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体现“学校文化” 新大学生爱到海外做义工



新大学生设立的喀什维吾尔族文化中心，展出了维吾尔族人的传统服饰、食物、乐器、居住环境等。
(新大提供)

王珏琪 报道

过去几年，新加坡管理大学三年级学生翁钰富积极参加海内外社区服务，每两周到本地医院做义工。

虽然新大规定本科生需履行至少80个小时的社区服务才能毕业，但翁钰富却没有把社区服务贡献呈报给学校作为服务记录，可说是体现无私的奉献精神。

主修政治科学的翁钰富(25岁)三年多前首次到柬埔寨，帮助乡村造井。“那是我首次接触贫困……第一次看到没有穿衣服的孩童、从烂泥饮水。我回来后，就决定我应该做些什么。”

之后，他把零用钱储蓄起来，作为到中国、印度等国的社区服务活动费用。



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两年前，他也在朋友的介绍下，开始每两周到心理卫生学院儿童部当义工，同一群义工一起为入院的孩童主办活动如打篮球、画画和主办佳节庆祝会等。为了更好地协助跟他谈心的病人，他还报读新大的一个辅导单元课程。

翁钰富的父亲是散工，母亲担任兼职厨

师大规定所有毕业生都须完成基本的80个小时社区服务。新大的记录显示，去年有超过4000名新大学生参加社区服务，其中超过六成成为本地社区服务。

师，他是家中老大，有三个弟弟，一家六口住在三房式组屋。

由于家庭背景的关系，翁钰富之前只想毕业后找到一份好工作，因此报读新大信息系统学院。不过，柬埔寨之行让他改变想法，向大学申请转到社会科学学院，为的是深入了解社会课题和累积专业知识，以有效地帮助当义工时接触的个案，甚至在毕业后从事人道主义工作。

翁钰富希望毕业后能到联合国组织工作，刚过去的假期他就到联合国组织位于马来西亚和泰国的支部实习，并没有获得任何薪金或零用钱。

超过一半学生 继续参加社区服务

自新大在2000年创办以来，所有毕业生都完成基本的80个小时社区服务。超过一半的学生过后还继续参加社区服务，为社区服务120个到500个小时或以上。

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去年5月，新大首次有学生到中国新疆的喀什当义工，这17名大学生的任务是利用约2万元的资金，设立一个“喀什维吾尔族文化中心”，协助维吾尔族人保留消逝中的文化。

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这批学生通过当地的新加坡籍酒店业者拉线，获得一个果园的主人支持，借出场地。学生修复复制的农场建筑，到处张罗代表维吾尔文化的物件，并布置文化中心。文化中心展出维吾尔族的传统服饰、食物、乐器和居住环境等。

组长林韵(22岁)受访时说，喀什原本的居民以维吾尔族人为主，近几年有很多汉族人移居那里，导致维吾尔族人的比例已少过一半，很多传统、古老的建筑也在现代化的过程被拆除，这个民族的文化间受影响，并可能最终消逝。

“因此，有需要保留一部分的文化，让未来的族人也能认识他们的过去。”

另一名组长曾诗容(20岁)说，小组面对的困难是，很多传统物件都已经消逝，他们得跑遍整个城市寻找。例如，他们从图片中看到的传统结婚礼服，都已经找不到了，他们要特别订做一件。

学生回国后，得知另一项好消息，原来这个文化中心也间接帮助果园主人争取到在当地开办青年职业学校的机会，让当地青年有机会接受款待业培训。

新大学生计划今年再次组织一团队，进一步修复和整理文化中心建筑的内外，并为文化中心设计虚拟展览，来推广喀什旅游业。

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Headline: A display of 'school culture' – SMU students enjoy overseas volunteer work

Translation:

Over the past few years, Singapore Management University (SMU) student Jerry Lewis Ong had actively participated in community service in Singapore and overseas, and volunteers regularly at a local hospital.

Although SMU requires all its students to complete 80 hours of community service as a graduation requirement, Jerry had not submitted his volunteer hours to the school – certainly a display of unconditional contribution.

Jerry, 25, who is a political science student, was in Cambodia for the first time three years ago to help the villages build wells. “That was the first time I came in close contact with the poor... It was the first time I saw children without clothes on, and they drank from a muddy puddle. After I returned, I was determined to do something.”

Thereafter, he saved up his pocket money to finance more community service trips to China and India.

Two years ago, following a friend’s introduction, he started to volunteer at the Institute of Mental Health’s children’s ward. Together with a group of volunteers, he organised activities for the children such as basketball, art sessions, festive celebrations etc. In order to be better equipped to help the patients whom he interacts with, he even took up a counselling module at SMU.

Jerry’s father is an odd-job worker and his mother is a part-time cook, he is the eldest at home, with three younger brothers. The family of six lives in a three-room HDB flat.

Given his background, Jerry had originally planned to focus on getting a good job after graduation, thus he applied to SMU’s School of Information Systems. However, his trip to Cambodia changed his perspectives. To better understand social issues and enhance his knowledge in the area, he appealed to transfer to SMU’s School of Social Sciences. That way, he could be more effective when helping those whom he meets during his volunteer work. He hopes to work with humanitarian organisations after graduation.

Jerry hopes to work in the United Nations upon graduation. He had previously worked (without salary or allowance) with two UN agencies during past school holidays – UNESCO Bangkok and UNHCR Malaysia.

More than half of SMU’s students continue to participate in community service

Since the inception of the University in 2000, all SMU students have to fulfill 80 hours of community service. More than half of the students continue to volunteer after meeting the 80-hour requirement, serving 120 to 500 hours or more per individual.

According to SMU’s records, over 4,000 students participated in some form of community service within the year, of which over 60% were involved in some form of community services work in Singapore.

In May last year, SMU sent its first community service group to Kashgar, Xinjiang (China). The role of the 17-student group was to set up a ‘Uyghur Cultural Centre’ with a fund of S\$20,000, to help the Uyghur community preserve its eroding culture.

With help from a Singaporean hotelier in Kashgar, the group got the support of a local farm owner, who provided the venue. They renovated the mud-brick house on the farm and went around Kashgar to source for traditional artifacts and items reflecting the Uyghur heritage, to be placed in the cultural centre. The centre, when completed, showcased Uyghur traditional costumes, food, musical instruments and living spaces.

When interviewed, team leader, Matilda Lim Yunn, 22, said the original habitants of Kashgar comprised mainly of Uyghurs. In recent years, more Han Chinese have migrated there, resulting in a decrease in Uyghur population to less than half of the total population in Kashgar. Many traditions have been lost and old buildings have given way to modernisation. The Uyghur culture is eroding away, and may eventually be lost.

“Therefore, there was a need to preserve some parts of their culture, so that future generations of Uyghurs can learn about their past,” Matilda said.

Co-leader Melissa Chan Shi Rong, 20, shared that one of the challenges that the team faced was that a lot of the traditional Uyghur heritage items have been lost and the team had to search around the whole city in search for them. For example, they saw a picture of a traditional wedding costume in a book, however, such costumes could no longer be found, and they had to get a tailor to custom-make one piece just for the centre.

After returning to Singapore, the students received a piece of good news. The Uyghur Cultural Centre they set up had helped the local farm owner obtain a license to run a vocational school which will allow young people in the local community to receive hospitality training.

SMU plans to send another team to Kashgar this year to refurbish the centre’s interior and exterior, the team will also set up a virtual tour of the centre, in a bid to promote Kashgar’s tourism.

Photo caption: The Uyghur Culture Centre set up by SMU students showcases traditional Uyghur costumes, food, musical instruments and living spaces.

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