

SEP-OCT2011

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Image courtesy of Singapore Tourism Board

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A surreal landscape featuring a giant person's legs in dark trousers and black shoes, standing on a green grassy field under a blue sky with white clouds. In the distance, a small person in a blue suit stands with their back to the viewer, looking towards the horizon.

SINGAPORE SMALL IN SIZE, BIG IN SPIRIT

BY
EILEEN NG,
EDITOR

IN THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM'S RECENTLY PUBLISHED GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS REPORT 2011 – 2012, **SINGAPORE** OVERTOOK SWEDEN FOR **SECOND POSITION WORLDWIDE**. RANKED ONLY AFTER SWITZERLAND, IT MAKES SINGAPORE THE **MOST COMPETITIVE ASIAN COUNTRY**, WITH JAPAN, THE SECOND-RANKED ASIAN ECONOMY, IN NINTH PLACE.

If recent events are anything to go by, Singapore has proven that there is never a dull moment in the city with its people working hard and playing equally hard. The annual Grand Prix night race in the Lion City has concluded amidst rave reviews. Formula One fans were not only treated to heart-stopping track action, but also performances from world-class acts like Linkin Park, Oprah-endorsed Charice, Shakira and more.

On the arts and cultural front, the Singapore Arts Festival ended its run recently. This annual event has transformed the city's cultural landscape by increasing the public's awareness and demand for the arts. The ArtScience Museum, the premier museum destination for major international touring exhibitions, is currently hosting the Dali: Mind of a Genius and Van Gogh Alive exhibitions. Soon to come is Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition where visitors can relive the glory days of this vessel with authentic artifacts and stories.

With all of these activities in place to promote a lively and dynamic environment, it is no wonder that Singapore is fast becoming an attractive place to live, work and play.

In this issue, *Synergy* takes a peek into the lives of some who have chosen to live, study and work here, including a couple of Singaporean students in Germany who have decided to return home for their internships. Find out more about new educational institutes like SUTD and Yale-NUS College which Contact Singapore is working closely with to bring in high calibre talent for their faculties.

As Aristotle had once said: education is the best provision for old age. We see this truth in our individual lives, and even in the life cycle of Singapore as a nation, education will play a distinct role in the years to come. The global schoolhouse has arrived in Singapore.



BIRD'S EYE VIEW

UNILEVER'S NEW GLOBAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CENTRE IN SINGAPORE

Singapore is set to become a home for Unilever's future talent development activities as construction of the company's first leadership development centre in Asia formally began on 19 July at research and innovation hub one-north. The consumer goods giant wants to groom leaders to support its expansion into developing and emerging markets, especially those in Asia.

TAKASAGO SINGAPORE INVESTS \$40.4M IN MANUFACTURING, R&D

Takasago Singapore will invest S\$40.4 million in a new facility as part of its regional expansion and plans to develop products especially for emerging Asia in Asia. As such, Takasago International aims to make its Singapore operation a key innovation, invention, R&D, and manufacturing location for the region.

UNIVERSAL MUSIC'S NEW REGIONAL BUSINESS UNIT IN SINGAPORE

Broadening its scope beyond just signing and developing artists, Universal Music South East Asia established a regional business development unit within its Singapore outfit in July this year. With partnerships already inked with Nokia, HP, and Singtel, the new unit seeks further business opportunities in both Singapore and the region.

SINOPEC BUILDS FIRST OVERSEAS LUBRICANT PLANT IN SINGAPORE

One of China's largest petroleum and petrochemical groups, state-owned Sinopec began construction of its first overseas lubricant plant in Singapore. A joint venture between EDB, JTC, and Sinopec, the group's Singapore operations will serve as Sinopec's regional production, servicing, and logistics hub for the Asia Pacific region.

CAREERS@SINGAPORE:

ENGINEERING, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, SOUTH KOREA



Contact Singapore held "Careers@Singapore: Engineering, Science & Technology" from 4 to 7 September, its inaugural event to engage with top science and engineering talent in South Korea. The trip was an opportunity to raise awareness of the Lion City as an attractive career destination for budding engineers, scientists and researchers alike.

Four organisations joined Contact Singapore in Korea for this event, namely A*STAR Data Storage Institute, NUS Graduate School, STMicroelectronics, and Vestas.

Contact Singapore and the employers participated in a series of successful campus recruitment events at five of Korea's top universities – Hanyang University, KAIST, Korea University, Seoul National University and Yonsei University. More than 300 students attended the events and many showed keen interest to gain international work experience.

Contact Singapore also collaborated with leading job search portal firm, Job Korea, to organise a networking event for experienced engineering professionals. Held at Job Korea's premises on 4 September, the session included presentations by representatives from Contact Singapore, A*STAR Data Storage

Institute, STMicroelectronics, and Vestas. Interview sessions were held afterwards for interested candidates who had submitted their resumes earlier.

Overall, this event showcased Singapore's dynamic engineering and research landscape, allowed for valuable one-on-one interactions between employers and attendees, and highlighted the many opportunities for an international career in Singapore. It also showed employers the considerable engineering talent present in Korea: they were highly skilled, technically competent, and many young Koreans especially were interested in relocating to Singapore for work.

Ms Natalie Lee, HR Director of Vestas Singapore, remarked,

"I have been to Korea several times. About 10 years ago, the biggest obstacle was English – not many people knew how to speak English. But now, Korean college students are fluent in English and I could feel their passion for the wind systems industry. They were aware of the current issues within the natural resources and energy industry. Many also showed great interest and knowledge in the environmental field."

OPPORTUNITIES@SINGAPORE: IN AUSTRALIA



From 25 to 31 August 2011, Contact Singapore organised "Opportunities@Singapore 2011", a series of career and networking events held in Australia in the cities of Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. Prompted by the positive feedback from previous participating organisations, this is Contact Singapore's second time helping the event. The aim was to attract Overseas Singaporeans and international talent based in the three Australian cities to consider career opportunities in Singapore.

A total of 12 Singapore-based organisations, ranging from academia to the public and private sectors, participated. Over 70 jobs and internship positions were featured to participants comprising undergraduates, postgraduates, as well as working professionals.

Divided into five main segments, the programme included pre-event networking sessions with Singaporean students and Singaporean professionals respectively; the main city events comprising presentations and career exhibitions for graduating students and working professionals; as well as campus events for Singaporean and Malaysian students.

Singaporeans who attended the exclusive pre-event networking sessions were among the firsts to engage with the participating organisations. This proved to be most fruitful, as Mr Loh Oun Hean, Director HR of Deloitte (Singapore and Southeast Asia), commented, "The pre-event networking with overseas Singaporeans was good as it allowed for more focused networking. Overall, the event was better than last year's – one single event for students in each city so there was less travelling to event venues. The events were spaced out well allowing us time to interview potential candidates."

The events attracted over 700 participants, and gave employers the chance to reach out to some of the brightest Singaporean and international talent in Australia. For many of the participating organisations, Australia is a new market source for talent recruitment. They were happy with this talent outreach platform, and found the quality of the candidates generally good. A few organisations shortlisted suitable candidates to be considered for internships and full-time positions.

Given the warm response to Opportunities@Singapore 2011, Contact Singapore is looking forward to working on similar high-quality talent outreach projects in the future.

"Thanks to Contact Singapore for arranging such a fruitful overseas event. It has really fulfilled the objective of attracting international talent," said Dr Khin Mi Mi Aung, Assistant Division Manager of Data Centre Technologies Division at A*STAR Data Storage Institute.



CAREERS@SINGAPORE 2011

16 AUGUST 2011

Despite the widespread effects of the global financial crisis, many countries in Asia, especially Singapore responded positively, leading to an up-trend in the hiring market in 2011. As many as one-third of hiring managers are looking to increase staff, with the majority of them confident of their respective companies' growth over the next twelve months. These were views shared by Mr Tim Hird, Managing Director for Robert Half International, during his workshop at Careers@Singapore 2011. The special private event – a platform for jobseekers to explore employment opportunities in Singapore – saw some 200 students mainly from universities in Europe and North America rubbing shoulders with representatives from well known multi-nationals, such as Barclays Capital, ExxonMobil, Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters, as well as organisations within Singapore's Public Sector.



WHAT "OUT-TO-HIRES" HAD TO SAY

"What Contact Singapore did well was reaching out to the students studying overseas who returned or came to Singapore for their holidays during this period. I had quite a lot of students coming around and asking for internships."

... Jacqueline Soon, Urban Redevelopment Authority

"We took a two-pronged approach – the immediate one as well as the longer term – where we would like to remain in their minds, and for them to apply to us when they graduate. I met a couple of really interesting ones, but of course I have to see how they compete with those who have applied to us."

... Jane Tan, ExxonMobil

"We got quite a good mix here, other than fresh graduates, we also have working professionals who aimed to come to Singapore to seek career opportunities, and we have a good mix of private and public companies, so I think it's pretty well organised."

... Hazel Teo, Unilever

"Because we get to meet potential employees, when you speak to them, they sounded out concerns you may not know as an employer. So when you hear the questions someone outside the organisation asks, it can actually help you improve your programmes to attract more talent."

... Zhen Ling Tan, Unilever

"The students were very engaging, they came in well informed and were very targeted in their selections. Many of them carried their own CVs. They knew exactly what they're looking for."

... Ng Min Hua, Johnson & Johnson

WHAT "UP-FOR-HIRES" HAD TO SAY

"Contact Singapore's London representative came to our business school in Madrid, Spain and he did a nice presentation of the opportunities in Singapore... right now, it's a lot better than the United States."

... Andrew Dupre

"It was a good fair, very informative; like RBS had a couple of representatives who were interning and it's easier to talk to someone at the same level."

... Kimberly Sarah Xavier

"I came here with the idea of finding prospective internships. I got more than that. I made many new friends, met many prospective employers, and they taught me a lot of things on what recruiters were looking out for."

... Durwin Ho

"It's very informative especially for us, students overseas. In fact, I hope to see more of these types of event soon. It has shown me the different opportunities there are in Singapore."

... Mavarick Ho

"I thought that the career talk came from a refreshing viewpoint – it gave me some insights that I never really thought about before."

... Michael Lian

9 SEPTEMBER 2011

WHAT "OUT-TO-HIRES" HAD TO SAY

"This is a good platform to meet and interact with young bright sparks from the top universities who are keen to pursue a career with us. I'm impressed with how prepared and vocal the students are, asking specific questions and building on the answers."

... Puvana Krishnan, Barclays Capital

"We believe in hiring for potential and creating a customised career path to build the passionate leaders of tomorrow. Interacting with the jobseekers here, we have found several candidates of high quality that we can evaluate further."

... Anand Wong, Mapletree Investments

"We are always on the lookout to secure the best talent. I'm pleased that this fair is an excellent way to access a diverse talent pool of bright young minds. I'm impressed with the remarkable quality of jobseekers."

... Duong Mai Chinh, Siemens

"We have participated for the past four years, happy with the high calibre of candidates from top schools and their interests in both our teaching and non-teaching openings."

... Audrey Tan, Ministry of Education

"We are very pleased with how well-organised the event is and the quality of jobseekers, who have clearly come well-prepared. The quality shows through the very focused and precise questions they ask about the financial industry and the roles we offer."

... Jonathan Loy, HSBC

"We're looking to expand our global footprint and this career fair is an excellent place to seek top-notch talent for an exciting career. We received a number of good CVs for our Manager-in-Training programme."

... Noah Spencer, Abercrombie & Fitch

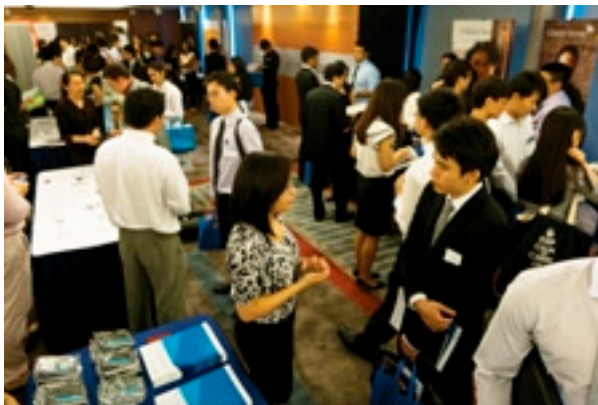
WHAT "UP-FOR-HIRES" HAD TO SAY

"The fair is a good chance to know more about prospective employers and get a headstart before I graduate. I'm looking forward to work in Singapore, confident that we will see good growth here as the financial hub of Asia. Besides, there's no place like home!" ... Tan Boon Shing

"The event was helpful. I enjoyed finding out more about the career possibilities in Singapore. I had a fantastic experience working in Indonesia so I would like to continue working in SE Asia!" ... Sarah Hird

"We students in the UK may be out of touch with the employment scene back home. The fair expanded my career options beyond academia. I'm looking forward to coming back to Singapore because it's important to make a difference in my own country." ... Becky Wong

"The fair provided an exchange of ideas and a good platform to get to know company insiders. After graduating from LSE, I chose to work in Singapore as it is the economic hub of Asia. Plus the strategic location, ease of getting around and the friendly people." ... Layla Liu



Continuing the success of the past three collaborations, Contact Singapore partnered with the four top universities in the UK – University of Cambridge, University of Oxford, Imperial College London and London School of Economics – for the fourth time. A private event attracting about 140 students in attendance, Careers@Singapore proved an excellent platform for jobseekers to explore employment opportunities in Singapore and network with prospective employers. The employers present comprised leading industry names, with the likes of Gallup Organization, Bain & Company, Bloomberg, Siemens; and financial institutions like Barclays Capital, Credit Suisse and HSBC.

Graduate School Projects@ Singapore

offers graduate students an opportunity to form a team of at least three persons and propose a project that is relevant to any of the key growth sectors in Singapore.

Open to graduate students of all disciplines with at least two years of working experience, the selected teams with the winning proposals will receive funding for a study trip to Singapore to gather information for the project as well as a stipend to cover associated expenses for the project.

Find out more about the programme and past cycles of projects at Contact Singapore's website www.contactsingapore.sg/gsp

Here, *Synergy* finds out more about the three winning proposals from cycle three.



(From left to right): Hao Song, Yang Qingjia, Vince Tay (Country Manager of CDM), Liu Qiulu, Yu Rui and Zhuo Yuwen (Contact Singapore representative)

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

According to a report by the World Bank, solid waste management, which has been an ongoing problem in China, is expected to double in the next 10 years. Four MBA students, who are majoring in environmental engineering at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), came together in an effort to study the factors that affect solid waste planning in China, in comparison to other countries. Moreover, the team also conducted a detailed study on the market status of solid waste planning in major cities of China, which can provide useful market intelligence for interested parties who want to penetrate their waste management business into China, with their strong expertise.

During their research, the team also made a study trip to Singapore. They visited the Keppel Seghers Tuas Waste-To-Energy Plant and Semakau Landfill for field studies, gaining on-site experience about the practices carried out in Singapore's solid waste management. The team also conducted a residential survey among the public, yielding an impressive result of 98% of residents who were in support of proper solid waste planning in the country.

This finding led the HKUST team to conclude that input and effort from both the government and public is crucial in order for the solid waste management market to be successful, as in the case of Singapore's.

Through this project, the team has recommended some ways to improve China's solid waste planning, some of which include planning solid waste management strategies to ensure its sustainability in the long run and to increase public awareness on environmental conservation and the detrimental consequences of poor solid waste management.

WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAID:

"Singapore, a wonderful and beautiful sunshine city, impressed me with its smart government and people. The Graduate School Projects@ Singapore opened a window for me to understand better both China's and Singapore's environments. This is a precious memory in my graduate study."

... Yang Qingjia

"Singapore is exactly like a huge garden to me – it is so clean and there are plants everywhere! Environmental technology here is incredibly progressive; other countries in the world should learn from Singapore in this aspect."

... Liu Qiulu

"One discovery we made during our stay in Singapore is that environmental protection ought to be based on a combination of both top-down and bottom-up. The former is related to effective implementation of policies while the latter focuses more on support and recognition from local citizens."

... Hao Song

"For a tiny island like Singapore, the solid waste management system has indeed been amazingly well designed. My entire experience here has yielded significant harvest!"

... Yu Rui



(From left to right): Peter Konefal, Connie Chang, Eva Tidlund and Kathleen Williams

WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAID:

"This is my first time in Asia and Singapore has left me with more than a few best impressions but if I have to pick one, it would be the people. The warmth of the locals has definitely left a huge impression on me and I can't wait, already, to plan my next trip back here."

... Peter Konefal

"I have lived in Singapore for a number of years when I was younger and returning now almost feels like I'm visiting a new place! The amount of development that has taken place here is impressive and for me the biggest change has to be the Marina Bay Sands (MBS). It's exciting, and I feel a sense of comfort coming back here."

... Eva Tidlund

"For me, the most memorable moments would have to be our case interview sessions. To my pleasant surprise, many Singaporeans in the hotel industry share our passion for environmental CSR. It's a wonderful experience meeting people halfway across the world from us who share our common interests."

... Kathleen Williams

"As I am an Asian, I've been mistaken by many Singaporeans to be the tour guide for our team when in fact, I'm the one who is mostly unable to find my way around here! I am impressed by the way Singaporeans, particularly the younger generation, are able to stand true to their traditions while moving forward with the rest of the world at the same time."

... Connie Chang

IDENTIFYING CSR BEST PRACTICES IN SINGAPORE'S HOTEL INDUSTRY

A team of four MBA students from Canada's Simon Fraser University had flown in to Singapore to investigate corporate social responsibility (CSR) views and practices in Singapore's hotel industry, focusing their project on the topic of environmental responsibility.

There were approximately 11.6 billion visitors to Singapore in the year 2010, with hotel room revenue contributing an estimated S\$2 billion to the industry. Being huge consumers of water and electricity, hotels have naturally fallen under the microscope of the team. They have split their research into two parts – collecting field data via electronic surveys and forming case interviews.

So far, the Canadian team has made one interesting finding – even as most hotels have displayed energy conserving efforts within their internal departments such as housekeeping and engineering, they have yet to encourage the same level of participation among their hotel guests.

Through insights gained from their study, the team recommended some ways to raise environmental awareness in Singapore's hotel industry. These ideas include encouraging hotel guests to be more involved in environmentally-friendly practices, using social media tools to gather market feedback on the environmental concerns of guests and peers in the industry, and gradually shifting to an environmentally-conscious system. An example of this would be to remove selected items from the complimentary amenities kit such as toothbrushes and shower items, and making them available only upon guests' request.



(From left to right): Ben Bonetti, Chun Zhi Lim, Gerald Tock (Representative from GAMBIT-MIT) and Hristo Odiseev

ADAPTING SINGAPORE'S IDM INDUSTRY

Due to its cost efficiency and incorporation of social elements into gameplay, the adoption of apps in the gaming industry has become more and more prominent over the years. Three MBA students from the University of Cambridge came together to study the needs of the evolving Interactive and Digital Media (IDM) market, basing their research on app adoption trends in the Asia-Pacific market.

Two primary reasons that led the team to Singapore were the cultural diversity and strong entrepreneurial background of the country. Their main goal was to seek out strategies that were able to boost Singapore's IDM market. The Cambridge team

discovered that though Singapore's gaming industry is smaller in comparison to countries like South Korea, it is a thriving one and the community is closely-knitted. Further investigations suggest that the size of the gaming industry can be attributed to the shortage of local talent in this space.

The team of three has recommended some ways to increase the talent pool in Singapore, such as continuing to draw talent from foreign markets, offering internship programmes to entice younger and fresher minds, and welcoming new and small entrants into the mobile market.

WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAID:

"From Chinatown's buzzing streets to Marina Bay's futuristic business hub, there is a perfect balance of rich culture and the forwardness of a modern era. I was also impressed by the panoramic view and the endless shopping and dining options along the Marina Promenade."

... Hristo Odiseev

"Despite performing very well, the gaming market in Singapore still has some catching up to do. There is, however, a lot of potential, seeing how local gaming companies are starting to become exceptionally creative and entrepreneurial. With a bit of boost, I am certain that Singapore will rise to the forefront of the gaming world."

... Ben Bonetti

"Being Singaporean, there is a great deal that I miss while away in Cambridge, such as the wide variety of food and the nature reserves – MacRitchie and Bukit Timah – where I go for trail runs. Despite being small, Singapore's excellent infrastructure, good IP protection and investment interest of reputable companies will definitely help us to go far."

... Lim Chun Zhi

CONSISTENTLY REACHING OUT

Studying abroad brings an exciting package of opportunities, from gathering new perspectives, obtaining a global outlook by learning about new cultures and different ways of living to developing personal character and skills. With these factors in mind, Contact Singapore continually seeks out new and interesting ways to engage and tap into this talent pool to bring them the myriad of opportunities across various sectors that are available back home.

BRINGING HOME OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE



For Adeline Tay, President of the Singapore Students' Association of Germany (SSAG), a love for languages drew her to pick up German at the age of 13.

"I feel that passion is a critical ingredient in learning languages. It helped that I was able to participate in a one-month immersion programme in Germany, which exposed me to a real German world, which fascinated me and made

me determined to make German part of my future career.

Adeline was introduced to the association by a senior who graduated from her university several years ago. She recalls, "I was certain that being in an environment with fewer Singaporeans would be a huge personal learning experience. In addition, I was aware that even amidst a new environment and new friends, it is important to form a support group of Singaporeans who will be there for each other in necessary times".

BRINGING LOCAL COUNTERPARTS TOGETHER

With two official events annually, the SSAG aims to bring Singaporean students studying in Germany together for a weekend to network, to share experiences with one another and to bring back the feeling of being "back at home". The first of these events is the Kennenlernwochenende (Meet-the-Singaporean-Students weekend) usually held just after the new academic year in Germany begins in October, followed by the Annual General Meeting held just before summer.

SSAG also collaborates with Contact Singapore to bring updates to Singaporean students on career and internship opportunities at home.

Adeline shares, "In a recent info-networking session organised jointly by Contact Singapore and SSAG, Singaporean students (mainly from Heidelberg University) had the exclusive opportunity to learn about the new developments and trends in Singapore first-hand from Contact Singapore's Global Operations Director, and to speak to him personally about internship and career opportunities in their respective fields.

Adeline is confident that her committee will continue to stay relevant and be connected to the student community with the help of social media.

"SSAG primarily serves to forge ties between Singaporean students in Germany, to facilitate and encourage mutual support and to allow the sharing of information, knowledge and advice with each other or with prospective students. This is mainly achieved through our forum and our Facebook page, where queries or concerns can be posted and where members are drawn to share their personal experiences. At the same time, these channels also facilitate networking and promote interaction between our members". In fact, in addition to a hyperlink from SSAG homepage to Contact Singapore Job Portal (www.contactsingapore.sg/jobs), Contact Singapore has been posting "Careers@Home" events on SSAG bulletin board.



Photo courtesy of Hadi Kang

HOME ESSENTIALS



For engineering student Huang Liangzhu, doing his internship in Singapore allowed him to indulge in his favourite local foods.

Despite the prospect of a more attractive internship package in Germany, engineering student Huang Liangzhu decided that returning home has promising prospects.

"While there are more internships in Germany, Singapore offers attractive internship opportunities in the finance and services sectors. German students are also drawn to the fact that many German MNCs are based in Singapore and it would be a perfect gateway into Asia."

"I decided to return to Singapore for internship after attending a "Careers@Singapore" presentation session by Contact Singapore in RWTH Aachen University. Contact Singapore provided me with information avenues of career opportunities in various burgeoning sectors of the Singaporean economy – finance, oil and gas, marine, pharmaceuticals and more."

"My internship at Droege Group (Singapore) provided me with interesting insights into management consulting. It was particularly intriguing as some projects involved not only attracting European companies to base their regional headquarters in Singapore but also expanding their businesses in Singapore to tap into other markets in the region."

"Having only been back in Singapore for only six months in six years, I certainly do miss my family, friends and of course, the food. To be honest, though having supper late at night is considered unhealthy, that is one thing about Singapore that I thoroughly miss – having roti prata with my friends at 1 a.m. without the need to wear a jacket."

MAKING CHILDREN SMILE



For 3rd year medical student, Raymond Ho Wei Jian, 24, studying in Germany was a valuable opportunity to widen his horizons.

There's never a better time than being far away from home to appreciate the warmth of the kindness from strangers. "I feel that the Germans' attitude towards the locals and international students is the same. They are friendly and respectful of other people's cultures. I have friends who have even invited me to join their family to celebrate German festivities," he enthuses.

Fortunately for Raymond, his elder brother is also studying engineering in Germany. "During our semester holidays or even weekends, we would travel to visit each other. My brother has always been there for me since the day I arrived in Germany. I am also a member of the Singapore Students' Association of Germany (SSAG). Through this channel, I am able to connect with Singaporean students in Germany," he says. It was also through the association that he learnt about the internship opportunities available at home.

"I got to know about the opportunity to undertake internship in Singapore during a "Careers@Home" session hosted by Mr Raymond Tan (Director, Global Operations) of Contact Singapore, and was excited to know more. It didn't take me long to choose KKH (Kandang Kerbau Women's and Children's Hospital) for my internship.

"From this attachment, I observed how the nurses and doctors work together as a team to provide the best and the most professional medical care to the patients. As I aspire to become a paediatric surgeon in the future, my attachment to the surgical department was most rewarding.

"The thing I will miss from this internship is the care and assistance rendered to me, enabling me to understand medical terms, picking up useful skills which might be beneficial in daily life and the friendliness of the staff, which made my internship fruitful and smooth sailing."

UNRAVELLING LIFE'S LITTLE MYSTERIES



A lifelong fascination with puzzles put Karsten Heil on the track to pursue his dream in medical science.

Traversing continents, crossing time zones and having never set foot in Asia before, it's admirable that German medical student Karsten is hardly daunted by the unknown. Instead, he focused on learning as much as he could about his host country, having known Singaporean classmates in Germany and made more friends here during his first attachment in 2009, an experience which inevitably drew him back.

Now in his final year at the University of Heidelberg Medical School, he is enjoying his attachment in Singapore. "In 2009, I did an elective each at KK Women's and Children's Hospital (genetics) and National Cancer Centre (oncology). I had such a good experience that I decided to come back again this year and since 1 August, I've been doing an elective in general surgery at Tan Tock Seng Hospital." After a four-month stint, he will be doing a psychiatry elective at two other hospitals before returning home.

Living in super efficient Singapore may have led some of us to take the system for granted but when viewed through a fresh pair of eyes, Singapore's healthcare system has much to be proud of.

"I'm really impressed with the efficiency of the healthcare system in Singapore, especially when you take into account the budget spent and results achieved. What I like is the sustainability of the system here, where people are more conscious of costs involved in their treatment and medication. So they tend to communicate more with their doctors and ask more questions."

In terms of comparing pace of work in Germany and Singapore hospitals, Karsten says "it's pretty much the same. I would definitely consider taking up residency training here after completing my course."

Building a global talent pool

With 25,000 graduates successfully acquiring their doctorate every year, Germany is one of the world's most attractive centres for scholars and researchers in the areas of science and engineering.

To catalyse the growth of Singapore's strategic research areas (such as clean technology, environmental and water technologies, biomedical sciences translational and clinical research) and to augment Singapore's workforce with relevant talent, Contact Singapore's Frankfurt office has been expanding its talent engagement efforts in Germany since 2009.

Contact Singapore aims to excite Germany-based talent with opportunities in Singapore through a variety of initiatives, including the "Careers@Singapore" and "Experience@Singapore" programmes.

"Specifically for Singaporeans who are studying in Germany, Contact Singapore extends its outreach via the SSAG, and has successfully managed to interest most of them to have at least one internship stint back home during their school vacation. We hope to have them return home for career opportunities upon their graduation," said Raymond Tan, Director of Global Operations of Contact Singapore.

dotting the "i"

SINGAPORE - THE GLOBAL SCHOOLHOUSE



Photo courtesy of the Singapore Tourism Board /
Photographer: Ng Xin Yu

Back in 1985, the Economic Committee had identified education as one of the 18 service sectors to nurture and promote for its net worth to the economy, revenue and export earnings potential. However, socio-political concerns limited efforts to develop education as a business. Fast forward to 2001 when the Economic Review Committee (ERC) was established against a backdrop of a significantly changed regional and world environment including developed economies' slowdown, rise of emerging economies like China, and uncertainties in Southeast Asia. Singapore's economy at that time was also evolving and the ERC was tasked to review the nation's development strategy, then look into ways to upgrade, transform and revitalise the economy. The development of education as a business in Singapore was once again brought to the forefront.

AN ENGINE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

The Singapore government recognised the pivotal role of education and established a vision to develop a vibrant education ecosystem. This education ecosystem will offer a diverse and distinctive mix of quality education services to the world, thus becoming an engine of economic growth, capability development and talent attraction for Singapore.

Statistics¹ showed that ten years ago, the education industry contributed approximately S\$3.0 billion to the economy, equivalent to 1.9% of Singapore's GDP. It also provided employment to 47,000 people and enrolled 50,000 foreign students in both private and public institutions. According to Merrill Lynch, the education industry is worth S\$2.8 trillion worldwide and employs 5% of the global workforce. In Australia and the UK, education contributed 5.5% and 5.6% to the respective countries' GDP in 1999 respectively. The aim for Singapore was to increase the GDP contribution from 1.9% to 3 – 5%, in line with our counterparts in other developed nations with an established education hub. This translates to an additional 100,000 international full-fee paying students and 100,000 international corporate executives for training.

The Global Schoolhouse initiative was thus born in 2002.

¹ Department of Statistics, 2000 and Singapore Immigration & Registration, 2001



SINGAPORE EDUCATION

Building of a brand name

By building a strong brand name in education, Singapore's Global Schoolhouse initiative has drawn world-class universities to set up operations here. Some of the highly reputable institutions offering quality education include INSEAD, the German Institute of Science and Technology – TUM Asia, and New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Many of the institutions that have established a base here represent the best in their respective fields, with disciplines ranging from business to engineering and applied sciences. Specialised schools in niche areas of the arts, media, hospitality and design have also enhanced the educational offerings available in Singapore. Not only has the local market reaped the rewards of choice education options, these institutions have been able to use Singapore as a springboard for expansion in the region. The Singapore Education brand name has thus grown from strength to strength and Anglo-Chinese School (International) and Raffles Education are testaments of its success.

What were the challenges facing the education industry in its infantile years of development and how were these overcome in tandem with the inherent strengths that Singapore possessed?

Leveraging strengths

Singapore is a progressive and cosmopolitan society that combines the best of East and West, making it an attractive base for educational institutions to establish operations. Coupled with its strong academic reputation, alongside a well-developed public education system, it is no wonder that Singapore is the Asia Pacific hub for top foreign tertiary institutions such as INSEAD, Georgia Tech and the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

English is used as the language of instruction and communication, hence enabling a large addressable market. As it stands, Singapore's reputation for quality education has drawn students from the region, and its location will also continue to attract international students to this viable education hub.

Tackling challenges

Where in the past there was a lack of quality overseas professors and teachers willing to stay beyond the experience-gaining period of two to three years, foreign professionals are now more open to living here and making Singapore their home. The continual development of Singapore as a well-run, safe and cosmopolitan environment appeals to foreigners looking to settle here. This has spelt a welcome

permanence for this industry, which in turn benefits the calibre of the teaching professionals.

In order to maintain its position as one of the leading education hubs in the world, Singapore is committed to achieve the highest standards across the private education industry in order to build a strong Singapore Education brand name internationally. In 2009, the Ministry of Education (MOE) introduced the Private Education Act to enhance regulation in the private education sector, in order to raise the standards of private education providers over time.

Maximising opportunities

Singapore is located amidst one of the world's fastest growing student markets. According to the UK Vision 2020 report, Asia is set to account for 70% of the global demand for international higher education by 2025.

Singapore's unique blend of East and West presents a multicultural learning environment that offers a global perspective with a distinct Asian flavour. Coupled with its competitive advantages as a cosmopolitan Asian city with a high quality of life and global connectivity, Singapore attracts the best talent from around the world. Many international institutions are already using their campuses in Singapore as a gateway to Asia. For instance, INSEAD's bi-campus model facilitates the exchange of students between France and Singapore, and offers the opportunity for cross-cultural learning experiences.

The Singapore government also doubled spending on higher education: investment in the university sector has risen from S\$1.24 billion in 2005 to S\$2.52 billion in 2010.



There are many opportunities available to grow this industry further by focusing on specific segments such as private commercial and specialty schools, the implementation of corporate training centres for MNCs, or even the establishment of quality preparatory and boarding schools for higher education. With the current measures set in place, the Global Schoolhouse initiative, along with every bright spark in Singapore's education landscape, can scale new heights for mankind's never-ending quest for knowledge.

Facts and Figures

- Today, Singapore is home to nine leading foreign tertiary institutions and over 30 pre-tertiary schools offering international curricula.
- Singapore is ranked 1st in both mathematics and science across 142 countries by World Economic Forum in its Global Competitiveness Report 2011-2012.
- The IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2009 ranked Singapore's educational system second in the world.
- Singapore emerged among the top performers in the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (Pisa) in 2009. Out of 65 countries, Singapore was ranked 2nd in mathematics, 4th in science, and 5th in reading.



SINGAPORE UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN:

DESIGNING AN EDUCATION FOR A BETTER WORLD

Established in collaboration with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Zhejiang University (ZJU), the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) is the nation's newest public university. Promoted as the "first university in the world to integrate the concept of design and innovation as a common thread in research and engineering", SUTD's mission is to develop future leaders and innovators who will serve societal needs.

School officially begins in April next year, and it's now all systems go: the university is on track to admit its first cohort of students; 50 academic staff have been hired, alongside plans to double its faculty within the next two years; and the first- and second-year curricula nearly completed. *Synergy* talks to SUTD Provost Prof Chong Tow Chong to find out more.

SUTD OFFERS four degrees in the areas of architecture and sustainable design, engineering product development, engineering systems and design, as well as information technology systems and design. Postgraduate study is also available in the form of a Dual Masters' Degree Programme in collaboration with MIT. Candidates spend up to one year with MIT and the other year with SUTD. Those who successfully complete the programme will graduate with two Masters degrees – one from each institution.

Photo courtesy of Singapore University of Technology and Design

INTERVIEW WITH

PROVOST, PROFESSOR

CHONG TOW CHONG

Photo courtesy of Singapore University of Technology and Design



For Prof Chong, SUTD is an exciting opportunity for him and his team to "take a bold step in shaping the future of architecture and engineering education through a totally new and different approach from what has been done traditionally". The emphasis is on teaching students to solve real-world problems – to build not just great academic qualifications, but great careers.

At the heart of SUTD is a focus on "The Big D" and a social mission. Prof Chong explains that The Big D is "the art and science of design, which encompasses research, innovation and entrepreneurship"; the "integrative glue" across multiple fields in technology, humanities, and the arts, such that the products, services or systems developed will serve society.

SUTD collaborates extensively on the education, research, and exchange fronts with MIT and ZJU, two universities renowned for engineering and entrepreneurship. MIT will develop most of SUTD's courses and train its faculty under a year-long, teach-the-teacher programme over the next five years. Through MIT and ZJU, students will be able to participate in exchanges, design competitions, workshops, as well as internships.

With the importation of what Prof Chong calls "the MIT DNA" into SUTD, the hope is to nurture similar individuals who will go on to be game-changers. The ZJU partnership opens doors to the Chinese economy and society, and represents a conscious effort to promote perspectives from both the East and West. After all, part of preparing future global-minded leaders is to inculcate not just technological expertise, but cross-cultural savvy as well.

INTERVIEW WITH

DR

FOONG SHAOHUI



After leaving Singapore in 2002 to pursue his undergraduate and graduate education at the Georgia Institute of Technology in America, Dr Foong Shaohui is continuing his academic career with SUTD as an Assistant Professor in the Engineering Product Development pillar (EPD).

Enthusiastic about joining SUTD in these early stages, he is excited to be able to directly influence research directions, curriculum, and pedagogy at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Apart from researching in the areas of mechatronics and automation, Dr Foong is also involved in the development and implementation of the school's introductory design course.

For Dr Foong, SUTD's unique "department-less" approach is its most exciting feature. This, he explains, not only "reflects the evolution of engineering and architecture pedagogy", but allows one to "seamlessly interact intimately with fellow engineers, scientists and architects on not just research challenges but also content in the classroom" as well.

And what about SUTD's mission to inspire and nurture future leaders who will use their technical know-how for social change?

Dr Foong believes that technology and design are vital for addressing some of the world's most pressing problems. "Design," he says, "is the essence of engineering, to continuously innovate and invent new methods, technologies and infrastructure for the advancement of mankind".



Photo courtesy of Singapore University of Technology and Design

CONTACT SINGAPORE:

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS WITH SUTD

In support of SUTD's faculty needs, Contact Singapore organised a series of recruitment efforts on the East and West coasts of US.

From 24 to 29 April 2011, Contact Singapore held a series of successful road shows at Carnegie Mellon, Columbia, Princeton, Harvard, and MIT. Over 100 contacts were established, with SUTD conducting on-site interviews for particularly promising candidates.

With the success of the April trip, Contact Singapore forged ahead with recruitment seminars, this time on the West Coast of US. Career talks were held from 12 to 16 September at the University of California, Los Angeles; California Institute of Technology; University of Southern California; University of California, Berkeley; and Stanford University.

Interested to be part of SUTD's faculty? Please visit www.sutd.edu.sg.

YALE-NUS COLLEGE:

CHAMPIONING THE LIBERAL ARTS FOR A NEW AGE

Photo courtesy of Yale-NUS College

The Yale-NUS College (YNC) is, in short, a college of many firsts – not only is it Singapore's first liberal arts college, it is also the first with a full residential college model that integrates living and learning. Furthermore, it is the first campus outside New Haven, Connecticut, that Yale University has developed.

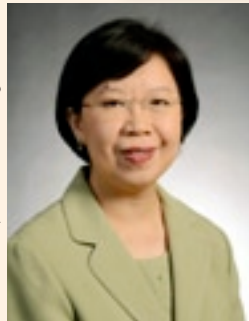
YALE-NUS COLLEGE offers a four-year residential liberal arts undergraduate programme leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours or a Bachelor of Science with Honours, awarded by NUS. Students will spend all four years living on campus, and a strong co-curricular and extra-curricular programme complements classroom activities. All students also have the opportunity to participate in internships, overseas experiences, as well as a specially developed leadership programme.

Interview with

PROFESSOR

LILY KONG

Photo courtesy of Yale-NUS College



The vision is to create a new model of residential liberal arts education, one based on the strongest elements of the American liberal arts tradition, but contextualised to Asia in the 21st century. As Prof Lily Kong, Acting Executive Vice-President (Academic Affairs), says,

"NUS and Yale hope to introduce fundamental innovations in education that could serve as a model for others in Asia, and that may help reshape approaches to liberal arts education in existing institutions including Yale itself".

A rigorous liberal arts education emphasises broad-based, multi-disciplinary learning in the arts, humanities, social sciences, natural and physical sciences, and mathematics, while promoting depth of learning. Prof Charles Bailyn, Dean of the Faculty, explains, "In the 21st century, it's more important than ever to make sure that a broad education includes science, social sciences and the humanities and arts on an equal basis. We need business and political leaders who understand science, scientists who are broad thinkers about human and societal needs, and artists and critics who appreciate the full range of contemporary knowledge".

In building a dynamic, close-knit community of thinkers and innovators who will go on to "become future global leaders and engaged citizens", Prof Kong says that YNC will be a key player in advancing Singapore's economy and society, "It can contribute to Singapore's next phase of growth by grooming a cadre of talent who can see and think deeply about connections across different domains", skills that are undoubtedly vital to thrive in our complex and fast-changing world.

INTERVIEW WITH

PROFESSOR

CHARLES BAILYN

Photo courtesy of Yale-NUS College



It is a very exciting time for Prof Charles Bailyn. As the inaugural Dean of the Faculty, he is at the helm of hiring a whole new team of faculty members in time for the college's opening in 2013. This means creating entirely new slots to attract the right people, and the opportunity to work on a much bigger scale. Prof Bailyn says he wants to "assemble a faculty that

covers an unusually broad range of disciplines and personal backgrounds and styles. What I hope we will all have in common includes devotion to teaching undergraduates, to research that both advances the field and involves undergraduates, and to developing a collaborative exciting learning environment for faculty and students alike."

Behind everything is a clear commitment to high standards. YNC wants to build a strong programme, which includes talented students and faculty from diverse backgrounds who are particularly interested in undergraduate teaching within the college's residential setting. "We're looking for scholars who think both deeply and broadly, and who will be leaders in developing and teaching the exciting new curriculum we have in mind. The founding faculty will have a truly unique opportunity to shape something new, rather than squeezing themselves into previously established traditions," Prof Bailyn explains.

When the opportunity arose for Yale to work with NUS to set up this new college, it was something that was "too exciting to pass up", Prof Bailyn reveals. "Specifically, we felt that Singapore presented several characteristics that combined to make a unique opportunity to do this kind of project." Singapore possesses a very strong educational system that consistently attracts top-notch talent, is located in one of the most dynamic regions of the world and is English-speaking, has a powerful research university like NUS with great facilities to boot, and "the resources and interest to carry out this project in a manner that would make the new institution a truly world-class endeavour."

BE PART OF

THE FOUNDING FACULTY

Faculty positions at all ranks and in all areas of the humanities, arts, and social and natural sciences are available. Yale-NUS College seeks outstanding teacher-scholars at all career stages who are keen to be part of the inaugural faculty, committed to innovative pedagogy, and who are dynamic researchers who enjoy close mentoring of students. Interested candidates, please visit www.yale-nus.edu.sg.

LIVING IT UP IN SINGAPORE

Being a small tropical island, the optimisation in usage of land is a priority in Singapore. As such, the only way forward for housing here is up – building tall, mesmerising, living spaces to suit various needs and tastes.

Renowned as one of Asia's most liveable cities, it is no wonder that many make the choice to come to Singapore not just for leisure, but to live and work as well. And while many are aware of its high standards in living and cleanliness, many are still unclear in regard to housing. How does an island city-state of only 700 square kilometres, house a population of over 5 million?



Photo courtesy of the Singapore Tourism Board /
Photographer: Jiew Tong Leng

A SPACE AMONG THE CLOUDS

To answer this, Singapore literally looks to the sky. Comprising 70 storeys of luxury living spaces, facilities and other conveniences, the majestic Marina Bay Tower 1 is currently the country's tallest residential building. Also known as The Sail @ Marina Bay, the development is a bench marker in the concept of a "Live, Work and Play" enclave that also boasts unparalleled views of the city.

The Sail is just one of many examples of how Singapore addresses the issue of land scarcity. Realising early on that careful and thorough planning was required to maximise the use of land, the government took decisive steps to align this with the country's growing needs.

A ROOF OVER EVERYONE'S HEADS

Public housing in Singapore is managed by the Housing and Development Board (HDB). The majority of the residential housing developments in Singapore are publicly governed and developed, with about 85% of Singaporeans living in such houses. These flats are located in housing estates - self-contained satellite towns - with convenient amenities and facilities. These include schools, supermarkets, clinics, hawker centres, and in some areas, even sports and recreational facilities. To cater to different housing budgets, a large variety of flat types and layouts are offered.

While HDB flats are built to provide affordable housing for the masses and their purchase can be financially-aided by the Central Provident Fund, public housing in Singapore is not considered as a sign of poverty or lower standards of living as compared to public housing in some other countries. Despite being generally cheaper than privately-built homes, HDB flats are built in a variety of quality and finishes to cater to middle and upper middle income groups.

THE PINNACLE OF QUALITY

Photo courtesy of the Singapore Tourism Board



As Singapore developed economically, changing demands has seen more up-market public housing developments catering to those with higher incomes. An example of this is The Pinnacle @ Duxton, a 2.5 hectare residential complex located at 1 Cantonment Road, Singapore. Coming in at an impressive 50 storeys, it is currently the world's tallest public housing development. It also boasts several added features such as:

- A link between towers at the 26th and 50th floors by sky bridges forming a jogging track and sky garden, a feature that is unique for public housing in Singapore.
- Facilities such as a food centre, daycare centre, underground carpark and other sports and recreational facilities.
- Buyers were able to choose their flat's layout from combinations of balconies, planter boxes and/or bay windows. Internal lightweight concrete walls in units can be easily removed and reconfigured by owners.

BUDGET

To be on the safe side, always give your budget a bit of margin, e.g. if your budget is S\$5,000, add a S\$500 buffer to play with. Rents vary depending on several factors such as the type of accommodation, location, whether it's partially/fully furnished, total floor size, proximity to amenities, duration of the lease, etc. For instance, a bungalow can cost anything between S\$9,000 to S\$26,000 a month to rent, depending on its size and facilities, whereas a room can range between S\$450 in a HDB unit and up to S\$1,900 in a full facility condominium. The ranges and varieties are manifold.

TYPES OF HOUSING FOR RENT

High-rise apartments & condominiums

Most expats in Singapore opt for private apartments, such as condominiums. The reasons for this are their generally favourable location, their luxurious character, their numerous and typically upmarket amenities/facilities and their accessibility to other foreigners.

Landed or detached houses

Bungalows and colonial "black and white" mansions tend to be a fair amount costlier to rent than most regular condos, because they offer serene surroundings, come with their own patch of land/garden and there's no sharing any of the building structures with neighbours.

Other types of landed property are semi-detached houses and terraced houses, such as the 19th century Peranakan shophouses that have been refurbished but still retain their old world cultural charm.

Housing & Development Board (HDB) flats

These are essentially public flats that are mostly confined to New Townships developed in specific districts. Recently more and more expats have taken to HDB units, not only because the rules governing HDB rental to foreigners have been relaxed, but also because HDB living is quite affordable. Furthermore, HDB flats tend to be located near public transport hubs, supermarkets and shopping malls. Lastly, the other reason we hear more often these days is that only by living in an HDB do you truly experience the real Singapore.

RENTING IN SINGAPORE

When renting, there are several criteria to consider when looking for your dream home in Singapore. Locating the ideal home boils down to finding a happy medium between the pros and cons, a comfortable middle ground between what you want and what you need.

LOCATION

Maps are your friends. Maps help you get a better feel in which area of Singapore the various houses of your choice are located and where your needs and wants are in relation to it. Crucial here is the distance you need to travel between home and work/school. In other words, it is advisable that you actually familiarise yourself with the property and its surroundings if you are able to.

ROOMS

There are several variations available and you might be overwhelmed at first. Therefore, it is important that you identify first-hand what your needs are. Are you looking to rent a room or an entire unit?

Do you want public housing within a built area or private (normally a condominium) housing with facilities such as a pool, gym and tennis courts? These are important questions to lock-down and are also directly tied to your budget. There are even options available for those in between who would like to rent a nicer room even with budget constraints, but do not like the idea of living within a HDB unit.

FACILITIES & AMENITIES

The following might be important enough for you to take into account - gym, pool/jacuzzi, tennis/squash/basketball courts, spa/sauna, playground, BBQ pits, jogging track, concierge and security services, reading/function room, deli/supermarket. But be prepared to pay for these. Other factors which may also have sufficient weight to influence your decision are amenities such as banks, shopping centres, hospitals/clinics, public transport, recreational areas and parking spaces.

In general, housing in Singapore is above the average mark. Whether renting or buying, one can be rest assured of a high standard of quality and living. If buying is an option or you wish to invest in a property in Singapore, it is important that you do in-depth research first as Singapore has recently introduced new laws imposing restrictions on property ownership, in particular to foreigners. Unless you are certain that you will be here for an extended period of time, it is better to simply rent and avoid the lengthy administrative and financial procedures.

For more information, please visit the following websites:

Housing & Development Board - www.hdb.gov.sg

Singapore Land Authority - www.sla.gov.sg

Singapore Accredited Estate Agencies - www.saea.org.sg

Nation Property - www.nationproperty.sg

PROFESSOR SRINIVAS K. REDDY

BEEN IN SINGAPORE SINCE 2009

ASSOCIATE DEAN
LEE KONG CHIAN
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

LEE KONG CHIAN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS.
ACADEMIC DIRECTOR, EXECUTIVE MBA PROGRAMME
DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR MARKETING EXCELLENCE
SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY



Prof Reddy believes in going where the action is. After some twenty years teaching in New York, Los Angeles and other parts of the United States, he jumped at the chance to teach at the Singapore Management University in 2009 as he thought that the move would be “a fantastic opportunity to be in the heart of Asia, where things are really moving”.

“When I look back at the move, packing was the most difficult part,” quipped Prof Reddy, alluding to the smaller living spaces that Singapore has compared to the US. “Effectively we still have our home in the US, but we packed most of the stuff and put it in storage, and the rest of it was pretty straightforward.”

“The streamlined processes that the government agencies had put in place essentially made my move here very easy. By the time I landed, I already had my employment pass and all other things taken care of.”

Getting settled into work seems to have presented no hurdles for him either. “We’re in such a connected society that it doesn’t matter where you are, and the environment here is like any other US research institution,” he said, remarking how the academics, research setup, and pedagogy, all differ little from his experience in the US. “In fact, the student body – the undergraduates here – are on par with some of the best students I’ve taught. So you get a fantastic kick out of teaching such students.”

Outside of the classroom he is also quite impressed with the research environment. “LKCSB (Lee Kong Chian School of Business) and the faculty here are ranked as one of the top universities in the world now,” he said. “The environment is very much research focused and the supporting structure is even better because they try to encourage faculty to travel to places where you can collaborate with your co-authors and others.”

One of the topics Prof Reddy had spoken on at seminars was “Innovate or Die: Strategies in Rapidly Changing Markets”. His talk looked at how firms have to deal with constant changes in the world of business, innovating not just their products, but their business processes, areas of opportunities, and business models to adapt to the ever-changing conditions of the market.

“I worked with companies like IBM to try and help them understand how you create innovations. Many people think innovation is about how much you spend on R&D or how many patents you have, and that’s usually not the way it works.

How you convert those technological inventions into business is the critical part of innovation,” he explained.

Turning that microscope on Singapore, Prof Reddy said, “One of the ways that I think will help to increase the level of innovation in Singapore is attracting talent. Singapore has done well in setting up innovation hubs – like Fusionopolis and Biopolis – to offer a conducive environment for talent to work in.”

He added that risk management is another important part of the process. Looking at the measures in place in Singapore, he remarked,

“I CAN SEE THAT, HAVING LOOKED AT THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED ELSEWHERE, THE FUTURE IS GOING TO BE VERY BRIGHT HERE.”

GETTING THE RIGHT ATTENTION

SOO MING MING

DESIGNATION: AREA DIRECTOR, CHINA

With her background in human resources, *Synergy* has a quick chat with Contact Singapore's Area Director to China, Soo Ming Ming, to find out how she brings her understanding of jobseekers' mindsets to attract a diverse pool of talent in Shanghai, where she's currently based.



CHARACTERISTICS: KEEN JUDGE OF CHARACTER

MAKING AN IMPRESSION

When I started out at Contact Singapore, I was in the Singapore Welcome Centre team looking only at the investors from Central China. Now in Shanghai, I'm also reaching out to the local professionals and the overseas Singaporean community in China.

During my first meeting with investors, they would typically be surprised to see such a young looking government official. Once, I entered the office of a client, who was the chairman of the company. He looked at me and asked me if the Area Director will be arriving soon. He was rather surprised when I passed him my namecard and told him that I was the Area Director who made the appointment to meet with him.

TOUGHENING UP

Beyond work, when it comes to living in Shanghai, one of the greatest challenges I faced was "training" myself to become more aggressive. Some instances would be squeezing into or out of the subway train, flagging down a cab, or just preventing people from cutting my queues!

DIVERSIFIED APPROACHES

I have three groups of audiences – investors, local/expatriate working professionals and the overseas Singaporean community. For investors,

I think it's still very much a one-to-one personal approach that works best. For working professionals, especially in a country like China where the volume of job seeking professionals is really large, I think technology is quite key to help us reach out to our targeted audiences. During the past year that I'm based here, I've learnt about very interesting social media tools such as Kaixin, Weibo and most recently we tried out word of mouth marketing for our career event earlier in April.

I really enjoy hanging out with the overseas Singaporeans as well, be it at events, small gatherings, luncheons or drinks after work. I'm very glad that many have been open and generous in sharing their experiences with me.

SEEKING ROOTS

There are many places in China that I like, but my most memorable experiences thus far were my visits to Fujian. My grandfather was from Fujian, so it was interesting to be back at my "hometown". I'm always quite thrilled to hear the locals speak in Hokkien!(laughs) I think their culture and behavior are also quite similar to Singapore's, so it's interesting to be far away from home, and yet feel like I'm in Singapore (sort of).

FOSTERING STRONG TIES

The good thing is, most Chinese have a positive perception of Singapore. They see

Singapore as a safe location and lawful society with a strong education system. The key is to be a good ambassador ourselves, as they tend to look at us and form an impression of what Singapore and Singaporeans are like. For the investors in particular, I also find it useful to just maintain contact, and build up that trust and personal relationship whilst we encourage and assist them in exploring business opportunities in Singapore.

WHY SINGAPORE IS THE PLACE TO LIVE

Being a multi-racial country, Singapore is home to several cultural enclaves from Chinatown, Little India, Arab Street to our first heritage town, Joo Chiat, where the Peranakan and Eurasian communities are concentrated. The wide variety of food options makes dining out an exciting yet affordable experience.

Well-designed infrastructure: With park connectors and new train lines sprouting up, there are plenty of ways of getting around Singapore which are easy on the pocket. Most heartland areas are packed with amenities like supermarkets, food centres, banks, parks and gyms.

With Universal Studios newly opened, international acts like The Lion King coming to Marina Bay Sands and worldclass exhibitions over at the ArtScience Museum, there are no lack of leisure options to while away weekends in Singapore.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CAREERS@SINGAPORE

This recruitment programme brings together Singapore-based employers, global professionals and graduating students who are interested in working in Singapore. Participants can find out more about working and living in Singapore, and network with local industry professionals and employers.

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
11 - 12 Oct	Singapore Research Virtual Careers Fair	Online
19 - 21 Oct	Careers@Singapore: Multi Industries	New York
22 Oct	Careers@Singapore: Legal Services	London
23 Oct	Careers@Home: Justice Law Clerks (JLC) Programme	London
1 Nov	Careers@Singapore in conjunction with the Pucheon International Student Animation Festival (PISAF)	South Korea (Puchon)
10 - 13 Nov	Careers@Singapore in conjunction with G-Star	South Korea (Busan)

OTHER EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
ASIA		
10 - 14 Oct	Experience@Singapore: Interactive & Digital Media	Singapore
14 - 16 Oct	ITB (Institut Teknologi Bandung) Integrated Career Day	Indonesia
15 Oct	Bilingual Job Fair by Daijob	Tokyo
EUROPE		
12 - 13 Oct	Budapest University of Technology & Economics Career Fair	Hungary (Budapest)
19 Oct	Inova Ilmenau Career Fair	Germany (Ilmenau)
19 Oct	Scholarships & Educational Programmes Fair	Croatia (Zagreb)
26 Oct	Bonding Career Fair	Germany (Berlin)
26 - 28 Oct	AGH University of Science & Technology Career Fair and Careers@Singapore	Poland (Cracow)
29 Oct	Careers@Home	Germany (Heidelberg)
8 - 9 Nov	Konaktiva Dortmund Job Fair	Germany (Dortmund)
9 Nov	Job Challenge Job Fair	Czech Republic (Brno)
14 Nov	Bonding Career Fair	Germany (Braunschweig)
15 Nov	T5 JobMesse	Germany (Munich)
28 Nov	Bonding Career Fair	Germany (Aachen)
30 Nov - 1 Dec	Absolventenkongress	Germany (Cologne)

CONTACT SINGAPORE WELCOME SESSION

This pre-departure briefing, held in various cities around the world, offers a broad overview of topics about moving to and living in Singapore. For further information, visit www.contactsingapore.sg/welcome_session

DATE	LOCATION
15 Oct	Los Angeles
21 Oct	Shanghai
21 Oct	Seoul
3 Nov	London
3 Nov	Sydney
12 Nov	Redwood City, CA

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
UK		
12 Oct	University of Edinburgh Careers Fair	Edinburgh
13 Oct	University College London Engineering Fair	London
19 Oct	Manchester University Engineering, Science & Technology Fair	Manchester
20 Oct	Imperial College Engineering Fair	London
27 Oct	Insight Fair @ Warwick	Coventry
2 Nov	Oxford Science & Engineering Fair	Oxford
US		
13 Oct	Boston University Engineering Fall Career Fair	Boston
14 Oct	Harvard Job and Internship Fair	Boston
14 Oct	Princeton Science & Technology Career Fair	Princeton
15 Oct	Asian Professional Exchange (APEX) Career Symposium	Los Angeles
20 Oct	University of Michigan International Opportunities Fair	Ann Arbor
25 Oct	University of Pennsylvania International Opportunities Fair	Philadelphia



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