25-year-old finally makes it to university, after long, unconventional route

From ITE to NUS scholar

He said his two years in ITE were a test of his discipline.

"It was a challenge. People at my secondary school were more dynamic and more focused," he said.

He then entered NP and graduated three years later with a Diploma in Information Technology. With his 3.97 GPA, he also received the IDA Gold Medal as the top technology graduate, and clinched the Lee Kuan Yew Award for Mathematics and Science.

Now, Mr Ang is in the second semester of his first year at NUS.

"It's been my dream ever since Secondary 2. It's like a dream become a reality," he said.

Mr Ang is doing a Bachelor of Computing in E-Commerce, and is planning to minor in entrepreneurship.

And he holds two scholarships concurrently — the NUS Undergraduate (Merit) Scholarship, and the Lee Kuan Yew Scholarship to Encourage Upgrading, which is a one-time $3,500 award.

Single-income family

Mr Ang comes from a single-income family. His father is a cabbie and his mother a housewife, so his various awards have helped lighten the financial burden on his family.

His mother is very happy with his progress.

She said: "I never liked giving him pressure. The most important thing is for him to do his best."

He has two younger sisters, one in secondary school and one in polytechnic.

"My sister in polytechnic said she sometimes feels quite pressured because of all the awards I've received so far.

"But I think she's on track to getting a scholarship," he said. "I think, somehow, maybe I inspired them. My sisters are doing very well now.

"Mr Ang does not excel only academically. He is also an active volunteer.

He has been with the National Police Cadet Corps since secondary school. He is now an Honorary Inspector.

Last year, he taught migrant workers basic computer skills at a not-for-profit organisation ad-hoc, hoping to help them upgrade themselves.

Mr Ang wants to become a life coach and help people find their passions in life.

"I want to help people who don't know what to do with their lives, or think they haven't reached their full potential. As a life coach, I want to co-create the future with them," he said.

People need to believe in themselves and challenge the unknown. They need to find counter-examples to prove they can actually do it.

And if you can't find a counter-example, then you can create one yourself. You."