



Yale-NUS College welcomes the Class of 2020

Text by Daryl Yang and Clare Isabel Ee | Image by Weave for Yale-NUS College

On 5 August, the Yale-NUS College community formally welcomed more than 200 new students at the First Year Assembly 2016, an event held annually on campus as a ceremonial welcome for new students.

The Assembly was graced by Mdm Kay Kuok, Chairperson of the Yale-NUS Governing Board; Professor Tan Chorh Chuan, President of the National University of Singapore (NUS); members of the Yale-NUS College administrative and faculty teams, as well as family and friends of the incoming students.

The new class heard warm welcome speeches from members of the College's senior leadership, the President of the Student Government, Ms Regina Lee (Class of 2018), and a member of the faculty nominated by the sophomore class, Assistant Professor Anju Mary Paul.

"We will provide you with some of the equipment and techniques to keep afloat, and we will certainly provide support if you ever feel that you are out of your depths," Founding President Pericles Lewis said as he welcomed the class to their new home. "we will hope for smooth sailing, but ultimately in

words from a Victorian poet, 'you are the master of your fate, you are the captain of your soul!'"

"That is what a liberal education is all about," he shared.

Ms Lee, President of the Student Government, took to the podium with advice for the new college students.

"I'm here to tell you that while the first few weeks are indeed important, your journey at Yale-NUS is not a sprint. It's not even a marathon," she declared in her speech. "It's more like a hike, where you may need to take detours because of a fallen branch or yesterday's landslide."

In the same spirit, nominated faculty speaker Dr Anju's message to the new class was one peppered with humour, but aimed to prepare the students for the learning journey ahead of them in an institution still in its infancy.

"Yale-NUS is small but we dream big dreams," she said. "In our intimacy, we find the opportunity to learn from one another and imagine a better world."

Inspired by the popular television show *Game of Thrones*, Dr Anju led the class in a new tradition at Yale-NUS – a pledge to signify the start

of their college life. Together, the class spoke the words of the Yale-NUS College Vision.

The First Year Assembly is the culmination of two weeks of orientation programmes. This year, the introductory activities were centred on the theme 'Full House'. The arrival of the new class is a significant milestone for the College, as it is the first time Yale-NUS has a full house of four classes of students on campus.

To welcome the incoming freshmen, the Orientation Committee, led by Dominic Choa (Class of 2018) and Ignacius Tay (Class of 2019), worked closely with the Dean of Students (DoS) Office to plan the programme for the freshmen.

"Orientation is a transformative time. It's a time when students enter an unfamiliar environment fitted with new social, emotional and academic obstacles that will, by the end of it, mould them into someone else," shared Isobel Ngo (Class of 2019), a member of O'Comm.

The DoS Office also tailored this year's programming based on past experience and student feedback. One example is 'aMaze': previously modelled after *The Amazing Race*, this year's class enjoyed a more relaxed pace of

exploring places in Singapore that even local students are unlikely to be familiar with.

"Orientation has been of a very high value to me personally as I moved [here] from a place far away from Singapore," said Jan Bronauer (Class of 2020), who hails from Austria, on reflection. "The activities during the first weeks, proved to be the perfect mix in order to get to know a whole bunch of people who I had never met before but who became close friends after merely a few days."

The Class of 2020 is composed of more than 200 students from 36 countries, the highest diversity of student nationalities in a single intake. With the new class, the Yale-NUS student body now comprises more than 700 students from over 50 countries across 6 continents.

"I believe that Yale-NUS, with its extremely international student body and its comprehensive curriculum incorporating lessons from both the East and the West, seems to fit what I'm looking for in a university education," shared Mr Michal Ong (Class of 2020).

"I hope to be able to learn, grow and to be exposed to other ways of thinking about life and the world."



Associate Professor Neil Clarke, Rector of Cendana

Text by Daryl Yang | Image by Weave for Yale-NUS College

At Yale-NUS College, each of the three residential colleges (RCs) – Cendana, Elm and Saga – forms a tight-knit community of students, faculty and staff.

Each RC is helmed by a Rector and Vice Rector who live in the colleges with their families and play significant roles in the residential life experience.

This semester, Associate Professor of Science Neil Clarke has taken up the leadership of Cendana College as Rector.

Cendana's inaugural Rector, Associate Professor of Humanities Derek Heng, stepped down at the end of last semester.

Rector Clarke received his Bachelor of Science in Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry in 1980 at Yale University, and completed his PhD in Biology in 1987 at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

He holds concurrent appointments as Senior Group Leader in Computational and Systems Biology at the Genome Institute of Singapore, and Adjunct Professor of Biochemistry at the National University of Singapore (NUS).

Rector Clarke is also the Head of Studies of the Life Sciences major at Yale-NUS. His wife, Cynthia, and daughter, Melanie – and dog, Pedro – are already part of the Cendana community as Rector Clarke has been a

residential faculty fellow this past academic year.

His two other daughters, Wendy and Serena, are currently studying in the US. On his first thoughts on becoming the new Cendana Rector, Rector Clarke shared that he wished the position hadn't been open at all in the first place.

"Derek was an excellent inaugural rector, a good colleague and friend; it is sad to see him and his family leave," he said.

"However, given that Derek did leave, I'm thrilled to be taking his place. Both Cynthia and I were students at Yale many years ago and believe very much in the residential college model. To be asked to help nurture the development of a Cendana culture is a great honor."

Rector Clarke noted that the Cendana community has been "amazingly energetic and creative in building the social life and physical space of the college" and hopes that aspects of Cendana College will continue to be driven by student interest and action.

"With respect to the intellectual life of the college, I'd like to give students more of a say in the inviting of Rector's Tea speakers," Rector Clarke shared, referring to the speaker series held by each Rector in their respective RCs.

"There are lots of people in Singapore who are ten or 20 years older than our students who would provide

interesting perspectives – but being much closer in age to our students than I am, there's a good chance [that students would] be more likely to know who these people are than I am."

The sense of adventure that permeates Yale-NUS excites Rector Clarke most about being a part the College.

"It's such a privilege to be able to help build a new institution with young people who are so bright, interesting and independent," he shared.

On his plans as Rector, he related his vision of the job: to be the one "encouraging creativity, advising and smoothing out bureaucratic issues".

"I've got some ideas for promoting greater interaction among faculty and between faculty and students and will be trying out some of these ideas next semester," he said.

Having heard some students jokingly refer to Cendana as 'pulau Cendana' ('Cendana island' in Malay) because it is furthest away from the other two RCs on campus, Rector Clarke is convinced that the nickname is a result of the other colleges' envy.

"The fact is, of all the colleges, we're closest to the gym, the Multi Purpose Hall, the dance studio, the science labs, the Fabrication Lab, the art studio, and the Black Box. We're also closest to the bus stops on Clementi and Dover Road," he said in jest.

Student Min Lim (Class of 2018) is looking forward to Rector Clarke's appointment with the start of the academic year.

"I am going to miss Professor Heng, not only as Rector but also as my major adviser," she said.

"Nonetheless, having been taught by Professor Clarke before, I'm fully confident that he is going to be a great Rector. Professor Clarke was always friendly and open to consultations even after office hours and I really appreciate his concern for the students in the college."

In his free time, Rector Clarke enjoys playing hockey and exploring new places.

"I love travelling of all kinds, but especially to sites of historical or natural interests. My family and I are all divers, though we only go on dive trips every couple of years," he explained.

"We have been in Singapore for 11 years now and we have travelled extensively in the region: India, Myanmar, Thailand, China, Taiwan, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, and Australia."



New student group provides consulting services

Text by Daryl Yang | Image provided by Yale-NUS Consulting Group

While her classmates were preparing for their final examinations and papers, Pareen Chaudhari (Class of 2018) was also learning about the fruit juice industry instead.

She was working on the first client project undertaken by Yale-NUS Consulting Group for SoulGreen, a small-medium enterprise (SME) in the fruit juice market, to improve their social media advertising and propose strategies to boost sales and market penetration. As Club Director, Pareen worked with her teammates to offer the company a new online strategy and assisted in a conceptual overhaul of its website.

The project was so successful that SoulGreen is looking to work with them on another project in consumer electronics for F&B vendors.

“We were very pleased with their commitment to our business and their smart solutions,” remarked SoulGreen’s Director, Steven Ong in a testimonial published on the group’s website.

First started by Aaron Kurzak and Rakesh Prabhakaran (Class of 2017), the group aims to harness the talent of the Yale-NUS College student body to provide valuable strategies and solutions to SMEs, social enterprises, and non-profits in Singapore.

“Rakesh first asked me whether I would like to help establish a branch of

180 Degrees Consulting,” shared Aaron, who holds the position of Business Director, referring to an international organisation that sponsors university students to set up consultancies at their schools which help the non-profit sectors.

“I was on board immediately, but questioned whether we really needed this umbrella organisation; why not start something from the ground-up, which would be harder, but give us 100% freedom of movement and 100% ownership, in addition to being truly Yale-NUS?”

After receiving encouragement from a leading professional on their idea during a networking event organised by the Centre for International & Professional Experience (CIPE), Rakesh and Aaron decided to go forward with their own venture and established Yale-NUS Consulting Group.

The group aims to offer a unique approach based on the interdisciplinary and multicultural principles that define the Yale-NUS

experience. The team’s grasp of different disciplines, from the arts to the sciences, fuels critical, creative and cooperative thinking to serve the different dimensions of its clients’ organisations.

“Yale-NUS Consulting Group is as much a result of the team’s collective efforts and brainwork as it is an outcome of the liberties and support we receive now and have received since the start of our studies from Yale-NUS,” explained Aaron. “The themes that constantly recur in our classes –interdependencies, behavioural pressures and

established a very good relationship with our client, the whole project has also been a two-way learning process,” she said.

Working in Yale-NUS Consulting Group has also shown Aaron how to build an organisation and unite intelligent people behind a common vision without any kind of monetary incentive.

“As I’ve been in charge of acquiring our first clients and sponsors, I had to learn how to sell what seems on first sight to be a poor product: young students offering

“The themes that constantly recur in our classes - interdependencies, behavioural pressures and incentives - heavily inform and permeate the design of our consulting process.

incentives – heavily inform and permeate the design of our consulting process.”

For Pareen, who had previously attended a semester-long associate consultant programme in NUS, successfully completing their first client project in the midst of finals week was especially memorable.

“Right from the initial project scoping meeting with our client, till our final proposal presentation, we have had a very exciting and enriching journey. Not only have we

consulting advice,” he said. “So it was my task to think hard about our ‘talents’ and really zero in on our strengths – what we can really do better than any career consultant.”

Beyond working on client projects in the coming year, the group also aims to organise networking events with industry professionals as well as conduct case competitions and workshops for students to hone their consulting skills.

Visit www.yalenusconsulting.com to find out more!



Yale-NUS student wins Japanese Speech Contest

Text by Daryl Yang | Image provided by Japanese Speech Contest 2016

“Instead of asking people, ‘where do you come from?’, ask ‘where is your home?’” Evan Asava Aree (Class of 2017) suggested at the end of his speech at the 2016 Japanese Speech Contest organised by the Japanese Association of Singapore.

His speech, on how his concept of home has

about how he was assumed to be Singaporean despite being a Canadian, because he sounds and looks like a Singaporean.

“I was reminded that identity, to me, is a matter of the heart, and the definition of home cannot just be about looks, or where you were born,” he explained.

University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanzan University in Japan.

“My 2 years of study at CLS and Nanzan University gave me a good foundation to build upon as I prepared for the finals of the speech competition.”

One of the reasons Evan chose to participate in the

experience were between breaks during practice sessions with his mentor.

“We talked about anything and everything, from her family, to my family, life in Japan and Singapore and what I want to be in the future,” he shared.

“Being able to express all that in Japanese, without reservations, was quite a refreshing experience.”

“I developed a deep respect for the Japanese and wanted to learn Japanese so that I could one day talk to them in person.”

changed over the years, led Evan to clinch the Japanese Ambassador’s cup for winning the first prize in the Open category.

In the preliminary round, participants were required to submit an original manuscript.

Contest judges then selected 20 semi-finalists, who were required to submit a recorded speech.

After making it through both the preliminary and semi-final rounds, Evan was selected to speak at the finals held at the Japanese Association.

Evan decided to write about the concept of home after he tried writing an introduction

“Instead, it has to be expanded to encapsulate your experiences, your feelings, and that’s what I tried to get across in my speech.”

Having studied the language for the past three years, Evan’s interest in Japanese was first piqued when his mother showed him an NHK documentary called The Professionals about the spirit of Japanese professionals.

“I developed a deep respect for the Japanese and wanted to learn Japanese so that I could one day talk to them in person,” he shared.

Since then, Evan has been learning Japanese at the Centre of Language Studies (CLS) at the National

contest was the opportunity to maintain his Japanese language ability even after coming back to Singapore because finalists were provided with a mentor with whom they would work with on the speech.

“I met my mentor for the first time 10 days before the finals and we proceeded to practice every single day,” he said.

“She cleared out her schedule so we could work on my pronunciation, getting my message clear and correcting my pacing. I also received advice from friends she invited to practice sessions just to listen to me.”

Some of the most memorable experiences he had from this

Through this experience, Evan also realized that clarity is crucial to communication.

“To be clear of what you’re saying, you have to know and engage with your own story. Most people are overcome by nervousness, but for me that went away the moment I knew I had my story down.”

The attractive prizes Evan won includes a homestay in Kagoshima, Japan, which he plans to embark on over the upcoming recess week break in September.

“I am really excited to see how the locals live,” he said.

“I want to know their traditions, the food they make (because I love to cook too), the way they talk to each other, and of course explore the beautiful scenery in Kagoshima.”



PROFESSOR
BARNEY BATE
Memorial Service
Yale-NUS College, 20-22 April 2016

Remembering Professor Bernard Bate

Text by Melissa Wang | Image by Alyson Rozells

In March this year, Yale-NUS College lost a remarkable man who was a friend, mentor, colleague and teacher deeply loved by the community. Last Friday, a crowd filled the Performance Hall, to mourn this loss, to celebrate his life, and most importantly, to remember him – Professor Bernard Bate, or more affectionately known to many as Barney.

His sudden passing while on sabbatical in California, had come as a shock to the Yale-NUS community. At the memorial service, sadness was often broken with light-hearted moments and tears punctuated with laughter, something those present knew he would have loved.

“Barney was such a joyful person that even on this sad occasion, there was a lot of laughter as his old friends remembered his antics and enthusiasm for life,” Professor Pericles Lewis, President of Yale-NUS College, shared during his opening address at the memorial service.

Beyond the enthusiastic and warm charisma, Professor Bate was a man who loved deeply. His love for the Tamil language and the Indian culture was one that was widely known. Professor Bate was well versed in the language and often communicated effortlessly in Tamil. When he passed away, multiple Tamil press outlets reported on the loss of the renowned Tamil scholar.

Dr Maunaguru Sidharthan, Assistant Professor with the South Asian Studies department at the National University of Singapore and a personal friend, spoke of Professor Bate’s love for the language fondly. Speaking about dinner parties Professor Bate hosted, where he would play Tamil songs, Dr Sidharthan shared:

“At times I would tell him, ‘Barney, there are people who do not know Tamil and may not understand Tamil songs so we should play something else’. But he would insist and play the songs. (...) Later I understood by being with him and through our conversations, that he believed the language could be learned and loved through songs, music and oratory. For him, language through these forms could be accessible to anyone.”

It was therefore apt and particularly poignant when Professor Jane Jacobs, Division Head of Social Sciences, recited a Tamil poem *The Paradigm* by Nammalvar, on behalf of the Division. Later, Abhinav Natarajan (Class of 2018) also performed a Tamil song, *Naan Oru Vilayaatu*, in memory of Professor Bate’s love for the Tamil language.

Above all, Professor Bate loved his family deeply. The memorial service was attended by two of Professor Bate’s children, Noah and Clio, and many eulogies

addressed them directly, telling them how their father had on numerous occasions demonstrated his deep love for his partner and children.

Though Professor Bate’s work took him far from home, he did however, find a new family in the Yale-NUS community, which he loved wholeheartedly as well. A close friend of Professor Bate for decades and Visiting Professor at Yale-NUS College, Professor John Kelly revealed that it was at Yale-NUS that Professor Bate found a renewed passion and became eager to publish again, for he thoroughly enjoyed his debates and discussions with students as well as teaching at Yale-NUS.

“His work was utterly unlocked,” Professor Kelly remarked, marveling in the way Professor Bate had started publishing. He shared that the Stanford Humanities Center Fellowship that Professor Bate had been awarded in 2015 was “only a fragment of it”.

As Professor Kelly puts it, “Things were strangely excellent in Barney’s life at the very moment of his death.”

“Barney Bate died in one of the very best years of his long and successful life, when he had finally found his truest place. (...) Here, he found the audiences that called forth his very best work,” Professor Kelly said in his eulogy, directly addressing students

of Yale-NUS.

It is little wonder that the sense of loss over Professor Bate’s passing is perhaps, felt most deeply by the inaugural Class of 2017.

Soh Wee Yang (Class of 2017), for whom Professor Bate had been a personal adviser, took the words out of the mouths of many of his classmates, particularly those majoring in Anthropology. Calling Professor Bate’s absence the “white elephant in the room” that everyone thought about, but no one spoke of. Wee Yang reminisced how Professor Bate was one of the first few faculty they had interacted with.

“I remember the lecture he delivered to the Class of 2017 on family during our first academic school year three years ago,” Wee Yang recalled.

Professor Bate also forged deep bonds with his colleagues, and was the best man at Assistant Professor of Humanities, Dr Andrew Hui’s wedding.

Dr Hui shared: “With the passing of Barney, what this young college is witnessing is the making of our first ancestor, our own founding father, and the creation of our own myths and histories.”

The College has lost a precious member of the family. While we will miss him, his contributions to Yale-NUS will continue to be felt by and benefit generations of Yale-NUS students to come.



New divisional director of Science

Text and Image by Melissa Wang

Only a month into his role as Director, Division of Science at Yale-NUS College, Professor Mark Bussell has already embarked on several ambitious plans as the College's inaugural class presses closer towards graduation.

One such project is to continue developing the capstone projects for final year students, where the learning in each major culminates in a yearlong research project. While challenging, Professor Bussell points out that this responsibility was one of the factors that attracted him to his new role.

Focusing on building up Science research at Yale-NUS College, he shares: "We are working closely with faculty on developing the research infrastructure and laboratory facilities to create capstone opportunities for the students."

As a Professor of Chemistry for 26 years, Professor Bussell brings with him rich experience in developing research programmes for undergraduates. At Western Washington University where he has dedicated almost his entire academic career to, Professor Bussell also served as the Director for the Advanced Materials Science and Engineering Center, an interdisciplinary programme that offers extensive interdisciplinary research in the field of Material Science.

Professor Bussell will be leveraging on his experiences to develop a vibrant Yale-NUS research programme.

Elaborating on the importance of research in a Science curriculum, Professor Bussell says: "Capstone projects enable students to work with faculty on original research challenges, providing open-ended problems for which answers are not known. This type of experience, in which students work on

best prepare students for a full range of careers in and outside of Science," he remarks.

To any student who is thinking of pursuing Science here, Professor Bussell, who is a liberal arts graduate himself, stresses that "liberal arts colleges are unique and wonderful places to do Science majors".

He explains: "The smaller student-to-faculty ratio means that Science students are able

but often neglected amongst Science students and academics.

This is particularly critical when it comes to presenting scientific research at conferences for example. "It is also so much more fun if you are able to communicate to people what you are doing, and to share the enthusiasm and excitement of Science," he adds.

This move to Yale-NUS College is Professor Bussell and his

"This type of experience, in which students work on hands-on research with faculty, is one of the signature offerings of a liberal arts and sciences education."

hands-on research with faculty, is one of the signature offerings of a liberal arts and sciences education."

Other items on Professor Bussell's plate include the enhancement of the Science majors, increasing the number of students majoring in the Sciences, and improving on the courses in the Common Curriculum based on the feedback of students and faculty.

"Reflection upon the full slate of courses in the majors will provide an opportunity to optimise both the required and elective courses in the Science majors that

to work closely with faculty, not only in course work and research, but also in the laboratories, where they get to experience what it is to do research and the excitement of discovery while working on a problem that has not been solved before."

He highlights that this is more difficult to do in larger research institutions which typically have graduate students to take on most of the research work.

Professor Bussell also highlights the essential communication skills that a liberal arts student develops – a skill he finds very important

wife Professor Kristi Lemm's first experience living in Southeast Asia. He considers it an adventure to take on this role in this part of the world where the idea of a liberal arts education is still new.

"The opportunity to come to Singapore and participate in the next stage of development of science in Asia, through liberal arts and sciences education and the creativity it cultivates, is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Combined with the chance to explore the culture and geography of Asia, this is an adventure that I could not pass up," he concludes.



Conducting environmental research in Andorra

Text by Daryl Yang | Image by Kelly Lau

Between 17 and 25 July, Jeffrey Tong (Class of 2018) would wake up every morning at 7.30am before setting out into the wilderness of the Andorran Pyrenees for a research expedition with 13 other people, including high school Biology teachers, a retired professor of engineering, and an oncologist.

The expedition was organised by Earthwatch Institute, an international environmental charity, which seeks to engage people worldwide in scientific field research and education to promote the understanding and action necessary for a sustainable environment.

This trip, sponsored by HSBC, was part of the annual HSBC/NYAA (National Youth Achievement Award) Youth Environmental Award that Jeffrey received earlier in April. Launched in 1998, the award aims to recognise young people for their environmental contributions in Singapore.

The award recognised Jeffrey's work in driving sustainable development and environmental activism. Jeffrey is the Vice-President of I'dECO, a Yale-NUS student organisation that nurtures future leaders in environmental activism, and a Youth Fellow on climate change with the advocacy group Environmental Challenge Organization (ECO) Singapore. His experiences had also led him to further

his expertise in a five-week environmental leadership programme in the United States under the US Department of State's Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) in 2015.

Jeffrey was on the Wildlife in the Changing Andorran Pyrenees expedition, organised by Earthwatch, which sought to study the impact of climate change in the mountain environment.

"The objective of the project is to measure and detail the changes to wildlife in the Andorran Pyrenees in response to climate change over a long period of time. To do so, several experiments have been designed, and these include seven key areas such as observing the species abundance of mammals, birds and insects using different experimental methods as well as tree diameter growth over time through the use of dendrometers," explained Jeffrey.

The mornings typically involve strenuous and extended periods of hiking on uneven terrain, ascending and descending slopes at high elevations in the Andorran mountains of over 2000m.

"We begin the day with setting up field experiments at six of twelve project sites established for the expedition. We resume after a lunch picnic but the afternoons are focused on observing and recording data that has been the result of

previous expeditions and fieldwork on the same study sites."

"We will also have special lectures in the evening, with topics that range from the Science of Climate Change, to the Ethnobotany & Ethnomycology of Plants and Mushrooms, to the Operations of a Ski Resort. These are either delivered by the lead researchers of the project or guest speakers."

His most memorable experience was his ascent to the snowbed at an elevation of around 2500m.

"When we arrived at the snowbed, we were tasked to identify plant species on several marked plots on the ground. These plants indeed looked like typical grasses that you would walk and trample on, but the fact that you could identify dozens of plant species and their degrees of flowering in a single square meter plot was fascinating."

"I watched in amazement at how our lead researcher lay belly-flat on the ground and started identifying plants by their scientific (Latin) name. By the time we were done after a few hours, I could already list a couple of species by scientific names off the top of my head! It still amazes me that there is so much depth in nature that often goes unnoticed."

As an Environmental Studies major, participating in this expedition has allowed Jeffrey

a hands-on experience of the research process.

"This trip has introduced me to, and allowed me to experience in detail, the processes of scientific research in environmental studies that will very much inform the work of decision makers and the scientific community in order to address the problems that we currently face."

The expedition has also helped to strengthened Jeffrey's convictions on the importance of holistic and interdisciplinary education.

"Our education should not be solely confined to the boundaries that we ourselves create. Just as how a researcher shared about the abundance of undocumented indigenous knowledge regarding the use of medicinal herbs and fungi in his field of ethnobotany, there are so many connections across disciplines that we can observe out in the field. Environmental studies, in particular, encourages us to explore the interconnections among traditional disciplines, focusing on both theory and application."

"My hope is for our education system in Singapore to adopt more of such holistic, hands-on approaches to learning and it's a great thing that we are currently working on that at Yale-NUS College," Jeffrey shared.



Taking on corporate internships around the world

Text by Daryl Yang | Image provided by Colette Chiaranussati

As the inaugural class of Yale-NUS College reaches its final year of undergraduate education, some students have taken on corporate internships around the world in preparation for life beyond the institution.

One such student is Subhas Nair (Class of 2017) who spent the month of July at the IBM Greater China Group in Hong Kong and Guangzhou, China. He was awarded this internship, alongside some classmates from Yale-NUS College as one of the prizes for winning a case competition organised by Yale-NUS' Global China Connection (GCC), a student organisation that aims to connect youth leaders and help them develop skills to succeed both in China and internationally.

"I am working with the Smarter Cities department to integrate IBM cloud computing technology, big data, and city-wide information communication systems in two sites along the Pearl River Delta in Southern China."

An Urban Studies major, Subhas plans to continue working on urban planning projects in China and South East Asia after he graduates. Prior to his IBM internship, Subhas had worked as a research intern at the Center for Liveable Cities in Singapore in June.

"The IBM internship has given me valuable insights

as to what that future might look like," he shared. "I have also learnt that 'smart' city-building is all about understanding the 'why,' before the 'how'. One must understand why the state wants a particular city to be 'smart,' before thinking about how a city can be smart."

Some rising juniors, like Colette Chiaranussati (Class of 2018), also spent their summers learning in the private sector. Working as a Summer Intern at a global macro hedge fund based in Connecticut, USA, Colette spent the first three weeks on training and the remaining time working between two departments, Sales and Trading and Investor Relations.

"I decided to do a corporate internship because I can gain a different experience from what I can learn in school. At my workplace, I witness how experts form a specific market view based on current events, and then connect the dots and express that market view in an investment. To me, that is something that I know I cannot learn anywhere else but in the workplace. It is a skill that comes with experience, an intimate understanding of the markets and a certain amount of intuition."

One of the most memorable experiences for Colette was going to the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) during the opening. Photo provided by

Colette.

"It's one thing to know that stocks are bought and sold at different prices, but to see exactly how this is done – with traders scrambling around to different desks recording the best prices, negotiating on the phone with the brokers. It helped me see the different and distinct moving parts involved when a trade is made."

For Luke Ong (Class of 2018), taking on a corporate internship was a natural choice because he had always aspired to join the finance industry after graduation. As an intern at ABN AMRO, a Dutch bank, Luke's work involved screening the bank's clients and prospects for quarterly reviews of current clients or for new clients.

An interesting point Luke realised during the internship was that the finance industry appreciates a diversity of backgrounds, to avoid the perils of groupthink.

"People tend to think that one has to have a finance background to do the job, but that is not true. I am an Economics major, which is useful because it allows me to understand the happenings around the world and the global markets from an economic perspective."

Like Luke, the most important takeaway for Erika Terrones-Shibuya (Class of 2017), who spent her summer in Hong Kong as a Summer Analyst

with Credit Suisse, was the importance of having unique perspectives.

"In today's hyper-connected world, information spreads very quickly, especially in financial markets. It is highly likely that you are not the only person to know about anything that could affect the markets. How an individual or organisation can stand out would be to offer a different perspective."

In the Equities Sales and Trading Summer Analyst Programme, Erika was assigned to work on various projects to support the regional Sales desk, as well as attend client meetings.

"Though it has been fast-paced and challenging, my experience has been nothing but great. We have multiple desk rotations every week, so we are exposed to all teams within Equities and this has been an especially eye-opening experience."

"This internship offered me tremendous access to people of all levels of seniority across many business divisions in the Bank, which has been the most valuable for me."

At Yale-NUS, in addition to the exciting opportunities our intrepid students secure on their own, the Centre for International & Professional Experience (CIPE) also coordinates internships with employers who are seeking student interns over the summer vacation period.



Learning and serving within communities

Text by Daryl Yang | Image provided by Tan Yanru

While many students would think of finding an internship with a multinational corporation, commercial enterprise or the public sector, some Yale-NUS students decided to work in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) where they served different communities while learning what it was like working in various parts of the world.

One of these students was Tan Yanru (Class of 2019) who interned with Caring for Cambodia, an organisation that aims to secure a better and brighter future for the children of Cambodia through education.

“As a gender equity intern, I had to revamp the organisation’s gender equity curriculum and prepare teaching materials, facilitate gender equity lessons and do a presentation on Gender Responsive Pedagogy for the NGO staff. Besides these, I also designed a wall mural for the school for future volunteers to work on,” said Yanru.

What touched her most was the impact she observed on one of the participants from the programme she helped to organise.

“While I may have doubted the effectiveness of empowerment in the past, I got to see how my gender equity lessons were having an impact on the students. A girl shared that after attending the gender equity sessions,

she was inspired to convince her parents to let her pursue running instead of working in the household, and she has since been to two provinces outside Siem Reap for running competitions.”

Saza Faradilla (Class of 2018) similarly went abroad and interned at the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD). JOHUD is one of the two royal NGOs in Jordan, and is the largest NGO in Jordan.

“I interned at both the children’s and women’s empowerment departments. For the children’s empowerment department, I worked on a social media strategy for a new centre they are opening in Kafraïn, and writing and editing reports for donors. In the women’s empowerment department, I worked on documenting the work that they do and collating it into a comprehensive manual,” she shared.

Saza’s prior experience running KidsAccomplish, a student organisation at Yale-NUS College that offers a holistic educational programme for primary school students, enabled her to meet the challenges at her workplace.

“Helming KidsAccomplish at Yale-NUS has given me the necessary skills to also contribute meaningfully to JOHUD. For instance, I was able to use the social media skills I learnt from managing

the KidsAccomplish Facebook page for JOHUD’s social media channels. I had the opportunity to apply my experience from running KidsAccomplish to help JOHUD develop an effective archiving system.”

Jane Zhang (Class of 2018) spent her summer in Singapore, serving the migrant workers community with HealthServe, a local NGO that provides medical assistance and advocates for the rights and welfare of migrant workers.

“My main role was to interview workers in order to create a compilation of their stories. I also helped out with other tasks such as running a free meal programme, accompanying workers on excursions around the city and to their hospital visits, and assisting in the Healthserve clinic and at public health screenings,” Jane explained.

Issues relating to migration have always been close to Jane’s heart because of her background. “Since coming to Singapore, I have been very interested in migrant workers’ issues and rights. I think this interest stems from a personal place, as my own parents were immigrants to the US and my own position as an international student here in Singapore,” she shared.

The greatest takeaway from Jane’s internship was realising that beyond humanising the migrant workers, it is

also equally important to recognise their needs and problems.

“They face very real, pressing problems, and simply being polite to them on the MRT is not enough; we must recognise their value as individuals in multicultural Singapore, include them into the patchwork of Singaporean society, and take care of their needs as much as we take care of the needs of any other member of Singaporean society.”

Jane also intends to continue volunteering with the organisation beyond her internship.

“I am very thankful to have gotten the chance this summer to work as an intern with HealthServe, because it allowed me to see how the needs of the migrant workers are being addressed by NGOs in Singapore. I am also planning a photography project in collaboration with the various NGOs that work with migrant workers in Singapore,” Jane shared.

At the College, in addition to the exciting opportunities our intrepid students secure on their own, the Centre for International & Professional Experience (CIPE) also coordinates internships for our students with NGOs locally and abroad. It also runs an annual NGO Bootcamp to prepare students with skills to contribute effectively to these organisations before they embark on their internships.