

ONLY DAUGHTER OF SINGLE MOTHER TOPS AS VALEDICTORIAN OF THE YEAR



Valedictorian of the Year:
Tan Yien Yien

Only child of a single mother, Tan Yien Yien tops her batch of graduates at this year's convocation of University College Sedaya International (UCSI).

The 21-year-old Bachelor of Business Information Systems graduate, who completed her undergraduate programme with flying colours, was also picked as the Valedictorian of the year for her achievements in both academic and co-curricular activities.

Yien Yien was a recipient of the President's Award for three consecutive years from 2003 through 2005. In December 2003, she also received the 'Sharing Your Life Award' for her dedicated contributions while serving, initially as its Director of Entrepreneurship, before winning the election and became the Deputy President of the Student Council as well as its Vice-President for Administration.

Hailing from a single family, Yien Yien has always been grateful for her mother's wholehearted dedication. Her mother, a housewife, Choo Kim Yoong has raised her up single-handedly.

"I never have to worry about her studies ever since her primary school years. She has always been motivated and initiatively sets targets for herself to achieve without me telling her to do so," said Choo.

"All I could give her was support although she did ask for minimal rewards whenever she achieved many A's. And I was very glad and relieved that she was able to continue her tertiary education through a full scholarship."

Currently, Yien Yien works as the Management Information System executive with the Student Affairs, where she maintains information systems and

implements IT solutions in Student Affairs such as Hostel Management Systems and myCo-Op.

Describing her as a “perfectionist”, her immediate superior, Student Affairs manager, Ooi Pei Boon said Yien Yien’s attitude to strive for perfection is both her greatest strength as well as one of her shortcomings.

“She might take longer to gather information and input before she starts on a task or project, but once she is in it, she delivers 101% good results,” said Ooi.

On why she chose Business Information Systems, Yien Yien, a former Pure Science student from Utama International School, said she has always been interested in Accounting.

Her teachers at the international school in Setapak, Kuala Lumpur have always recommended her to do an Accounting degree or to pursue her ACCA qualification. It was a tough decision for her whether to opt for a Computing for Business or Business Information Systems programme when she first joined UCSI at the age of 17.

However, her deep desire to keep abreast with the latest development in Information Technology had motivated her to choose Business Information System, which covers both Computing and Business elements – a decision that she does not regret. In her own words, that was exactly what she had always wanted to do.

A former student of Chung Hwa Middle School in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, where her father used to work, Yien Yien had initially faced difficulties in adapting to the national schools upon her return to Malaysia with her parents. She later joined Utama International School to continue her ‘O’ Levels stream, which allowed her to major in Pure Science and Accounting.

Being the only child in the family, Yien Yien believes that soft skills and practical work experience also play an important role in the overall development of a person. A well-rounded education, she says, is not the byproduct of lectures, books, assignments and classroom projects. For the former Deputy President of the Student Council, it is the opportunities given to her to be involved with the numerous events she has organized and committees she has chaired that have helped her to become a better person.

Her priority on graduation is to secure herself a permanent job before thinking of pursuing her studies to Masters or other professional qualifications.

A word of advice from Yien Yien: “Excelling in studies by learning up the theories and knowledge is not enough for one to survive and progress in his or her career. We need to put what we learn from books into daily practice. Whatever experiences each person gains out of his or her practical is never the same chapter each day.”



Yien Yien being congratulated by her aunt and mother (left).