E3 World Catch Up with Our Top EEE Graduates

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A famous quote says that “a journey starts with a single step”. My journey through life as a mature person started with an important decision to enter the School of EEE. From that time, numerous experiences have given me invaluable lessons.

I am really honoured to be given the chance to share my experiences in this issue of E3World. As I recall my memory of studying in EEE, I realize that I have made the correct decision.

Life was not always easy back then. There were numerous assignments and long hours put in to chase the deadline and the frightening exams. Yet, there were also life-lasting friendships formed and the euphoria when exams were over.

Life in NTU was really different with its fast pace and enormous pressure to excel. To be able to endure all these, I realized that to have a commitment and to enjoy what you do really helped me to excel both academically and non-academically. The support from my friends and my tutors has been no less beneficial in making all my achievements possible.

My industrial attachment in Switzerland is my most memorable experience. It opened my eyes to life in other parts of the world. I realized that openness to new things and communication skills are really important, especially with a different culture, and, of course, I will never forget travelling in Europe.

I cannot deny that all these experiences have made me grow. As an engineer, I am trained to analyze problems in depth but at the same time to think from a wider perspective. The technical subjects in EEE polished my analytical skills, but I also learned to balance my life and to respect other people as a mature person through the non-technical subjects and my extra-curricular activities.

Thinking about the future, I have a dream to contribute to society with the talent that I have. As to how I am going to achieve my dream, there is still a long road ahead of me that I need to discover. Pursuing postgraduate study to discover useful inventions for society is one of the options that I am strongly considering. Working as an engineer to create a device which will improve people’s lives is another viable option which is equally honourable. I really hope that I can achieve this dream and I hope that you will also achieve your dreams, whatever they are. Remember to dream high, as no dream is too high!

Chen Xiao Yan

My NTU life has come to the end. These four years have been so enriching and rewarding for me that I have obtained satisfactory academic results and a DSTA Gold Medal for my FYP. My partner and I also submitted papers to IEEE Student Paper Contest and IES Publication Awards 2004 based on our research and findings. However, the university is not only a place for studying, besides school work; ECA was another important element in my university life. I was the vice chairperson of Chinese Dance Club, where I practised and improved interpersonal and management skills. Tracing back my university journey, I can see the ups and downs along the way. I wish to take this opportunity to thank my supervisors, project partner, and my study group, without whom I would never have achieved what I did.
Chang Kok Leong

Writing this page of reflections, it is tough to imagine how these three years have gone by so quickly. These three years have been the most eventful years of my life. Any diploma holder crossing into NTU will feel that life in poly is very different from the life in NTU. I am no exception. I used to think that I was knowledgeable in my course of study, but NTU changed my point of view. It introduced to me a much wider and deeper view of Electrical Engineering. The course did indeed develop my technical abilities. I like the way some professors conduct lessons whereby the syllabus doesn’t seem to be important, as compared to understanding of the basic but important concepts, as well as to see the complete big picture. I feel that no matter how much you know about something, if you have a strong foundation, you will be able to go far. The reason being that with the basic concepts, you can always fall back on them.

My success formula is very simple: just go with your interests. I personally feel that learning something you want to learn will not make it become a chore. My interest in electrical engineering started when I was young, and the reason why I am still doing it after so many years is through my continued interest and the satisfaction of knowing more. My professors in NTU also helped me tremendously during my initial period of university entry. Knowing that I did not have the 1st year background in NTU, they were open to all my questions.

My three years in EEE have impacted and changed me in many ways. Firstly, I am more vocal and am able to present myself better. Secondly, I have learnt to be more independent in all aspects. During my Industrial Attachment, I was selected for an internship with Lutron Electronics Co., Inc. in the USA. Working in the states broadened my experience. In Lutron, interns get the same treatment as permanent staff, which trained me for my future professional life.

Right now, I am serving my remaining National Service. I am now in the process of applying for the A*Star research scholarship to pursue a postgraduate degree in Electrical Engineering in NTU. Thinking about my goals, I hope that I can do my part in the knowledge based industry in Singapore in the future.

During the four years of study, I took every course, project, attachment seriously and treated each up and down as an opportunity to learn and grow. Never ignore any subject and project, because you will never know when you may need it. Personally, I feel that fixing on one final year specialisation is not enough for us to adapt to the fast changing industrial world. EEE gives students vast opportunities to develop personal interests and widen our views by providing cross divisional subjects, electives and various hands-on training. Apart from my final year option - circuit & system, I also chose one photonic subject as my elective and a topic in fiber optics for my FYP. These subjects opened a new and interesting area for me to develop and helped me to get my current position, R & D Engineer for fiber optic transceiver in Agilent Technologies. It requires knowledge in both circuit design and optics, for which EEE has equipped me well. I feel that NTU has taught me not only the knowledge and skills, but more importantly how to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for everyday life. I enjoy my current position very much and in the mean time I will keep the momentum to explore new areas and pursue further study in the near future. Now it is the time of transition for me from study to working life. I always believe that if I do well in what I am doing, I will be able to seize the opportunities as they come. I hope this will be true for you as well!