Chance to pursue their dream careers

Maritime diploma graduates awarded scholarships for university studies

They had a dream that did not involve a desk-bound career. So Mr Eric Tan Wei Han, 22, and Miss Yvonne Wu Xuan Jia, 20, opted to study for a maritime career. That dream is becoming a reality.

On Aug 15, Mr Tan and Miss Wu were among 58 students who were awarded the Maritime Outreach Network (MaritimeONE) Scholarships and Tripartite Maritime Scholarships. After graduating with a Diploma in Marine Engineering from Singapore Polytechnic’s Singapore Maritime Academy in 202 and 2014 respectively, Mr Tan and Miss Wu are now moving on to pursue two-year degree programmes at the Singapore Institute of Technology and Newcastle University in the UK. (See story report.)

Mr Tan will pursue a Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Naval Architecture while Miss Wu will pursue a Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Marine Engineering, both sponsored by the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS). The scholars have elder siblings in the maritime industry. Mr Tan’s brother, Mr Tan Guoqian, 27, graduated with a mechanical engineering degree and is now a technician at National Oilwell Varco. Another brother, Mr Tan Yong Hua, 27, is an operations executive with Ocean Linking Services.

He said: “It is a good industry to go into. There is always a demand as Singapore is highly dependent on international trade. Besides the monetary award, this scholarship also provides me with a rare opportunity to have an internship with ABS.

“Experience gained from interning with one of the world’s leading ship classification societies will be invaluable.”

Miss Wu’s older sister, Miss Wu Peiyun, 21, graduated from the same diploma course, and is now a project engineer with Caterpillar Marine.

Mr Eric Tan said: “After my O levels, I chose the Diploma in Marine Engineering programme because I wanted a career like no other, something that is exciting and challenging.

“The polytechnic lectures also shared interesting stories that further fuelled my interest in a maritime career.”

Miss Wu said: “My eldest sister advised me to pursue the marine engineering programme at the polytechnic. My parents also encouraged me.”

GAINING HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

After his national service last year, Mr Tan took a three-month course relating to the oil and gas industry at Robert Gordon University, UK, before he moved on to work in a local shipyard.

There he assisted the engineers in preparing the layout and design of complex piping systems.

During the second year of his polytechnic studies, Miss Wu led a group of seven first-year polytechnic students on a trip to Japan on board a training ship.

The ship’s close experience with the machinery in the ship’s engine room during the seven-day voyage left a deep impression.

After graduating last year, she worked from August to February as the only female engine cadet onboard container ship APV Serendah.

She said: “During my tour of duty, I helped my seniors in the repair and maintenance of machinery, writing the daily log book and doing daily rounds to check for leaks and other problems from the machinery.

“While in polytechnic, I also interned at Wartsila, where I went to different departments to learn from my colleagues about how to dismantle fuel pumps and do calibrations, among other things.”

Miss Wu has obtained her Certificate of Competency for Class III for marine engineers (DOC III), an internationally recognised certification for marine engineers working on board ocean-going merchant ships.

Mr Derek Nwok, ABS President and CEO, Pacific Division, said: “Eric Tan and Yvonne Wu are the second batch of award recipients since ABS joined the MaritimeONE Scholarship programme last year.

“It is an initiative that we are happy to support because it allows us to spot talented and bright minds that could potentially contribute to the success of our organisation down the line.

“Moreover, we think that it is also beneficial for MaritimeONE Scholars of varying academic and personal backgrounds to have the chance to interact and learn from one another even at students because it prepares them well for the future.”

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More than $2m for maritime scholarships

On Aug 15, the Government, maritime businesses and local seafarer unions presented more than $2.6 million in maritime scholarships during the MaritimeONE Scholarship Awards Ceremony.

The ceremony was held at the Conrad Centennial Singapore Hotel. Funds for the MaritimeONE Scholarships are pledged by various stakeholders in the maritime industry, including shipping lines, shipyards and maritime supply service companies.

This year, 56 MaritimeONE scholarships worth more than $2.4 million were awarded by 20 organisations.


The TMSS scholarships are jointly funded by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, shipping companies, SMOU and the Singapore Organisation of Seamen.

Twenty TMSS scholarships valued at about $1.4 million were awarded this year to students enrolled in the Naval Studies and Marine Engineering diploma programmes offered at the Singapore Maritime Academy at the Singapore Polytechnic.