



WINNIE LOKE
SMF SCHOLAR

DESIGNATION:
Analyst (Capital Markets
and Projects)

STUDIED:
BSc in Maritime Studies,
NTU

with equal salaries, job stability and job flexibility.

After going through three rounds of interviews, Yifei was offered the PIL-MaritimeONE Scholarship under the MaritimeONE initiative. This MaritimeONE scholarship initiative was kick-started in 2007 by the four partners, namely, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, the Singapore Maritime Foundation (SMF), Singapore Shipping Association (SSA), Association of Marine Industries (ASMI).

Funds for the scholarships are pledged by maritime partners who supported MaritimeONE and SMF's endeavour to groom talents for the maritime industry. For Yifei, she will be bonded to her sponsoring company, Pacific International Lines (PIL), after graduation. PIL is one of the largest ship owners in Asia and one of

the top container operators in the world.

Prior to her scholarship interviews, Yifei did a lot of research to equip herself with a better understanding of the maritime industry. "I was really interested in the maritime scholarship. To prepare myself well for the interview, I focused my efforts on learning about the maritime industry and rehearsed the answers for the likely questions that the interviewers may ask me about the Singapore maritime industry. I believe it was this sincerity and my hard work that convinced my interviewers to offer me the scholarship,"

"Singapore has a lot of competitive advantage in terms of its location and in the area of sea transportation, so there are definitely many career prospects in this industry for a young graduate like myself," Yifei rationalises.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Students in Maritime Studies will spend a semester in their third year in Norway, as the programme is a joint effort by NTU and the Norwegian School of Management (BI). The PIL-MaritimeONE scholarship will see Yifei through her four-year course with a financial sponsorship of \$50,000. Yifei will get \$10,000 of allowance each academic year, as well as an additional \$10,000 for the semester spent in Norway.

Yifei's senior, Winnie Loke, received The SMF Scholarship in 2005. The scholarship came with no bond, instead requiring scholars to be committed to the maritime industry for a minimum of three years. Scholars under the SMF Scholarship were allowed to choose the company they wanted to join upon graduation. "It gives me the freedom to choose which company I want to work in so long as I remain in the Singapore maritime sector," the bubbly 23-year-old explains.

Winnie found out about the maritime scholarship at a talk in NTU, after she had been admitted into the course, which she joined because of her deep love for the sea. "I always felt happy and excited when I went on board cruise holidays with my family, so my love for the sea is my main motivation for taking on this course," Winnie says.

The maritime scholarship has given her plenty of networking opportunities with the maritime professionals in the Singapore maritime scene. Winnie graduated in July

2009 and is currently an Analyst (Capital Markets and Projects), with I. M. Skaugen, a fully integrated Norwegian shipping company that designs, builds, owns, mans and manages their own ships.

SURGING AHEAD WITH PASSION

Besides analysing the financial market, Winnie also meets with bankers and officials from the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), lawyers and other maritime professionals as part of her work. "I meet bankers to discuss the financial services they can offer, MPA to discuss about regulatory issues and lawyers to draft out legal documents," Winnie explains.

Her education has helped her appreciate the maritime industry better. "My work now requires me to explain certain mechanisms of the shipping industry. The course has equipped me to better explain the business to our clients," Winnie reflects. Some of her favourite modules in school included Ship Chartering and Maritime Law.

Even as she revels in working in the industry she loves, Winnie feels that one major challenge is trying to prove herself in a male-dominated environment. "It seems daunting sometimes, especially when these are men who are more experienced. I work hard to show them that I'm confident and competent in my work," Winnie says. "Meeting time-specific deadlines are also challenging."

"It's very challenging to work in the maritime industry, which is global in nature and very fast-paced. There are always new developments and new things to learn," says Winnie. To students who are at crossroads deciding their next step forward, Winnie has this to say, "Go ahead and apply for the MaritimeONE scholarship. The maritime sector is much more diverse and dynamic than you can imagine and there would definitely be great prospects for young talents as Singapore is one of the leading international maritime centres and is poised to grow in importance." *

Visit www.smf.com.sg on MaritimeONE scholarships and www.maritimecareers.com.sg to find out more about careers in the maritime industry.