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MLC STUDENTS ACHIEVE IVY LEAGUE STATUS

Methodist Ladies' College graduates from the Class of 2008 have made new ground in securing offers from a number of top-tier colleges in the United States.

Acting Principal Yvonne Palmer said 2008 dux Sonya Chu and fellow high-achieving graduate Nicole Teow had laid down the gauntlet and demonstrated MLC provides a world-class education which, combined with commitment and hard work, enables students access to the very best universities.

"College staff and students are excited and pleased for the young women, who are currently preparing to commence their tertiary studies at Ivy League colleges in the United States in August," Ms Palmer said.

Sonya Chu received an Australian Student Prize from the Federal Government and rescinded a scholarship offer from the Australian National University to take up an undergraduate degree in chemical engineering at Princeton University.

Ms Chu said she wanted to work in an area in which she could use her full potential. She chose to study engineering biology/pre-medicine because it would allow her to pursue medicine as a profession, while leaving engineering and scientific research options open. The major also appealed because it involved problem solving and the practical application of mathematics and the sciences, which are particular strengths of hers.

"I have been working towards a university education in the United States since I was in Year 10, following a year-long experience living in the culturally diverse environment of Singapore. I wanted to meet new people from different backgrounds and cultures, and expand my horizons. The United States was a natural choice because its upper tier universities place special emphasis on student body diversity and provide more research, study abroad and internship opportunities for undergraduate students," Ms Chu said.

"Applying to the universities in the 'States was a lengthy process which involved a lot of preparation and work, but it ensured I aimed high during my final years of school at MLC."

Ms Chu said she believed the key to doing well academically was to have a commitment to learn and an interest in knowledge. She conceded studying and completing the required work was a significant part of doing well academically however, she felt it was important to study efficiently using time management and organisation skills, and understanding personal study habits.

"I don't believe it's worth sacrificing all of your leisure time, sleep and non-academic activities in order to get 0.5 more on your TER."

Ms Chu said during her final year of school while she combined TEE with extra-curricular activities and the application process to American universities, she learnt to appreciate and accept the support of others, particularly emotional support, practical advice, encouragement and guidance. She said she was extremely grateful for the support of her parents.



Nicole Teow received offers from two Ivy League colleges in the United States; Brown University and the University of Pennsylvania, where she has accepted an offer to study Biomedical Engineering.

Ms Teow said she had always wanted to follow in the footsteps of her parents who were educated in the United States. Her goal was entry to a university that offered biomedical engineering which, although relatively new on the global stage, had been well-established in the United States since the 1950s.

“I set my heart on tertiary studies in the US because of the superior research facilities and access to world-class faculty. At the University of Pennsylvania, I can conduct independent research as a first-year student under the mentorship of a professor, which is something I look forward to doing,” Ms Teow said.

“Numerous Nobel Laureates and world-class scientists who are leaders of their respective fields of research are all within reach of the students. For instance, the pioneer of stem cell research, Dr John Gearhart, lectures at the University of Pennsylvania and is actively involved in student research,” she said.

“I’ll be studying techniques and principles in the fields of medicine and biology which are used to create new methods or machines that can be used to save lives, such as mechanical hearts and dialysis machines.”

Ms Teow plans to attain a Masters or PhD qualification and following that, potentially research cellular interactions to create more effective medicines.

“My parents implanted a belief that anything was do-able. I believe in myself and have a 'can-do' attitude, but I can also doubt myself on a daily basis. Fortunately I received a lot of support and encouragement from the staff at school. MLC opened so many doors for me,” she said.

Ms Palmer said she expected the academic achievements of both young women to inspire current students to work hard towards attaining their ambitious goals.

She said the success of the 2008 Leavers in gaining entry to universities in the United States complemented the accomplishments of numerous 2008 graduates who had achieved scholarship offers from universities Australia-wide.

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PHOTO OPPORTUNITY:

Nicole Teow will be in Perth until Friday 5 June.

