

Scholarship Interview

An Gel Siah and Mariam Dawood

TRANSCRIPT

How did you feel when you found you were awarded the scholarship?

Angel: I think I got the call when I was at an internship. The really first moment, I was in a little disbelief. I was really sure it was real, but then, when I really had the time to think about it, it's just a really exciting one. You actually know that, "I'll be going to a new city, a complete new place, and a new institution in a month, for the next two years." It's really an exciting one.

Mariam: I think, for me, as well, I wasn't able to believe, just like her. I was like, "I need the email first from Simon, I cannot take the call." But I had mixed feelings. I was nervous, and I was excited, too. Nervous because I had to convince my parents, since I'm from Pakistan, and I would just like to highlight that there is a patriarchal society and there are stereotypes. Coming from such a place, it was kind of hard, but my parents were kind enough. My mom had the utmost faith in me, and my dad was super enthusiastic in me being a lawyer. Yes, it just made it possible and it was just exciting, then.

What's been your biggest highlight of the scholarship?

Angel: For me, it's the ability. The University of London programme is obviously, a world-recognized degree, but to be able to go to a physical University of London institution, it's really, I guess, the dream for all law students to actually complete it with teachers who are authors of your textbooks, to work with people who are in the industry, and knowing how things really work in the world. I guess it's also for King's given that it's in such a strategic location. It's the opportunity to actually know the firms around the world, as well, and to be able to study with people who are equally motivated and from across the world. You see just so many different backgrounds, and you learn so much just in that community. That's the value in it to me.

What's been your biggest challenge?

Angel: I guess the biggest challenge is, firstly, the studying differences, the way that lecturers might really expect you to answer in class and to be proactive, but, of course, that's a pretty quick phase. I think I got used to that a bit quickly. I think the biggest challenge for me was realising how career-orientated people here are. When I'm still really focused on studying, people are thinking more about the big things-- how to make yourself better, how to grow more. That's quite a big challenge because you had to learn how to balance many things, but then, it's a great challenge. Then, with people around me, the support that the campus have, I think it worked out pretty okay.

What's next for you?

Angel: For me, I'll be heading back to Malaysia soon. I have a few internships back in Malaysia, but I will have to take a qualifying paper because I do want to qualify in my own jurisdiction first, and then, I'll probably continue the path as a lawyer, to qualify as a lawyer.

Mariam: Well, I have applied to King's College Distance Learning Programme for my LLM, it's in International Finance and Commercial Law. I think I can just go towards the finance side now.

Dreams coming true, but I also plan on working, side-by-side, maybe applying for in-house Legal Advisor in a multinational, so let's see.

Would you like to give any advice to UOL students?

Mariam: We are actually the people who are lucky enough to get a perfect education-- such a good education, just value your academics and just cherish it, and make good use of it. Yes, good luck to everyone.

Angel: I guess mine will be on similar notes, as well. Just to end it, I really just want to say thank you to the whole University of London team to be given this opportunity, something that I've never even dreamt of. It just opens up so many doors, opens up so many ways of thinking. It's just a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, I'll say, and we're just the really lucky ones here. To anyone who wants to pursue a degree in law, there are always ways to do it, as long as you want to do it, and it's definitely a journey with you.