

# SIM GE creates opportunities to develop students' global competence through culturally diverse programmes

written by Sheryl Khor

## Nurturing GLOBAL LEARNERS

As the world economy advances in an increasingly borderless fashion, graduates of today cannot merely excel in traditional skillsets. The international workplace requires a global competence that will give them the edge. SIM Global Education (SIM GE) does just that, by enhancing student education through its Global Learning programme.

Since the programme started in 2009, more than 2,200 students have benefitted from the many initiatives such as overseas experiences, study trips, workshops and on-campus activities. As Dr Michael Chang, Head of Global Learning (SIM GE) explains, "While students in Singapore may be world-beaters at the traditional skillsets, concepts like global competence cannot be developed in the same way – yet are increasingly more valuable and necessary in the globalising workplace. At SIM GE, Global Learning is dedicated to train and empower students to seek their own global competence development and experiences."

SIM GE adopts a unique approach to developing global competence, focusing on orientating the student's Attitude, acquiring Knowledge, developing Skills and enriching their learning and working Experience. "Being globally competent means different things to different

people," says Dr Chang. "Our three-part Assess - Acquire - Apply development programme helps students understand the concept of global competence and how it plays a part in their daily lives. We first assess the student's profile of global competence; next, we provide training for them to acquire the right attitude, knowledge and skills. Finally, we create educational, work and interaction opportunities where students can apply what they have learned."

This holistic model that encompasses activities both overseas and on-campus is accessible to all students, not merely those who have the ease in finances and academic schedule to go abroad. Ranging from short two-hour workshops to two-month long projects, these targeted programmes help students to enhance their global competency in many different facets.

### Global Learning

Zoe Teo, 20, a second-year student in the SIM-University of London Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Business and Management programme travelled to Oki Islands in Japan for a Service Learning Project (SLP) experience this year. She took on a consultative role to help revitalise the industries in the Oki Straits islands, also known as Dozen. Since 2007, Dozen has been experiencing population decline with many young residents moving to the mainland, leaving behind the elderly. Under the Oki Islands SLP, students like Zoe work with the Dozen town authorities to assist in developing reforms for the region's sustainability—an issue equally relevant in Singapore.

"Ama Town in Oki Islands was where I spent most of my time, working hard on our AMA-zing and Marine Port Hotel projects. Besides the business consultancy aspect, it was a rare opportunity to build relationships with the students, business owners and even the elderly at the



*The Service Learning Project lets students experience a cross-cultural business environment on top of honing global competence*

himawari, a welfare facility. In addition, I also got to experience so many different aspects of the Japanese culture—trying out local delicacies such as Oki beef, experiencing soybean farming and soaking in the beautiful coastal sights," says Zoe. "This trip truly made a difference in my life and I hope I made a difference in their lives."

The 17-day SLP was a cultural eye-opener for Nicolas Yee, 25, a recent graduate of the SIM-University of London Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Business and Management programme. "It was a challenging yet rewarding experience learning to communicate our ideas across the language barrier," says Nicolas. "During this project, I could apply what I learnt in school in the real-world context. We had to adapt to Japanese work ethics and get a sense of the issues that they hold dear to their hearts. A large part of our final presentation was assessing what strategies could work in their unique environment whilst drawing inspiration from Singapore's socio-economic culture. We wanted to show the Dozen students that they too, could take up the task of helping to revitalize the town in the future."

For aspiring entrepreneur and second-year SIM GE student Genia Ong Yi Zhen, 20,



*Zoe Teo (second from left, standing); Nicolas Yee (bottom row, first from left); Genia Ong (bottom row, second from left) during their Service Learning Project trip at Oki Islands, Japan*

going for the SLP trip to the Oki Islands was the perfect complement to her role as the Vice-President of the Global Learning Society (GLS). The student-led society conducts cultural workshops for their peers to enhance their appreciation and understanding of different cultures through food, festivals and activities.

Besides her participation in the GLS, Genia interned with SIM GE's Global Learning office where she gained hands-on expertise in video-production, cross-cultural research and crafting of promotional materials for the Summer Abroad programme. With a strong desire to broaden her horizons, Genia also took part in the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) Summer School in the UK. "At LSE, I had mentors hailing from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. I also had the opportunity to work on a project with my peers from around the world. It was truly an eye opening experience."

Buoyed by her recent achievements, Genia took on another internship in July as a Global Buddy with the International Summer Programme @ SIM—all part of the intangible yet vital global learning experience on campus. "SIM GE has a diverse student population which provides SIM students with opportunities to accumulate experience and knowledge relating to global competency. Such lessons are crucial in modern context, yet cannot be taught in tutorials or lectures," quips Genia. "There is an increasing need for us to be globally competent and to possess the right mentality as we face new and complex situations in the global workforce."▲

UPCOMING  
EVENTS

SEP  
17  
SATURDAY

OPEN HOUSE@SIM GE  
Time: 10am to 5pm | Venue: SIM HQ

SEP  
17  
SATURDAY

PARENT INFO SEMINAR  
Time: 10am to 12pm | Venue: SIM HQ

REGISTER ONLINE NOW

THE  
GLOBAL  
EDGE

ABILITY

ADAPTABILITY

EMPLOYABILITY

www.simgedu.sg

SIM  
GLOBAL  
EDUCATION

A Member of the SIM Group