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THE GLOBAL INNOVATION CHAMPION
DAREN TANG '97

ON A MISSION TO STRENGTHEN
MUSLIM FAMILIES
GUY GHAZALI '05

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS IN LEGAL PRACTICE
HUAY YEE KWAN '04, LYNN ARIELE SOH '08
& LIN SHUMIN '08

BLAZING A TRAIL IN LAW & TECH
PROFESSOR DAVID TAN &
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DANIEL SENG '92

STUDENT LIFE IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF
THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE
FACULTY OF LAW

CONTENTS



2 Dean's Diary

Message from the Dean



3 Alumni Spotlight

Daren Tang '97: The Global Innovation Champion	3
Reflections on 2020	7
Guy Ghazali '05: On A Mission to Strengthen Muslim Families	8
Law Alumni Mentor Programme 2020	9
Celebrating Achievements in Legal Practice	10



12 Law School Highlights

Real-Life Skills for Real-World Good - The Centre for Pro Bono and Clinical Legal Education	12
Blazing A Trail in Law & Tech	13



14 Student Features

Year 4 Law-USP Student Elected as NUS Students' Union President	14
The Inaugural NUS Law Arts Week: The Virtual Edition	15
Student Life in the Age of COVID-19	16
Law IV: Undue Influence	18



19 Reunions

LLM (IBL) Class of 2010's Zoom Reunion	19
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22 NUS Giving

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DEAN'S DIARY

PROFESSOR SIMON CHESTERMAN

In the course of this year, students have sometimes asked me about the value of lawyers during a pandemic. We didn't find the vaccine; we were of little help nursing those afflicted or caring for those grieving. What can someone with a law degree do that would make a difference in such trying times?

Plenty.

Lawyers ensured that the economic pain is distributed fairly, that health services and the coming vaccine will be shared equitably, and that emergency surveillance powers rolled out around the world are limited to the extent and for the duration truly necessary.

Lawyers keep the wheels of industry turning even as we write and enforce — and push back against — the laws to keep us safe and healthy.

Lawyers may not save lives directly. But we can make those lives saved a little fairer, a little more just.

The alumni of NUS Law have been doing all this and more. As these pages show, our graduates continue to make their mark in Singapore and in the world.

At a time when research and development into pharmaceuticals is more important than ever, we are proud that Daren Tang '97 has been appointed Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Given the strain that the pandemic has put on families in Singapore and beyond, Guy Ghazali '05 will play a key role in her new post as Senior President of Singapore's Syariah Court.

Up and coming lawyers were also recognised in Asian Legal Business' "40 Under 40" list, with four NUS Law alumni featured.

And many of you supported the next generation of lawyers, serving as mentors even as the pandemic forced us to move our LAMP programme online.

That was only one of the accommodations that our students had to make in the course of this extraordinary year. What has struck me, again and again, is how adaptable and resilient they proved themselves. From attending classes on Zoom to premiering the Law IV musical on YouTube, our students brought creativity, resourcefulness, and strength to their curricular and extracurricular pursuits.

In this, they had willing and supportive partners in our faculty and staff, who worked tirelessly to provide the best legal education and university experience possible. Even as we shifted online, however, we continued to push ahead with new initiatives, like our Law & Technology Primer series and an expansion of our Centre for Pro Bono & Clinical Legal Education.

These initiatives also benefited tremendously from partnership with alumni in offering practical and experiential learning opportunities for our students, preparing them for a fast-changing world.

For as we look beyond the pandemic, it is clear that the world will continue to change rapidly and unexpectedly.

Our alumni are proof of the diverse ways in which the graduates of NUS Law have worked to make Singapore and the world a better place.

And, as I tell our students, you help us reframe the question that our students should be asking themselves — not what can an NUS Law graduate do in such a world, but what can't we?



THE GLOBAL INNOVATION CHAMPION

DAREN TANG '97

Daren Tang is the first Singaporean head of a United Nations agency, taking office as the Director-General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) on 1 October 2020 for a six-year term. Amidst his frenetic schedule of relocating to Geneva and setting new goals for WIPO, Professor David Tan manages to pin him down for a chat.





Daren Tang kicking off IP Week @ SG 2019

“ One of the great advantages of a legal education is that it trains you to analyse any situation or issue in a logical and methodical manner, and then to express yourself succinctly and concisely. As legal professionals, we are often called to apply this to a wide variety of contexts in legal work, but it also helps us in other areas of work that we may venture into, whether it is government, diplomacy or business. ”

Daren Tang was appointed Chief Executive of the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) on 16 November 2015. Daren was previously Deputy Chief Executive of IPOS and in charge of the Registries Cluster, and oversaw the operations of the Registries of Patents, Trade Marks and Designs, as well as the development of Singapore’s intellectual property (IP) policy and legal regime. He also represented Singapore in myriad international IP negotiations, including WIPO and in Free Trade Agreements. It was at IPOS that I first got to know Daren, and I was most struck by his good humour and bonhomie.

Prior to joining IPOS, Daren was a Senior State Counsel with the International Affairs Division of the Attorney-General’s

Chambers, where he advised the Singapore Government on a number of complex international law issues. Daren graduated from NUS in 1997 and later obtained an LLM (with distinction) from Georgetown University, where he was also a Fellow of the Institute of International Economic Law. He also attended the Advanced Management Program at the Harvard Business School in 2013.

Law was never on my mind

Law was never on Daren’s mind when he was young, and he was far more fascinated with psychology and astrophysics. But growing up in Singapore in the 1970s and 1980s, Daren was told by his parents that it would be best to do something practical. He recalled, “Even then, going

to law school was far from my mind, and I applied to med school. I ended up arguing with one of the members of the interview panel, who had asked a rather incoherent question, and one of them laughingly told me that I should apply to law school instead. Well, I did that the next year and if I recall correctly, I failed my first interview. I think I only got in on my second interview. I was probably too flippant for the first law panel as well, whom I recall asked serious but rather boring questions about geopolitics!”

It was a blessing for NUS Law that he finally took up the suggestion by the medical school interview panel. The study of law is indeed a practical and broad-based education as Daren has pointed out, and at that juncture he thought being a professional was attractive and it was versatile enough that he could move on to do something else later. On reflection, he said: “One of the great advantages of a legal education is that it trains you to analyse any situation or issue in a logical and methodical manner, and then to express yourself succinctly and concisely. As legal professionals, we are often called to apply this to a wide variety of contexts in legal work, but it also helps us in other areas of work that we may venture into, whether it is government, diplomacy or business.”

“Law school was generally huge fun!”

Judging by Daren’s enthusiastic reaction when asked about his most memorable moments, one wondered how he had any time to study! True to his convivial personality, Daren quipped: “I always joked that one had to work hard to fail law school exams! Most of the law school years was not about the law school, but about the opportunity to open our horizons as young adults in university. I always told myself, and I maintain it to this day, that law students do themselves a disservice if they see themselves as law students first, and university students second. It should be the other way around.”

As a student leader, Daren was not one to shy away from provoking the administration, but always with the welfare of the students in mind. “I have vivid memories of being Law Club President in my final year, where I had the chance to work with many fellow students to make law school a better place”, he shared. “We started the Law Careers Fair (an idea I brought back from my exchange at McGill Law School), initiated a Curriculum Review, which had certain members of the Deanery rather nervous, and tried our best to make the corridors more lively and active.” But Daren did not stop there, and continued to light a few little fires; mercifully there were no hunger strikes! “Towards the end of the academic year, a few of my fellow student leaders and I mounted a protest against fee hikes, which were announced without much prior consultation, so that made for a very dramatic end to my four years in law school. We did not succeed then, but it was important that we tried. If our young adults give up trying to change things for the better, then what hope is there for the future growth of our society?” Trina Ha ‘97, his classmate, confirmed this: “He was always one of the more vocal students in class, frequently offering views from a different perspective.”



Daren and fellow Music Directors/Composers from Law IV 1997



IPOS Workplace Launch Event 2017



At the 2016 Yong Shook Lin Professorship in Intellectual Property Public Lecture with (L-R) Dr Stanley Lai, Dean & Professor Simon Chesterman, Professor David Tan, Professor Kal Raustiala and Ms Priscilla Shunmugam '06

The Music Man

It seemed that Daren’s final year at NUS Law was his *annus mirabilis* after he returned from a year’s exchange at McGill (where he, Lim Bee Hong ‘97, and Michelle Ng ‘97 were the very first exchange students there). He said, “I really wanted to bring some fresh ideas to improving the law school environment. And the study of law had finally clicked a bit better as a discipline – although taxation law was an utter nightmare, and Prof Stephen Phua, merciless! I have fond memories of the moot court too, not because I was terribly enamoured of moots, but because there was a piano in the corner that I could play once in a while.” Daren’s love for music was echoed by his classmate Basil Hwang ‘97 (Managing Partner, Hauen LLP), who shared: “I first knew Daren as a jazz-crazy pianist classmate in law school, when jazz was not yet quite popular in Singapore. Daren introduced me to jazz and bossa nova, for which I am much grateful. When we were both young men, Daren struck me as a thoughtful, humorous individual with an artistic side, and sometimes a bit of a mad-scientist air to him.”

Intellectual property was an “arranged marriage”

It came as a surprise to me when Daren confessed that he was never really interested in IP when he was a student. He admitted: “My interests in law veered much more strongly to public international law, human rights, jurisprudence - all these “fluffy” subjects, as they were commonly referred to.” Daren’s first contact with IP law came much later, when he was doing his postgraduate studies at Georgetown. He joked, “So, it wasn’t love at first sight, but more like an arranged marriage – I grew to love it. But that is the beauty of legal education, isn’t it? It gives you the discipline to approach any issue in a structured and logical manner, and once you see it within the larger societal and economic context, it all comes alive in a very concrete way.”

This arranged marriage has brought Daren from Singapore to Switzerland, and the journey is not one he has made without compunction. “It isn’t so much about leaving IPOS, but leaving the people that I have worked with very closely for years. That isn’t easy,” he mused. “Beyond work, part of my family is also still in Singapore,

which is tough. So there is a real sense of the closure of a chapter of life, and the opening of another."

My biggest influences

The biggest influences in Daren's life are neither lawyers nor jurists, but musicians and artists. However, in his career as a lawyer, he counts former Chief Justice and Attorney-General Mr Chan Sek Keong '61, with whom he had worked closely in the Pedra Branca dispute, as one who has made the most indelible impact on him. Daren explained: "My clearest memory of understanding what was good advice was reading a two page memo that Mr Chan wrote on an extremely complex constitutional matter. I read this when I was in my second year in Legal Service, as a State Counsel. It was short, sharp and succinct, and gave guidance on the possible way forward. A real joy to read and a revelation on the craft of giving advice." Others whom Daren had learnt much from include the late Mr S. Tiwari '71 (who was his immediate boss for many years), Chief Justice Sundares Menon '86 (who paved the way for his career shift from AGC to IPOS); Ambassador-At-Large Prof Tommy Koh '61 (who was his boss in the US-Singapore FTA negotiations). It is not just by standing on the shoulders of giants that one may see farther, but inspiration can often be found from those right next to us. On a more personal note, Daren intimated: "This may sound strange to some readers, but often my children influence and inspire me. They make you see clearly the future of the world, and they make real what needs to be done during our time so that we can leave the world a better place for them."

Helming WIPO

It was fascinating for me to hear so much about the richness and diversity of Daren's experiences over the last two decades, but I was eager to have him talk a little about his current job. When asked what his vision for WIPO was, and how he would

characterise his leadership style, Daren candidly shared: "These are still early days but in a nutshell, we need to stop seeing IP just as a legal and technical matter but as a driver of enterprise and economic growth. IP offices need to evolve beyond being recipients of IP applications to proactive builders of innovation ecosystems. As the UN agency in charge of IP, we play a critical role in supporting innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship everywhere in the world." I am sure there are many exciting initiatives ahead, and if Daren's student leader days at NUS Law are anything to go by, WIPO and the rest of the world are in for a dynamic ride.

Colleagues who have worked with him at IPOS have only affectionate memories. Trina Ha '97 described her interactions with Daren as follows: "Daren and I were in the same classes for a few years in NUS Law and our paths crossed again in IPOS. The four years of his stewardship as Chief Executive were intense yet exciting with his vision and views of the strategic role IP could play in our economy. He constantly challenged us to rethink, explore and be brave to try new ideas or push boundaries. I'm sure with his skills and varied experiences especially in the international arena, he will do very well steering WIPO through these challenging times." Mark Lim '94 proffered a personal anecdote: "Daren's breadth of knowledge in diverse unrelated areas is amazing. For example, when hosting a foreign guest at a *dim sum* restaurant, he will not only share what are the ingredients in a particular type of *dim sum* and how it should be eaten, but can also share its history, the variations you might encounter in different countries and so on. As a result, his guests are invariably impressed with him and enjoy conversing with him, and he is able to quickly establish a good rapport with them."

There is no doubt that Daren will be creating new warm personal memories at WIPO, as well as inspiring the organisation

to steer ahead confidently amidst the severe global disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The role of WIPO working together with other UN organisations to address the challenges brought about by the pandemic, as well as other issues such as climate change will be of paramount importance. Daren is well-aware of the challenges ahead: "As a leader, my job is to allow my colleagues to bring their best to work everyday. This means not just finding the right structures and processes, but putting in place the right culture. And since we are here to support innovators, and support global IP and innovation, the culture must be one of openness, transparency and dynamism."

Beyond 2020

I did not want to end this interview on a pandemic note, but I do want to highlight Daren's meditative advice: "This year has really driven home the lesson that there is a lot in life that is outside of your control. In the face of this, we have to sit with what there is in our lives, not turning away from it, but also not over-reacting to it."

I had always wondered if the rarefied Swiss air contained something magical, a *je ne sais quoi* that gave the world Rolex and Roger Federer. While Geneva is a very international city, housing many UN agencies, international organizations and NGOs, it is also distinctively different from Asian cities, where there is vibrancy and cutting edge quality to life. That said, in both cities the attitude to work is highly professional but, according to Daren, the rhythms of personal life revolve around different things. "The charms of Geneva and this part of the world centre around nature, which is both spectacular and tranquil. Mountains surround Geneva and on a clear day, one can see all the way to the tallest mountain ranges in Europe. It reminds us that life requires a more encompassing perspective that goes beyond ourselves and our immediate concerns."

REFLECTIONS ON 2020

2020 has been a challenging year for everyone as the world grapples with the pandemic. We asked some of our alumni to share their reflections on the year and what they look forward to most in 2021.

Debbie Ong '89 Presiding Judge, Family Justice Courts

"Important lessons in 2020: 1(a) "The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry" in 2020. 1(b) Nothing can be taken for granted – so appreciate, appreciate! 2(a) More things are possible than we thought. 2(b) I can conduct hearings paperlessly. 3. "Let it go!" ("it": that fixed way of doing things). 4. Continue to care for those who matter in our life. 5. Hope is vital. 6. Take charge and make it happen. 7. Gratitude for blessings. 8. Certainty was never so precious before (looking forward to that next year/s!)"



Eleanor Wong '85 Vice Dean (Student Life & Global Relations), NUS Law

"Distance is the space we choose to put between us. Nothing had really changed except the perimeters we set on our minds.

Age holds no monopoly on wisdom. As we teachers raced to convert our lessons to remote learning, our students adjusted with graciousness and ease, and many stepped up to assist with technical expertise and pedagogical suggestions for how to teach better in a technological age.

Value has seldom been the same thing as price. We came to appreciate the true worth of those in our community upon whom our well-being is built. When our guest workers had to be taken out of circulation, Singapore literally came to a halt. When we could not hold those we love or sup with those most dear, it was little consolation that Michelin star restaurants figured out how to Grab deliver. In August, grandma could finally come for a simple home-cooked dinner with us and her grandkids."



Sunil Sudheesan '04 Director, Head (Criminal Department), Quahe Woo & Palmer LLC

"2020 was hard. We had to say goodbye to many friends and legends in the fraternity. Losing Harry Elias S.C. and G Raman was particularly tough for those who knew them. Both exemplified the best traditions of the Bar and both have set examples which we should strive to emulate.

2020 was a useful reminder to all of us to cherish our family, friends and socially distanced colleagues. WFH is part of the new paradigm, and Zoom hearings demand that we develop a different approach to court craft but the Bar will relish the opportunity for change.

I am grateful that technology has allowed my practice to continue, but for some industries, the disruption persists. As lawyers, we have a moral obligation to help those we can with the skills that we have, especially those who cannot afford our help. Many already epitomise the pro bono spirit and in 2021, we should celebrate the efforts of all those who volunteer when help is needed."



Joan Foo Mahony '74 Author & Publisher

"The effect of the 2020 pandemic on my life, and what I am most thankful for, is my book! As my husband and I hunkered down in Kuala Lumpur, I used the quiet time to complete 'MILLENNIALS MEET MARY' (www.millennialsmeetmary.com). The book was launched on 30th May at the Vatican Museums via a Zoom Webinar, and 2,000 copies have already been sold. The book is a biography of the historical Virgin Mary, revealed through stunning Renaissance artworks. Eighty Millennials from forty-two countries and from all walks of life provide commentary on the artworks and how the story of Mary has impacted them. Personally, this has been a tremendous learning and spiritual journey for me, and I am grateful that the firm and enduring friendships cultivated while working in Tokyo, New York, Boston and Hong Kong have enabled me to assemble Mary's Millennials with ease and joy."



Luke Tang '06 Deputy Senior State Counsel, Attorney-General's Chambers and Caris Tay '05

"We were living in New York city when we found ourselves at the epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the catchphrase of the year being "social distancing", the pandemic has fostered a different and more intense form of togetherness – a stronger impetus to connect with friends and family across physical distances, a deeper appreciation for the people serving the community, and the joys (and tribulations) of spending 24 hours a day with our boisterous young children.

We also witnessed the power of adaptability and innovation. In our interactions with counterparts from all over the world, we came to realise that the human spirit is resilient. We will collectively find ways not only to survive, but even thrive, amidst the most unimaginable hardships.

The pandemic has shaken the world to its core, and in so doing unearthed many serious social issues and created new ones especially for the most vulnerable members of society. We feel one of the things we can do with our legal training is to share it with those who need it most. As such, Caris recently completed a series of superhero graphic novels that aim to empower kids with knowledge of the law, and we look forward to publishing the books and an educational website going into 2021."



Singapore Delegation – WIPO Director-General Campaign 2019

ON A MISSION TO STRENGTHEN MUSLIM FAMILIES

GUY GHAZALI '05



Photo: MCCY

Former District Judge and Assistant Registrar of the Family Justice Courts, NUS Law alumna **Guy Ghazali '05** was recently appointed as Senior President of the Syariah Court. She takes over the reins from Ustadz Alfian, who is currently pursuing his PhD at NUS Law. In the 27 July 2020 ST article announcing her appointment, Dr Nazirudin Mohd Nasir, the Mufti of Singapore (Singapore's highest Islamic authority) praised Guy's "depth of knowledge of the Singapore legal system and her experience in Muslim family law through her work in the appeal board", which put her in good stead to lead the Syariah Court.

LawLink caught up with Guy to find out more about her journey to, and aspirations for, her new role.

What made you decide to read law?

I had always wanted to pursue a career that has a human touch. My late father suggested that I consider law as an option. I remember attending the Law Open House in 2001 and the then NUS

Law Dean, Professor Tan Cheng Han, SC, addressed us. At the end of his speech, I was set on pursuing law.

What are your fondest memories of NUS Law?

One of my fondest memories was being part of the NUS Law IV musical production, put together by the graduating batch of 2005. I was in the marketing and publicity teams. There was great camaraderie; the different teams involved worked towards a common mission and there was sheer satisfaction at the end - after all the blood, sweat and tears!

Another fond memory I have is that we used to have mailboxes that were used by the school to deposit our notes. These mailboxes were also sometimes used to surprise friends with notes and gifts.

Please share with us your career journey since NUS Law and what were some of the considerations along the way?

After graduation, I spent pupillage and a

further nine years in Tan Rajah & Cheah ("TRC"). TRC believed in young lawyers having broad-based training rather than specialisation from the start. I was doing a variety of civil and commercial litigation work, including family law work, under numerous partners. I learnt a lot as I was exposed to different styles of work and legal thinking. I assisted in arbitration, mediation, matters in the State Courts and the Family Justice Courts (as they are now known), the High Court and the Court of Appeal, the Syariah Court and the MUIS Appeal Board.

In my third or fourth year, I started to focus my practice on personal law matters such as family law and probate/succession planning work for both non-Muslim and Muslim clients. I was also involved in the Law Society's Family Law Practice Committee, Muslim Law Practice Committee and the Probate Practice Committee.

That continued to be my primary area of practice until I decided to join the Legal Service in 2015. I spent the next 5 years in the Family Justice Courts before being posted to the Syariah Court on 1 August 2020.

For those who may not be familiar, could you tell us about the main work of the Syariah Court and how does it interact with the Family Justice Courts ("FJC")?

The Syariah Court ("SYC") deals with Muslim divorces and makes orders on the ancillary matters such as division of matrimonial assets; nafkah iddah (maintenance for generally a period of three months after the divorce); mutaah (consolatory gift paid by the husband upon divorce); custody, care and control and access of children.

FJC deals with the enforcement of SYC's orders and may also make orders for the maintenance of wife (during the subsistence of the marriage) and the maintenance of children.

SYC also issues the certificate of inheritance setting out the shares that beneficiaries are entitled to in intestacy

while FJC issues the Grant of Probate/ Letters of Administration.

Please share your thoughts on taking up the Senior President role - what are your aspirations and priorities?

The first thing that I aspire to do is to live up to and uphold the vision of SYC, which is "to be a reliable, dynamic & just court which inspires confidence".

As the Court that administers justice in the area of Muslim family law, SYC has to be in the forefront of the development of Muslim family law jurisprudence in Singapore through our judgments and case law and explore strategies to make our judgments more readily accessible to the legal fraternity and the public.

It is also important for SYC to work closely with its community partners. This is important because in the marriage and divorce ecosystem, the Court is only one of the many actors. The upstream efforts (designed to strengthen families or to resolve/minimise disputes or acrimony when the families are in distress) and the post-divorce efforts (to enable parties to transit out of the court process amicably and to facilitate healing) are as important

as the court experience. There must also be appropriate interventions and approaches to minimise the impact of divorce litigation on children.

Although SYC is an institution that deals with Muslim divorces, our mission includes saving marriages and encouraging reconciliations, where possible. As such, we are always looking at working with other agencies and our Asatizah (religious scholars) on how we can strengthen Muslim families as we recognise that the family is the basic unit and the bedrock of the community.

As SYC administers Muslim law, we also look forward to working with our Asatizah to explore how they can contribute their knowledge and expertise that are relevant to the work that we do in SYC - whether as counsellors, arbitrators (hakam), mediators and even adjudicators as future SYC judges.

What does it mean to you to be the first female to be appointed to this role in Singapore?

I believe that appointments in an organisation are made based on the organisation's needs at that particular

time and the organisation's assessment as to how these appointments can fulfil those needs, irrespective of gender. Whilst this is the first time that a female Senior President has been appointed, it is not uncommon for females to be performing a judicial role in SYC and the MUIS Appeal Board. Before my appointment, we already have a female President in the Syariah Court, female Registrars and female members of the Appeal Board. Therefore, the appointment of the Senior President, irrespective of gender, is a natural extension and progression in this context.

Also, what I find significant in the present appointment, is that we now have a bench of SYC judicial officers with a breadth of expertise and knowledge - a good mix of religious scholars and those with court administration and legal practice experience. This can only be beneficial to the parties that appear before us and the families that we serve.

What fills your weekends?

I spend most of my weekends with my family - either going out or spending quality time at home. My idea of relaxing is to spend some quiet time reading.

LAW ALUMNI MENTOR PROGRAMME 2020



If you are keen to find out more about LAMP or join us as a Mentor, do drop us a note at lawlink@nus.edu.sg.

LAMP connects first and second year students, as well as Masters students, with alumni lawyers to provide networking opportunities, insight, and guidance on career and professional development issues. This year's LAMP launch event was conducted via a series of evening Zoom sessions from 6 to 8 October 2020. Each evening focussed on

different practice areas, and mentors and mentees had the opportunity to meet and speak in small, intimate breakout room sessions. Many groups engaged in lively conversations, with mentees not only being able to hear from their own mentors, but also from other mentors, and mentees from different years of study.

"This year we had the largest participation ever in LAMP, where 173 students have enrolled and they will be matched with 171 mentors. This is an amazing mentor to mentee ratio, and students are encouraged to make the most of it. To the mentors, I say a huge thank you for taking the time and effort to guide our students especially this year. To quote a pop culture philosopher, when the going gets tough, the tough get going. That's where the mettle of a community gets stress-tested and I'm glad to report, based on the continuing wonderful progress of our mentorship programme, that this community, right here, right now, gets an A+", said Associate Professor Eleanor Wong, Vice-Dean of Student Life & Global Relations of NUS Law.

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS IN LEGAL PRACTICE

NUS Law is proud to celebrate the achievements of our alumni who were recognised in Asian Legal Business' 40 Under 40 list for 2020. We caught up with three of them - Huay Yee Kwan, Lynn Ariele Soh and Lin Shumin - to find out their career motivations, reflections on their journey and advice for their younger selves.



Huay Yee Kwan '04
Partner, Stephenson Harwood (Singapore) Alliance

"Adaptability and work ethic will be what ultimately helps in tough times, so no need to sweat the small stuff. Make the most out of any available opportunity and hang on to the friendships you make along the way."

Huay Yee Kwan '04 made her mark as the first female Singaporean admitted to the international partnership of Stephenson Harwood. As a maritime and offshore

finance expert, she has developed a reputation as a preferred lawyer for clients in the Chinese market. She regularly advises on international financing transactions and has executed some of her firm's most high profile transactions.

Her career started on a humble path. She considers the time when she started at a local boutique corporate law firm as her formative years. As a junior lawyer, she learnt by watching other lawyers in action, picking up useful skills in interacting and managing clients.

"I benefited immensely from senior lawyers who took the time to teach and train. I still remember an associate teaching me how to craft e-mails and mark up documents. These all seem like small things now but I still adopt those styles to this day," said Huay Yee.

When she joined Stephenson Harwood in 2007, she observed that the partners were predominantly male Caucasian senior practitioners and initially saw

making partner as an unbreakable glass ceiling. In retrospect, she counts herself fortunate to have forward-thinking and entrepreneurial leaders who provided her ample opportunities to discover her niche and explore new avenues.

On what she loves about her work, Huay Yee said: "What I enjoy most about the job is the people element of practice, the ability to foster trust and relationships with clients, and working together to achieve a satisfactory outcome. Many of these relationships transcend borders and seeing these relationships develop and grow over the long-term is extremely satisfying."

She sees mentoring and championing female associates to helm senior leadership roles as an important part of her legacy.

"I see young lawyers encountering different challenges, particularly women who are building their careers and families at the same time. I enjoy mentoring and helping them build sustainable practising careers for themselves," said Huay Yee.



Lynn Ariele Soh '08
Director, Eng and Co. LLC

"Champion for the things you believe in."

Lynn Ariele Soh '08 has advised on corporate finance, mergers and acquisitions, and general corporate work in her over ten years of practice. She has also acquired valuable experience and insights as an in-house counsel when she was Vice President (Legal) at a healthcare group with business and operations in Asia and Australia.

It might be surprising to learn that law school was not Lynn's first choice

when she was deciding what to study. When confronted with the choice of communication studies or law, it was her father's advice that helped her on the path she is on today.

"My heart was set on becoming a journalist as I had a very good internship experience at a local Chinese newspaper when I was in junior college," said Lynn. "My father told me that I could always become a journalist with a law degree, but not the other way round. I remain grateful to this day for his wise counsel."

Looking back, she has three lessons to share with her younger self.

Be adaptable

Lynn recounted being called to the bar in 2009 during the global financial crisis and faced a dearth of corporate law opportunities.

"I decided to switch from corporate legal work, which I was trained in, to disputes work and spent my first year of practice specialising in medico-legal work," she said. "When the economy recovered, I

worked my way back into corporate law, starting with a boutique corporate finance firm, then moving to one of the local big four firms, and eventually to a Magic Circle firm," she said.

Be open

Where you start is not where you finish. "Law school is a good head start, but there are always many pathways in life. Always be open to opportunities and possibilities that life brings to you."

Be nice and stay nice

Stand your ground and do not perpetuate toxic behaviour or culture, even if you find yourself at the receiving end. At the same time, champion for the things you believe in.

"I am an advocate for practice issues for women, mental health for lawyers, and work-life balance for working mothers," said Lynn. "I make it a point to start by making a difference in my workplace, and extending the same to every person that I have the privilege of meeting through work, be it clients or opposing counsels."



Lin Shumin '08
Director, Dispute Resolution, Drew & Napier LLC

"Don't be afraid to fail, or to make mistakes."

With over 12 years in practice, Lin Shumin '08 regularly acts in complex contractual disputes, shareholder's disputes, company law issues, and tortious actions. She has particular experience with freezing

injunctions and her work has also seen her handle judicial reviews, competition investigations and dawn raids.

Her journey in NUS Law has helped pave the way to a fulfilling professional and personal life. It was at law school where she met her husband and two of her closest friends. She counts them as her sounding board for whenever she faces an issue or difficult problem.

"More importantly, when things get tough or discouraging, we encourage each other and pull each other up. It is that camaraderie, which has followed through from NUS Law days, that has kept me going," said Shumin.

Legal practice has been an adventure for her. One aspect of her work that she loves is the opportunity to meet people.

"My career has enabled me to meet a whole host of people from different

industries that I would not otherwise have encountered," said Shumin. "It is inspiring to learn how my clients have built up their businesses, and it's a privilege to be able to help them navigate through and resolve their disputes."

Her advice to future lawyers is something that she is still continuously learning to master. There are two important skills that any lawyer will need. First, the ability to communicate in a clear and precise manner. Second, the ability to keep calm under pressure.

"Don't be afraid to fail, or to make mistakes. Whilst you should try your best to avoid mistakes, things will always happen that are outside of your control. It's far more important to learn how to pick yourself up and to fix your mistakes when they happen," said Shumin, on contemplating what she would say to her younger self.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7 - REFLECTIONS ON 2020

Faz Hussen '05 General Counsel & Director (Legal & Government Relations), McDonald's Singapore

"Looking back, this year has been momentous for me in so many ways. I was privileged to partake in the last ever (to-date) English Premier League match full of fans and experience the unparalleled spontaneous rapture of celebrating a crucial derby goal (Man United won 2-0!)."

2020 was a very challenging time both personally (I got COVID and was quarantined for 51 days due to swab issues) and professionally (given the constantly evolving challenges and dynamics a General Counsel of a consumer business faced in the months leading up to, during and post circuit breaker). However, it has certainly been illuminating and affirming too. The experiences this year triggered me to make a life-changing decision I had been putting off which has led to much more happiness and fulfilment in my life.

Looking ahead to 2021, given my never-ending *fernweh*, I am very much looking forward to travelling once again! YOLO! Here's wishing everyone a Happy 2021 ahead!"



Susan Peh '86 Chief Executive Officer, Adsan Law LLC



"The COVID-19 pandemic swept through humanity wreaking havoc and disrupting almost all aspects of our lives. It has made us relearn, reinvent, reimagine and recreate - all at once - over an intensely short period of time. Beyond work, it struck me that in a crisis, we are capable of being self-sufficient in ways never imagined.

2020 has enabled me to spend so much more quality time at home with my family which is priceless. I even became a self-appointed resident barber to my 94-year-old Dad. I would like to think that the pandemic is fortifying and conjures optimism. Without any doubt, the day will come when we are able to put this pandemic behind us. For now, let's wake up to each sunrise with renewed strength, hope and boundless imagination."

Rakesh Kirpalani '06 Director (Dispute Resolution & Information Technology) and Chief Technology Officer, Drew & Napier LLC

"2020 is a great teacher. The most important lesson for me is that people can be closer even when they are physically further apart. Just like how your actions define you, organizations, institutions and countries are defined by the actions of their people, wherever they may be.

At the same time, while technology can bridge many gaps, it will never replace the personal touch or the humanity of being present.

2020 showed us what we are capable of, how resilient and adaptable we can be and that the things we thought mattered most, in truth, cannot measure up to the people who matter most.

The best that we can hope to do moving forward into 2021 is to not forget the lessons taught by 2020."



REAL-LIFE SKILLS FOR REAL-WORLD GOOD

– The Centre for Pro Bono and Clinical Legal Education



The Centre for Pro Bono and Clinical Legal Education welcomed its new leadership team in July this year. The 3 now at the helm, Associate Professor Eleanor Wong '85, Senior Lecturer Sonita Jeyapathy '03 and Sheridan Fellow Benny Tan '12, bring together a diversity of perspectives and experiences based on their respective personalities and backgrounds. Their experience ranges from government service to local and international private practice, from prosecution to communication and pedagogy consultancy. To truly realise the Centre's mandate of providing NUS students with as many chances as possible to use their real-life skills for real-world good, the new leadership is eager to collaborate with partners who share a passion for service to the community.

The core vision for the Centre remains unchanged. The Centre will continue to focus on administering pro bono programmes for law students and creating opportunities for law students to get a taste of experiential learning through law clinics.

In relation to pro bono opportunities, the Centre administers the Singapore Institute of Legal Education pro bono programme for law students. It works closely with student groups like the Pro Bono Group and the Criminal Justice Club, which run and coordinate multiple

PARTNER WITH CPBCLC

in 3 ways

- Let our students help with your pro bono initiatives
- Donate or co-fund to support project grants, awards and events
- Mentor and teach our students in structured clinics

across 4 domains

- Litigation work
- Corporate advice and transactions
- Legal Policy research and reform
- Technology solutions for law

✉ probono@nus.edu.sg

pro bono projects for our students, and external partners (including the State Courts, Ministry of Law and the Law Society) to grow the opportunities for our students to experience and assist in pro bono projects.

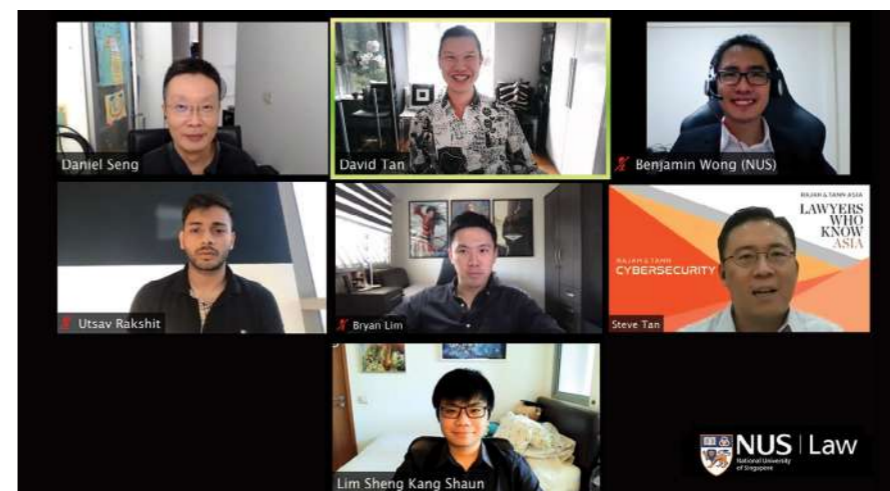
Law clinics are where our students help or work on live files in a sustained and structured manner. The students are set a curriculum which includes several assessable tasks and receive

academic credit. Here, the Centre is fortunate to have many excellent partner organisations such as the Legal Aid Bureau, National Gallery, the Singapore Art Museum who have entrusted Centre personnel with the conduct of some of their legal matters, which have formed the basis of the Centre's clinics. Further, starting in AY 2020-21, clinics will also be run by practitioners who commit to mentoring our students while involving them in the conduct of socially meaningful live legal work. Such work might engage active litigation or corporate advice. In time to come, the Centre hopes to also offer clinics in the realm of legal reform and legal technology. These will provide even more opportunities for students to apply interdisciplinary skills in a practical setting, and at the same time allow students to have a chance to make a real difference to the lives of the individuals and organizations that they work with. It will also allow them to hone independent learning skills, which will carry them a long way in the working world.

It promises to be an exciting ride ahead. The Centre is always on the lookout for new and varied opportunities with the endgame of being able to offer a transformational experience for our students. If you are keen to partner with us or to offer your support in other ways, we would love to hear from you.

BLAZING A TRAIL IN LAW & TECH

NUS Law launched a series of half-day Law & Technology Primer webinars for the undergraduate cohort starting in September 2020 helmed by Professor David Tan and Associate Professor Daniel Seng '92.



Webinar on 7 October 2020

Starting in Academic Year 2020-21, all undergraduates at NUS Law will attend a half-day seminar on law & technology. Conceived by Associate Professor Daniel Seng '92 (Director, Centre for Technology, Artificial Intelligence & the Law (TRAIL) and Professor David Tan (Vice Dean (Academic Affairs) and Deputy Director, TRAIL), this "Law & Technology Primer" aims to introduce students to issues in law and technology that build on their compulsory modules, get them excited about doing law & tech electives, and familiarise them with the use of technology in legal practice.

In its maiden year, this Law & Technology Primer seminar was compulsory for all Year 1 and Year 2 students, and optional for Year 3 and Year 4 students. In future years, all Year 1 students will be expected to attend the seminar, and there are plans to introduce this as a semester-long module.

On the research front, TRAIL led by Associate Professor Seng is close to completing its work on the Special Issue on Law and Technology, which will be published by the Singapore Academy of Law (SAL). The Special Issue curates eleven articles from academics covering three topics – the general regulatory challenges that technology poses for law and societies, sectoral approaches to technological advancements, and the potential of artificial intelligence to open up a new paradigm of legal systems and legal thinking.

Diverse perspectives abound on how much "tech" a law student should

learn at university, compared to other content important to legal practice such as corporate finance, restructuring and insolvency, and other skills like business literacy and advocacy. Associate Professor Seng who spent over half a decade at Stanford immersed in law & tech research, offers his views: "While coding is useful for any discipline, the value of law students learning coding is not in the coding per se, but the exposure to a systematic, problem-solving mentality mandated by the coding environment. Despite technology slowly making its way into the legal mainstream, only specialist users, developers or researchers need coding skills for their work."

This perspective is echoed by Steve Tan '98 (Partner, Rajah & Tann Singapore LLP; Director, Rajah & Tann Technologies; Adjunct Professor, NUS Law), who said: "For the next 1 to 2 generations of lawyers, in the vast majority of traditional law practice areas, coding expertise would not be needed in order for one to be a proficient legal practitioner." As the global economy continues its rapid pace of digitalisation, Steve thinks that a law student should possess the adaptability and willingness to embrace technology as tools to be utilised in the practice of law. Perhaps as Associate Professor Seng intimated, what law students should be learning is "law & tech" as opposed to "hard tech". He comments: "In law school, interested students can take a variety of technology law electives. The NUS curriculum also enables those who are really inspired to pick up one or two non-law technology courses from the School of Computing."

In the Law & Technology Primer seminar, Associate Professor Seng explained that our societies are always in a state of change as new technologies are introduced. In a series of three case studies (AI-generated works, autonomous vehicles and cryptocurrencies), he demonstrated how recent technological advancements have challenged longstanding legal assumptions in an unprecedented manner. Professor David Tan covered how conduct on social media may be regulated by a kaleidoscope of laws regulating content on social media, such as Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA), Protection from Harassment Act (POHA), Administration of Justice (Protection) Act, Sedition Act and the common law of defamation. Sheridan Fellow Benjamin Wong '15 offered an overview of local and global issues relating to privacy and data protection. Joining them were Mr Rajesh Sreenivasan (Head of Technology, Media & Communications, Rajah & Tann Singapore LLP; Director, Rajah & Tann Technologies) and Mr Steve Tan. Current students Utsav Rakshit '21 (who completed a Minor in Information Systems) and Bryan Lim '22 (who interned at Rajah & Tann Technologies), and Shaun Lim '18 (Research Assistant, TRAIL) also shared their insights and experiences.

Rajah & Tann Technologies (RTTech), a subsidiary of law firm Rajah & Tann Singapore, provides cybersecurity, data breach readiness and response services; tech-enabled services such as electronic discovery and digital forensics, e-learning through its Novusdemia platform, contract management, and other legal tech and regulatory technology services. As increasing amounts of non-advocacy legal work are being handled by non-legal entities, law firms have no choice but to keep pace with developments in technology. Associate Professor Seng offers a glimpse of things to come: "The biggest change is a serious reconsideration of the entire economic structure of the legal industry. Legal tech is changing both the way lawyers interact with clients, and the expectations of clients about legal advice. This in turn puts pressure on the practice of charging based on billable hours." Well, perhaps what we can teach our law students is not more tech, but to equip them with better skills in business and financial literacy?

YEAR 4 LAW-USP STUDENT ELECTED AS NUS STUDENTS' UNION PRESIDENT



Su-Ann wants to create a united and transformative Union by strengthening bonds with the Constituent Clubs, Associate Bodies, and the students themselves.

The NUS Students' Union (NUSSU) has elected its second female President.

Wee Su-Ann, a fourth-year Law-USP undergraduate and former varsity sharpshooter, was elected as President of the NUSSU 42nd Executive Committee. She started her one-year term on 1 Oct.

She succeeds Richard Wang, an NUS Arts and Social Sciences graduate and the outgoing 41st President.

Expressing confidence in his successor, Richard said: "Through my interactions with Su-Ann during her campaign and after her election into office, I have come to know her as a determined and competent person."

The election was heartening for Richard. He added that he had been encouraging more female candidates to run for office for some time.

In his outgoing message, Richard welcomed Su-Ann as the second-ever female NUSSU President, and the first in 14 years.

Preceding Su-Ann as the first female NUSSU President was Ms Tay E Teng, an NUS Business School graduate and the President of the 28th Executive Committee. She held office from 2006 to 2007.

Su-Ann did not expect to become the second female President in NUSSU's history. "I did not realise there was only one female President before me," she said. "I feel honoured to step up and be the role model for other female students to be inspired to step into leadership positions."



Su-Ann spending time at the theme room of NUS Cinnamon College

The eldest of three children, Su-Ann had also served in her second year in the 40th NUSSU Executive Committee as Regulations and Compliance Officer, to provide more legal support to the Union.

She spent one semester on a student exchange to London in her third year, before returning to serve again in NUSSU in her final year.

The precision and focus she brings to her various leadership roles can perhaps be traced back to her experience in competitive shooting, where she specialised in the air pistol. Su-Ann was

in the teamNUS shooting team in her first and second years, carrying on from her secondary school and junior college days.

"It's an interesting sport, you don't really run around. You stay in one spot and you focus," mused Su-Ann who has taken part in various local competitions.

"I learned a lot about myself, I learned how to focus and concentrate on things. It's a very mental sport."

Plans for NUSSU

Su-Ann intends to tap on her legal background and experience to equip NUSSU student representatives with the skills to respond more effectively to regulatory matters, improve NUSSU's adjudication and internal conflict management processes, and build a more robust system within the Union for the Personal Data Protection Act.

That ties in with her legal interests, which currently lie in negotiation and mediation, as well as international law.

Su-Ann added that her team will also look into different ways of communicating with students, which could potentially include a YouTube channel about NUSSU.

After undergoing an election campaign filled with unexpected changes and last-minute adaptations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the team also plans to reformat the exam pack, NUSSU Receive and Give (RAG) Day, as well as the Freshmen Orientation Central Committee (FOCC), in preparation for such crises in the future. There is also a NUSSU merchandise store in the works.

Together with her team, Su-Ann aims to create a united and transformative Union by strengthening bonds with the Constituent Clubs, Associate Bodies, as well as the students themselves, innovating new formats for student life and welfare initiatives, and helping students adapt to the new learning conditions during and after the pandemic.

This article was first published on 1 October 2020 on NUS News at <https://news.nus.edu.sg/highlights/nus-students-union-elects-second-female-president>.

THE INAUGURAL NUS LAW ARTS WEEK: THE VIRTUAL EDITION

Contributed by Leah Chua '22

Arts Week 2020 was supposed to be a grand extravaganza - fairy lights strung up, performances all around school, little bazaar stores set up, friends and family milling about, celebrating the artistic talent in Law School. Then COVID-19 happened.

Law Arts, a novel initiative set up by the 40th Law Club Management Committee, was meant to create a community of like-minded people. Law Sports and law-related sub-clubs already existed, but clearly, in legalese, there was a *lacuna*. We had painters, dancers, actors, singers, playwrights; it was time to harness that talent to the fullest! With that in mind, Law Arts formed 3 interest groups - a Book/Film club "Open Jio", Performances, and Dance. In addition, we implemented 'Workshop Wednesdays', a pocket of time once a month where we held subsidised (or entirely free) workshops for students, such as pottery, terrarium making, or art-jamming (painting). Occasionally we planned outings to plays together such as SRT's *The Lifespan of A Fact*. Arts Week 2020 was intended to be the *pièce de résistance*: it would wrap up the activities of our Law Club Term while introducing the freshmen to the various opportunities Law Arts offered.

The onset of the lockdown and COVID-19 restrictions threw a spanner into our plans. How would we publicise our activities? Could we even organise activities in the first place?

Inspired by artists all over the world who were seamlessly transitioning to technology to forge and maintain a connection with their fans, Arts Week: The Virtual Edition was born. We had various Welcome Teas with the different Interest Groups (Dance had an online workshop; Open Jio discussed The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Lai; Performances had a get to know you session); a Floral Arrangement Workshop hosted by Charis Chan '22; a Career Talk "The Road Less Travelled: After Law School" graced by Ivan Heng '88, Willin Low and Priscilla Shunmugam '06, where they shared their struggles and successes after embarking on a career path outside of the legal industry; and last but not least, "The Show Must Go On", a virtual talent-show/concert/sharing starring Dean Simon Chesterman and Vice-Deans Eleanor



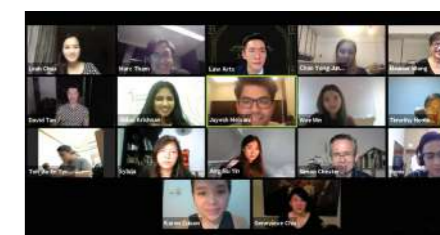
40th Law Club Management Committee

Wong and David Tan, along with student performers who serenaded us, namely, Jonathan Lee '21, Wee Min '22, Timothy Homer Hsu '22, Ryan Nonis '22, Sarf Malik '24 and Marc Tham '24. The final event was live-streamed on Facebook too, where to date, it has reached more than 6,800 viewers. During the Finale Show, we saw the Deanery in a completely different light as they demonstrated their artistic sides - poetry, story-telling and photography. It was, in a way, bittersweet: while we celebrated the amazing talent in our midst, we were soberly reminded of how badly the arts industry has been hit. It goes without saying that we all left that night more convinced than ever of how essential arts is to our daily lives.



Law Arts Directors, Leah Chua '22 and Benson Fan '22

Were there difficulties in organising Arts Week? Certainly. The most challenging part would probably have to be the 6-hour drive around Singapore to deliver the items individually to the Floral Arrangement Workshop participants - from Changi to Lakeside (Benson Fan '22, my fellow Arts Director, was at the wheel doing all the heavy lifting)! However, most



"The Show Must Go On"



Floral Arrangement Workshop

of the other challenges such as publicity were overcome by ramping up our online presence, such as organising an Instagram lucky draw giveaway where students had to submit their artwork in order to secure a lucky draw entry. At the end of the day, Law Arts and Arts Week 2020 would not have been possible without the buy-in from the students, who truly helped us form a community. We look forward to having a physical event next year.

All thanks to Professor Eleanor Wong and Clement Cheong for their support and help with our activities, the 40th Law Club Management Committee, our Arts Week Chairman Jayesh Melvani '22, our Law Arts Committee and Interest Group Heads - Vidya Singanathan '22, Denise Thia '22, Tyrone Toh '22, Sylvia Loh '22, Emily Wong '22, Timothy Homer Hsu '22 and Ryan Nonis '22 - for their dedication, love, time and energy into making the Law Arts dream a reality.

STUDENT LIFE IN THE AGE OF COVID-19



2020 B.A. Mallal Moot Team - (Left to Right) Melvinder Singh '23, Kevin Tang '23, Kyna Chew '23 and Phoon Yi Hao '23

The year 2020 will be remembered as a year of unprecedented global challenges. With the COVID-19 pandemic still looming at large, it is worthwhile recognising how we have adapted to disruptions, and celebrating how we have reimagined ourselves in the "new normal".

When Mooting Goes Virtual

Mooting has long been a rite of passage for many law students. Representing the university in mooting competitions remains a sought-after learning experience. While COVID-19 placed international travel restrictions and halted physical moot court sessions, many organisers were quick to revive competitions virtually.

From preparing for virtual moots to sparring against opponents via the now ubiquitous Zoom video-conferencing application, it was a novel experience even for seasoned mooters.

Isabella Tan '21 and Nikhil Angappan '21, winners of the International Negotiation Competition (INC) 2020 National Round, did their preparation entirely online during Singapore's circuit breaker period. "When I first heard about the concept of virtual moots, I was sceptical as to whether they could work. Much of the competition experience is in the atmosphere," said Nikhil. He and teammate Isabella felt that the camaraderie of exchanging ideas and laughter with opposing participants and competition judges would be missed as well.

Kevin Tang Yan Wei '23, who emerged champion of the 2020 B.A. Mallal Moot, asserted that online moots cannot capture the visceral zeal and nerves of debating in front of a live audience. He said: "Part of the excitement of mooting comes from being able to speak in the moot court."

As social gathering restrictions shut the door on physical meetings, technology opened up new avenues for communication.

"Paradoxically, preparation for moots has been easier. Meeting online is second nature to everyone. This has made organising practice sessions much easier because there is no need to find an available venue and to travel. It takes a few clicks to set up a Zoom meeting," Kevin said, adding that he even managed to set up several practice sessions with friends residing in the United Kingdom.

"In the past, I would usually meet up with my teammates to simulate the actual rounds. We'd have discussions in seminar rooms, laying out all of our ideas on the whiteboard, talking them through, and editing our memorials and negotiation plans together," said Isabella.

This time around, the INC pair powered through extensive Zoom meetings during their training sessions. The ease of connectivity allowed them to invite more coaches and alumni to join in, giving them the benefit of garnering immensely valuable feedback.

However, conferencing from the comfort of home came with one drawback. The long Zoom calls, up to five times a week, meant learning to deal with Zoom fatigue.

Learning Something New

"Mooting on Zoom requires a different skillset from mooting in real life," said Kevin, adding that mooters need to adapt themselves to presenting and speaking well on camera.

He explained that small movements or facial expressions that would not be noticed in person could become big distractions as they appear starkly on-screen. He said: "With the camera trained on your face throughout the moot, maintaining eye contact and controlling facial expressions become especially important."

Apart from on-screen peculiarities presented by the confines of video conferencing, the mooters observed that establishing the right chemistry and rapport during the competition was particularly challenging.

Chan You Quan '22 and his teammates had initially trained online separately from each other for their Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mooting competition but were not entirely satisfied with the setting. The team, who took first place in the 4th ADC-ICC Asia-Pacific Commercial Mediation Competition, decided that

competing in person while following social distancing protocols would be the correct call.

"Given that mediation uses an ADR format, which focuses heavily on teamwork, there are situations that simply cannot be replicated in a Zoom room. For example, when we wish to get our partner's attention, it is much easier to simply turn to them in person and look at them to initiate a response. Such nuances contribute to the overall team chemistry," said You Quan. Fortunately for the team, by the time of the competition, they were in Phase Two of Singapore's reopening. And with help from the university, they managed to book a meeting room and loan the necessary equipment.

Not being able to meet in person, Isabella and Nikhil took an innovative approach to confront the difficulties impacting team performance. They had to plan the flow of their arguments meticulously, agree on who would speak when, and decide what signals to give each other when interjecting. "We couldn't feel the round as we would have been able to in person. Most notably, knowing when to jump into the conversation was tougher in the absence of physical body language cues," said Nikhil.

Teamwork the Way to Go

If there is a lesson to be learned, it is that, the spirit of teamwork and collaboration is strong and undeterred by unforeseen times. Whether competing in physical or virtual moots, great teamwork wins the day.

"I learned that teamwork is everything. Isabella and I had prepared extensively before the competition, down to our respective roles and what we would say. But once the round starts, trusting your teammate is of unmatched importance," Nikhil shared. "At some points during the competition, we had to deviate from the game plan. But because we had confidence in each other, we were both able to run with whatever judgment calls were made by either teammate. Due to this, we were also able to cover for each other during the round as and when needed."

You Quan added: "To overcome the time constraints, we worked together as a group to decide how we were going to approach the issue, and we anticipated and predicted what the other side was going to raise. When the competition round could accommodate only two persons, we discussed our overall strategy, plan, and direction hours ahead of time."



National Round of the International Negotiation Competition 2020

Welcoming the Class of 2024

Despite the challenges occasioned by COVID-19 safety measures, the NUS Law Club Freshmen Orientation Central Committee (FOCC) rose to the occasion and organised an inspired virtual Law Camp in order to welcome the new class of 2024.

Freshmen Charisse Peh Xue Qi '24 and Ng Yong Kang '24 shared their thoughts on this unprecedented start to their university experience.

Like many freshmen looking forward to making new friends, Yong Kang was initially disappointed when he learnt that orientation would be held online. However, during the three-day e-camp, he realised that the orientation group leaders had made a huge effort to plan activities to help foster bonding among students.

"I am more than thankful for the orientation experience," said Yong Kang. "Our group leaders took the initiative to try to get our group to bond. Every night, they would set up an informal Zoom session, for us to get to know each other better."

Charisse appreciated the host of orientation activities organised, which included virtual visits to four firms, namely, Yuen Law LLC, Baker Mackenzie, ET LLP, and Allen & Gledhill.

"E-Orientation was essential and useful in kick-starting my journey. Although it was held online, I found the seniors' sharing of experience and e-firm visits very informative and useful. Apart from that, I also managed to make friends with my Orientation group mates through online games and outings when Phase Two began," she said.

On learning that she would attend most of her classes online and miss out on face-to-face interaction, Charisse felt worried. "I knew that the rigour of Law School was something I needed to adjust to, and it did

not seem easy doing so while being isolated from everyone else," she said. "The pandemic gave me a different university experience from what I envisioned, but I tried to make the most out of the situation by actively making new friends and taking on opportunities that I am interested in."

When it comes to online learning, the students see benefits and drawbacks.

Yong Kang leaned towards preferring online lectures as he can playback recorded lectures at variable speeds and rewatch particular segments to gain more clarity. "I'm in the other camp when it comes to tutorials. I enjoy LARC tutorials the most right now because it is a face-to-face module. I find it easier to participate in the discussion in person during class, rather than over Zoom," he said.

Charisse felt that online lessons have the potential to cover more ground. "On Zoom, the question-and-answer function allows us to pose questions at any time. It also allows us to view everyone's questions, and we benefit together from the lecturer's answers, whether spoken or typed. This may not be replicated in a physical setting," she said.

Beyond the New Normal

The foremost question in our minds is: What would the world look like after such an unprecedented year? Much has been said about not returning to the normal we are familiar with. The lessons we can take comes from the ingenuity of overcoming the disruptions posed by the pandemic and marching on with our lives in the "new normal".

"I would think that even after COVID-19 passes, many of the tools and methods that we have applied during the pandemic would remain. It is likely about identifying the best way to approach things in the appropriate context," said You Quan.

"Ultimately, it is a matter of remaining adaptable and flexible. Our value rests not on being able to execute mere repetitive tasks, but by being adaptable, innovative, and flexible whatever challenges come our way," he concluded.

Charisse found a silver lining. "There is still a lot to be grateful about, like having my family, friends, and mentors support me through my first semester. The COVID-19 situation has also opened up countless opportunities for us to help others, like volunteering to tutor students during home-based learning and being able to do so more efficiently because it is remote," she said.

LAW IV: UNDUE INFLUENCE

Contributed by Valen Lim '20, Alison Lewis '20, Natalie Ng '20 and Phoon Wuei '20
Photos: Michelle Shona '20



Law IV has been a tradition at NUS Law when the graduating class every year will stage a musical production to celebrate and showcase their talents while raising funds, through ticket sales, to give back to the community. Everyone had different reasons for signing up for Law IV. For some, it was a storied NUS Law tradition that they too, were eager to join. For others, it was an opportunity to become better friends with their batchmates. Whatever the cause, we shared a common purpose - to make the best out of our final year as the graduating class of 2020, and to do good at the same time.

This year's production, titled *Undue Influence*, was a musical about a *bona fide* murder mystery. A young lawyer, Hugo Tan, was found dead in his office after a long day of work. The suspect? His best friend, influencer Nathaniel Ho (@natflexandchill on Instagram). As he struggles to defend himself in the court of public opinion, his defence counsel, Shirley Hong, attempts to navigate the equally unforgiving landscape of the Singapore courts. It is up to Shirley to uncover her inner sleuth and seek out the truth behind Hugo's death.

Undue Influence was a proud production and accomplishment of the Law IV 2020's team with a record of 16 songs, choreographed dance sequences, multifunctional stage sets towering over the stage, and a new record to sponsorships.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's performance became an extraordinary one. The cast and crew spent many hours discussing the future of Law IV 2020, setting in place various contingencies and backup plans. However, eventually, the performance was forced to be cancelled.

After consultation with the faculty, a single recording of Law IV 2020 was produced and launched on the date the musical would have been staged. This allowed the team to not only continue to canvass for donations for our beneficiary, Geylang East Home for the Aged, but also to provide an opportunity for interested audience to watch the musical. As a result of the recording, this year's Law IV became a debut online premiere on YouTube on



22 May 2020, which has since reached a viewership of more than 1,800 (more than 3 days of full-house performances)! While Law IV 2020 did not turn out the way the team had planned, it was heartening to see that the audience enjoyed the musical as much as we enjoyed staging it.



Scan this QR or click [HERE](#) to view Law IV 2020 - Undue Influence online.



Scan this QR or click [HERE](#) to donate to our beneficiary, Geylang East Home for the Aged.

LLM (IBL) CLASS OF 2010'S ZOOM REUNION

Contributed by Charles Guo LLM '10

Neither the pandemic, nor borders, nor different time-zones, could prevent the LLM (International Business Law) Class of 2010 from celebrating their 10th anniversary since graduation. Attended by 39 out of 60 classmates from around the world, the e-reunion was held virtually on Zoom late on the night of the 26th of July 2020, with the theme: "One year of study, life-long friendship".

The event had the full support of the Faculty of Law, and was graced by Dean Simon Chesterman as the Guest-of-Honour. To kick off the celebrations, Dean Chesterman warmly greeted the class and shared his views on how Covid-19 has changed methods of teaching, reshaped education, as well as the means of connecting. The International Business Law (IBL) Programme Director, Associate Professor Stephen Phua '88, then delivered a keynote speech recalling some of the

highlights and memorable moments from when he taught the Class of 2010, and summarizing the unique features that have made this class so special and united from the day they entered NUS Law.

Following that were three sessions of sharing and discussion by various classmates around three broad areas: career development, life and work experiences as well as opportunities for co-operation. This presented a unique opportunity for everyone to get involved as representatives of judges, lawyers, entrepreneurs, philanthropists, in-house counsels, government officials, and scholars all took turns to share their stories and experiences since graduation. Amidst recalling the good old days and exchanging the latest developments on each side with much laughter and friendly banter, time really flew and all too soon, it was time to say goodbye with tears! Many

of us have not seen each other since we graduated from NUS Law in 2010.

The Class of 2010 of the IBL Programme is one family consisting of some 60 alumni from 12 countries in 3 continents, and we were delighted that 39 of us were able to join in this online reunion. As Jo-Ann Chan '97, Associate Director of Alumni Relations and Development at NUS Law, commented, "being able to bring together people in different countries in celebration of a common event via Zoom is one of the small silver linings of this difficult time in history, and your class reunion is a perfect example of this."

We are grateful that together, our class has made a difference to strengthen the NUS community, especially during this time of pandemic and full of uncertainty!



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