A passion for improving lives

MELISSA HING

A KEEN interest in understanding how the human body functions led to her desire to help others, but Ms Alko Sokko pursued a degree in physiotherapy at the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT).

The 21-year-old says her love for softball sparked her interest in physiotherapy. She first took up the sport in primary school and continued to play competitively through secondary school and when she was studying at Singapore Polytechnic (SP).

She graduated from the polytechnic in 2016 with a Diploma in Nutrition, Health & Wellness, before scoring a government scholarship to pursue her current degree. During her break, she worked as a softball coach at various schools, besides an internship with national defence research agency DSIO Laboratories.

"My coaching experience made me realize how much I enjoyed working with people and that I wanted to pursue a sports-related career. Physiotherapy just seemed like the perfect fit."

The right choice

Ms Hing chose the director's passion for unravelling data and a conviction for the need to help others for her much research. Despite that, she had reservations about enrolling in the university as it was relatively new then, but attending an open house in 2016 and getting feedback from lecturers who studied there alleviated her concerns.

"I was drawn to SIT because of how much it supports its students, and how the lecturers and programme director try their best to prepare them for the working world," she says.

My lecturers put a lot of effort into planning and teaching each course. I value the lessons learnt from their rich experiences. I find my learning journey rewarding and I know what I learn now will be applicable in the future."

Joy of learning

"Despite previous naysayers, I enjoy learning about the human body in this course and appreciate how much the SIT teaching staff cares about the quality of knowledge they impart to students," she says. "My lecturers put a lot of effort into planning and teaching each course, I value the lessons learnt from their rich experiences. I find my learning journey rewarding and I know what I learn now will be applicable in the future."

Ms Hing says the modules she has taken so far have been enriching. Learning about anatomy and physiology has given her a deeper knowledge of the human body, while the physiology modules taught her about the mechanics of the body and its muscles.

"With the knowledge I gain from each module, I will be able to improve my diagnoses and provide them with better treatment," she says.

Ms Hing adds that physiotherapy students have a wide variety of experiences to help them keep fit, including team sports and videos. They even get the chance to work with patients.

The friendly and encouraging student culture at SIT also appeals to Ms Hing.

"My classmates are helpful and empathetic. I love how everyone is willing to teach one another because we know we are studying with our future colleagues and we want everyone to learn as much as they can."

"I feel that we inspire one another to do better and it helps me to be in such a positive environment."