



To explore ideas about Buddhist and Hindu philosophies taught in a Philosophy and Political Theory class, Mr Goh went on a self-funded 44-day hike through the famed Annapurna Circuit in Nepal. PHOTOS: JAKE GOH

# The world's a stage

Mr Jake Goh gets many different perspectives at Yale-NUS College

ESTHER TEO

WHILE Mr Jake Goh had always been strong in mathematics and science subjects, he wanted a university education that was steeped in the liberal arts as well.

To get the best of both worlds, he decided to enrol in the then newly opened Yale-NUS College in 2011.

At the end of their four-year undergraduate studies, Yale-NUS students will graduate with either a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) or Bachelor of Science (Honours) degree.

Based in Singapore, he received the bond-free Yale-NUS Faculty

Scholarship, which provides an annual award of \$18,000 for tuition fees; while financial aid covered his residential expenses.

## All-round development

Now into his second year at the liberal arts college, Mr Goh is pursuing a major in mathematical, computational and statistical sciences, a discipline he is very passionate about.

The 24-year-old's interest in it was sparked when he took a computer science course that was taught by a professor known for giving very challenging assignments. Mr Goh remembers staying

up till the wee hours of the morning trying to solve the professor's newly released problem sets.

"I relished the rush of endorphins (when solving the problems). That's when I realised that this was my future," he recalls.

Despite being less comfortable and well-versed in subjects other than science, he has enjoyed modules such as Philosophy and Political Thought in addition to Number Theory and Introduction to Black Holes.

The modules help him understand how the world works from different angles and perspectives. They also help him to connect the dots between seemingly distinct and opposing ideas — a skill that is highly relevant in the globalised and interconnected world today.

Mr Goh says: "The liberal arts path is definitely not for everyone. It will challenge you in ways you don't even expect."

"I find it incredible how it pushes you to grow as a leader and future citizen of the world. It has made me a more complete thinker and problem-solver, and has very subtly, but surely, changed my thought process in looking for a solution."



Mr Goh enjoys the small and intimate classroom environment at Yale-NUS where the global student population adds depth and different perspectives to debates on various issues.

## Not confined to the classroom

Besides lectures on campus, there are also projects and learning outside the classroom.

The latter allowed Mr Goh the opportunity to travel extensively across various continents for a cumulative period of more than six months — all in just two years of being with the programme.

He has been to Sarawak, Malaysia, to live with the Iban people, who were former headhunters.

He also visited an isolated Sumatran island in Indonesia, where he and his teammates felt like "the last people on Earth".

Last year, to explore ideas about Buddhist and Hindu philosophies taught in a Philosophy and Political Theory class, he and a fellow student embarked on a self-funded 44-day hike through the famed Annapurna Circuit in Nepal.

He also took part in a 20-day field-based leadership expedition in Wyoming, United States, to experience living in the wilderness at the Windy River Range.

Currently, he is interning at app company TOPDOX, in Porto, Portugal, and participating in the summer programmes under the Future Global Leaders Fellowship.

Mr Goh is a recipient and a fellow of the New York-based Future Global Leaders Foundation, an accelerator programme for top college students who want to become members of the Fortis Society, the world's first private network of leaders.

Even when he is in Singapore, the activities do not stop for Mr Goh. He is a member of a variety of student groups such as the YNC Hacks (a hacker group for students passionate about technology), the Green Room Theatre and the illuminafrati (a residential group).

Apart from the vibrant residential college life, he also treasures the smaller and more intimate classroom environment at Yale-NUS, where students from far-flung corners of the globe enjoy greater proximity and are able to add depth and different perspectives to rigorous debates on various issues.

Upon graduation, Mr Goh hopes to join the technology industry and continue to travel the world.

He says: "There's too much in this world to learn and experience. It is my purpose to go out there and get as much as I can."