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LEARNING FOR SUCCESS

Smooth sailing to research dream

Educational consultancy helped researcher to a hassle-free education

Had it not been for a visit to her junior college in 2004, Miss Tan Joo Huang's overseas study experience would have been very different.

That year was when the Nanyang Junior College alumnus came across CMS, an educational consultancy, when they visited the junior college.

"Before that, I had never heard of CMS or of educational consultancies in Singapore. So I went to talk to them about opportunities to study Biology overseas after my A levels," said Miss Tan, 28, now a PhD candidate at Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School.

After talking to the CMS representatives, Miss Tan, who was interested in pursuing further studies in biology and related fields, eventually settled on pursuing further studies in Australia after doing her A levels in 2004.

She came across CMS again at a career fair in 2005, and with their help, enrolled in Murdoch University's Bachelor of Science programme in 2005, majoring in Molecular Biology and Biomedical Sciences.

She graduated in 2007 and after consulting with Mr David Teo of CMS, she enrolled for an Honours programme with the University of Western Australia, and graduated with a Bachelor of Medical Science (Honours in Pathology) in 2008.

After engaging CMS' services in 2005, all she

needed to do was provide the required documents, fill in a few forms and CMS took care of the rest.

"The staff at CMS took care of everything with regard to enrolling in the universities in Australia. When I told them about my interest in pursuing further studies in biology, Mr Teo provided me a list of Australian universities with strong Biology programmes and took pains to go through the programmes with me. I then decided to apply to Murdoch University.

"I preferred studying in Australia as the universities there had flexible programmes where one could combine majors, and finish a Bachelor's programme within three years, thus saving time and money. Furthermore, Perth is a nice city which is not too far from Singapore.

"CMS arranged for my health checks for the visas, and even arranged for accommodation in Australia and people to meet the students at the airport. If one preferred to stay away from the hostel, they had a list of homes where students could stay as well.

"And all this was free. All I had to do was show up when required," said Miss Tan, whose younger brother is studying Economics at the University of Western Australia with CMS' help too.

After returning from Australia, she worked as a research officer at the Bioinformatics Institute at A*Star Singapore for 18 months before enroll-



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— Miss Tan Joo Huang

ing at the Integrated Biology and Medicine (IBM) Program at Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School in 2011.

She is now training under the Neuroscience and Behavioral Disorders Signature Research Program, in the Center for Cognitive Neuroscience, and is expected to graduate in 2016.

"I've always been interested in what makes people tick and my work involves researching how people interact with the world around them. By investigating their brain scans, electroencephalograms and behaviour, I find out how their brains process and interact with our environment, thus ultimately influencing our behaviour," said Miss Tan, who wants to work in research and academia.

"Had I not met Mr Teo, I would probably have had to wade through a lot of paperwork and requirements on my own. Thanks to them, my family and me were spared a lot of effort and worry.

"I will definitely recommend CMS' service to others."

AT A GLANCE

The Signature Research Program in Neuroscience and Behavioral Disorders comprises research groups that investigate molecular, developmental, systems and cognitive neuroscience.

The aim of much of the work in the Program is translating discoveries in basic science into diagnostic and therapeutic strategies in cognitive, developmental, eye and psychiatric disease.

Members of the Program work closely with the Institute of Mental Health and the National Neuroscience Institute, which provide unique opportunities to study psychiatric and neurological disorders at many different levels.

Graduates of the Program can work in the following careers:

- Academic research.
- Research and development in industries.
- Administration
- Teaching

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