2 in 3 new NTU grads have jobs: Survey

By LIM YI HAN

TWO in three of the students graduating from Nanyang Technological University have already secured jobs, a preliminary survey shows.

Despite the uncertain global economic climate, the university said their employment outlook appears promising.

Last year, a similar proportion of students at the university found jobs before graduation.

The latest poll was carried out at the end of June. It showed that the first batch of 115 graduates from Nanyang Business School's double bachelor's degree in accountancy and business have all landed jobs.

Those in the top 10 per cent in terms of pay are also drawing an average salary of $7,145, almost twice that of their peers.

Graduates from other faculties also seem to be doing well in terms of job prospects.

Before graduating, Miss Samantha Loke from the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information had job offers from organisations in education, finance and business consultancy.

Said the 23-year-old, who chose the finance sector: "It's very exciting to step into the working world, though I miss the freedom in school."

But the road to graduation can be rocky for some like 26-year-old Ms Shen Sihui, who is graduating this year from the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering.

On her 21st birthday, she developed transverse myelitis, a neurological disorder caused by an inflamed spinal cord, which has left her wheelchair-bound ever since.

She was also hospitalised for three months and had to postpone her studies by a semester. But she remains positive and looks forward to the day she can walk again.

Ms Shen, who is currently looking for a job, said: "Initially, it was a mental struggle because I went from being independent to dependent. But I know if I persevere on, I'll recover."

The class of 2012 is made up of 8,863 students, 2,929 of whom are receiving master's degrees and doctorates - the highest number in the university's history.

At yesterday's graduation ceremony, 342 doctorate, master's and bachelor's degree scrolls were presented to students.

The university also awarded an honorary Doctor of Engineering degree to nanoscience expert Chad Mirkin, a visiting professor and member of United States President Barack Obama's Council of Advisers for Science and Technology.

A second honorary doctorate was awarded to Dr Richard Parker, the director of research and technology at Rolls Royce, who helped set up a laboratory at the university specialising in power electronics.

He was unable to appear at yesterday's ceremony. President Tony Tan Keng Yam, who is also the university's chancellor, and Education Minister Heng Swee Keat both attended.

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Ms Shen Sihui, 26, developed a spinal disease five years ago that left her wheelchair-bound. She graduates from the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering this year and is looking for a job. ST PHOTO: MARK CHEONG FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

Professor Chad Mirkin (left) being conferred an honorary degree. PHOTO: NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY