

Getting To Know Our Students

Lee Wan Hui Caitlyn, Master of Arts (Counselling and Guidance) graduate



Caitlyn Lee
is a recipient of the
Ong Tiong Tat/
Irene Tan Liang Kheng
(OTT/ITLK)
Scholarship.

Please share with us your professional life journey thus far.

At which point in your career did you aspire to pursue a graduate degree?

I was working as an Autism Therapist at a special education school and part of my job responsibilities included supporting the families of the students who were under my care. While my support to the parents was meant to be more on the “technical” side, such as providing them with behavioural strategies to better support their child at home, meetings with them always evolved into something more as they began sharing their own personal stories of heartbreak and hope. It was then that I realised how fulfilled I felt interacting with them in such a manner. I desired to learn how to better communicate, respond and support them in their challenging journey, and that was what led me to pursue my further studies in counselling.

What was the best part of being a student at NIE?

In my opinion, the greatest part of being a student here at NIE was the intimate friendships that I formed with my peers during my course of study. I relished the feeling of getting together several nights a week with individuals from diverse backgrounds and partaking in a culture of sharing and learning. Our friendships went beyond the confines of the NIE campus as we had no qualms about lending support to each other in the respective fields and industries we came from.

Which aspect of the programme has left a deep impact on you?

The two semesters of practicum placements that I underwent were the most memorable and impactful. It allowed me to interact with clients in a real-world setting and taught me valuable things I could never have learnt in a classroom. Professionally, I have learnt how to adaptively apply the technical knowledge gained in class, depending on the context and client I was working with. Personally, I learnt a lot about myself in terms of my strengths, weaknesses and beliefs.

How has the Master of Arts (Counselling and Guidance) programme benefited you in your professional practice?

The Master of Arts (Counselling and Guidance) programme was very comprehensive, providing me with both the breadth and depth of skills and knowledge that I needed to add value in my future professional practice. The practical nature of the module assessments and the two semesters of practicum placements allowed me to put these skills and knowledge to the test. There were many instances during my practicum placements where I experienced scenarios with clients that were nearly identical to the case studies and materials explored in class. This allowed me to confidently apply what I had gleaned from my class discussions to support my clients in the best way possible.

For someone who had no prior experience in the counselling field, these aspects of the programme helped me to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice. Furthermore, it greatly reduced the anxiety I felt entering a new field upon graduation, since I had already gained some prior practical experience.

Would you recommend the Master of Arts (Counselling and Guidance) programme at NIE?

Without a moment's hesitation! If you aspire to further your studies in a learning environment that offers both a comprehensive curriculum and a strong culture of learning and support, look no further than NIE!