GIVING STUDENTS A HELPING HAND

Since its opening in August 2013, Yale-NUS College has offered over 20 percent of its pioneering cohort scholarships and study awards so that students can pursue their ambitions and achieve their potential with peace of mind. Four students share how these scholarships and study awards have transformed their lives and their Yale-NUS experience.

Sheryl Foo  
Georgette Chen Study Award recipient

“I think I offer a unique combination of raw talent, energy and a grounded perspective in shaping the culture of my College.”

The Georgette Chen Study Award has lifted a tremendous financial burden on me. I come from a single parent family, where my mother has to support my younger sister’s education by receiving a small sum. This Scholarship covers my tuition fees, removing a substantial load off my family. As a Prima Scholarship recipient, I have to worry about having to work part-time or accumulating debt.”

Sylvia Gan  
Prima Scholarship recipient

“I like the idea of a residential college and a small cohort. These make for a greater sense of community, where learning is intimate and transcends classroom boundaries. Also, I think a broad-based curriculum that combines ideas from both Eastern and Western societies is very interesting.”

Before I found out that I had made it into the College, I was still deliberating whether or not to even consider Yale-NUS (although I wanted to come here) as I was not sure if my family could afford it. The Prima Scholarship really played a part in influencing my decision. I am really thankful for the opportunities that Yale-NUS and this Scholarship have given me.”

Evan Asava-Aree  
J Y Pillay Study Award recipient

“I hope that a liberal arts education will be an enlightening experience that will inspire us to think out of the box, participate in discussions close to our hearts, and act on ideas we feel most strongly about. I also hope that it will help us see the connection between ideas in the world, and enable us to apply what we learn in the classroom to the most interesting things about us.”

“The J Y Pillay Study Award has made the decision making process (in choosing a college) a much easier one - it significantly decreased the costs of joining Yale-NUS. The Study Award also further motivated me to make the most of my College experience, knowing that I’ve been given the opportunity to do so.”

Andrea Lee  
Sharon Ann Erawally Scholarship recipient

“The three weeks I spent in New Haven were truly the time of my life. From the informal debates in seminar sessions to passionate discussions about our ideals for liberal student societies to arguments over the best pizza in New Haven, I knew that this College was the perfect place for me. I am constantly being drawn into intellectual exchanges between students and faculty and inspired by the great ideas that spontaneously spout up. I have always desired a liberal arts and science education because it would finally give me the opportunity to learn for learning’s sake.”

“Coming from a family of five children, the financial burden on my parents was no small sum. This Scholarship covers my tuition fees, removing a substantial load off my family’s backs. I do not have to worry about being burdened by hefty student loans or about not being able to secure a place in this school due to the inability to pay.”

INVESTING IN THE POTENTIAL OF A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple, one of Singapore’s oldest Buddhist temples, has given generously to Singapore’s first liberal arts college.

The Temple’s gift has enabled Yale-NUS College to establish the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Study Award, which will support up to eight students per Academic Year at a steady state, beginning August 2014, with preference given to Singaporean students. Study awards enable Yale-NUS to admit and provide opportunities to the best and brightest students from Singapore and around the world.

The College has also been able to recognise teaching excellence and attract some of the brightest minds from around the world to be part of its inaugural faculty through the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Professorship in Humanities.

Dr Tan Choon Kim (’66), Chairman, Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple, says, “The Temple shares the values behind Yale-NUS’ mission to equip young people with a form of education that will enable them to become leaders as well as engaged citizens who will be able to contribute to the advancement of society. We want to give bright, highly motivated and articulate students, regardless of financial background, a chance to benefit from a Yale-NUS education and to learn from excellent teachers who are leaders in their fields.”

Professor Jay Garfield, the inaugural Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Professor of Humanities at Yale-NUS College and a leading scholar of philosophy, found his academic calling half by chance and half by circumstance. Trained in Western philosophical thought, Professor Jay Garfield admits having had little awareness of non-Western philosophy when he was a student. All of that changed when he became an Assistant Professor at Hampshire College, a liberal arts college in the US. On day one at work, his very first student walked into his office and wanted him to chair his senior thesis on ‘Indo-Tibetan Madhyamaka and the Social Contract Tradition.’ Seven years later, the College introduced a strong multi-cultural requirement that demanded that all teachers introduce a non-Western element to their disciplines.

Professor Garfield has not looked back since then, having devoted his career to advancing the idea that philosophy is a cross-cultural enterprise, and that it is morally and intellectually imperative to read and to work across cultural boundaries. He says, “It is a real honour to be associated with a major Buddhist temple dedicated to care and benevolence. I am thrilled to join Yale-NUS, and am excited by the opportunity to help to build a college and a curriculum committed to academic excellence, genuine interdisciplinarity and to a truly global academic vision.”

Having both studied and worked in a liberal arts environment for most of his academic career, Prof Garfield has had the privilege of learning and teaching in an interdisciplinary environment and alongside psychologists, computer scientists, linguists, legal theorists, mathematicians, physicists, media studies scholars and others. This increased his commitment to interdisciplinary studies, to collaborative teaching and learning and to the importance of a hands-on approach to undergraduate education.

He says, “Liberal arts is essentially an education for a free person, both in the sense of personal freedom and one living in a free society. It is an education in what one should know in order to take an active part in civic life and to lead a fulfilling life, eventually passing on this knowledge to future generations. This Professorship has given me the opportunity of a lifetime - working with motivated, creative and talented students and colleagues and working in a community committed to building something entirely new, an Asian liberal arts college with a truly global curriculum.”