain practical work experiences to complement their academic training.

It gives them the opportunity to gain valuable insights into their intended field of work, and lets them test their abilities against real-world business scenarios.

He realised the significance of IT in all companies today. Although the IT department is not a revenue-generating department, it has a critical function that supports the entire organisation.

As in most frontline jobs, handling customers is difficult and Mr Chia found this to be the biggest challenge during his three-month internship.

Once, he had to work with a very important client who required immediate attention. He did his job well and even built up a friendship with her.

He was able to turn problems into pleasant experiences for most of his end-users.

### PRO-ACTIVE

Ms Michelle Tai, his internship supervisor, said: “During his internship with Thatz International, Vernon proved himself to be a pro-active and enthusiastic person who is always keen to learn new things.

“After his internship, he was given a testimonial and an additional financial incentive on top of his internship allowance to recognise his contributions to Thatz International.”

The internship experience allowed him to look at areas that would not be found in textbooks. It was also a stepping stone to the realisation of his aspiration to build his own IT business.

Internships turned Miss Wong’s and Mr Chia’s term breaks into interesting and memorable journeys.

By being in the industry and working on the ground, they were able to identify what they want to do upon graduation and help map out their career paths clearly.

■ Miss Pham Minh Nguyet is a third-year student doing a Bachelor of Science (Honours) Business Management degree programme awarded by the University of Birmingham, UK, in partnership with SIM Global Education.