ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: NAVIGATING HER OWN PATH TO SUCCESS
FROM DOCKSIDE DREAMS TO MARITIME MASTERY

Della Pearce’s early years laid the foundation for a lifelong passion in the yachting industry. Her journey illustrates how personal drive and unconventional paths can lead to remarkable careers.

Igniting the Maritime Flame

Della Pearce has travelled all over the world. She regularly rubs shoulders with global movers and shakers, and deals with superyachts worth hundreds of millions. But her glamorous story begins right here in Singapore.

It was through a family friend’s business at Raffles Marina that a young Della was first introduced to the world of superyachts. She would spend weekends during her holidays in secondary school working part-time for them and helping them with all the superyachts passing through Singapore. This exposure, coupled with the allure of diverse cultures and the grandeur of luxury yachts, planted seeds of fascination that would guide her future choices.

“It was fun, it was outdoors and I love doing things outdoors. And I got to meet a lot of interesting people at the age of 14. That experience really sparked my interest in this business, so when I learned about the Singapore Maritime Academy, I enrolled as soon as I was able to.”

Steering Through Internships

Proactive in shaping her educational experience, Della sought out an internship on her own in her second year, which more closely aligned with her interests. Instead of the position at a commercial shipping company offered by SP SMA, she found an opportunity with Marina@Keppel Bay.

“The school said, okay, this is completely new to us, but we will allow it. And they came and checked on me every month and they saw how well I was progressing. They also saw that there was this whole other sector in the maritime industry: leisure shipping, so it’s not just commercial shipping.”

With SP’s full support, Della’s time at Marina@Keppel Bay not only distinguished her from her peers but also enriched her practical knowledge, positioning her at the forefront of maritime certification and training.

Learning from the Best

Della is very thankful for the support of her lecturers at SP SMA, not least for indulging her independent streak. She feels that this was because they all came from seafaring backgrounds, so they could understand what she was trying to do.

“Even today, I’m still in close contact with a lot of my lecturers. Some became my clients, some became my partners. We are still doing a lot of work in the pleasure yachting industry because of my connection with SP SMA.”

Sailing into a Professional Future

The transition from academia to the professional world saw Della ascend to notable roles within the industry, breaking barriers and setting new standards in a male-dominated field. Her work with Simpson Marine and later Hong Sih transformed her from a pioneering student to a respected leader.

“I would say that my time in SP SMA prepared me to excel in the industry. More than just academic knowledge, it was the experiential lessons that I cherish: SP SMA gave me a foundation to build on, it gave me credibility to further my career.”

Della advises young alumni to embrace every educational opportunity offered by the school, whether they are lessons in the course or extra-curricular activities.

“Participate in as many relevant events and seminars as possible to broaden your understanding and network within your field. These experiences are invaluable and can significantly enhance your career readiness and industry connections.”

Looking to the Horizon

As Della continues to influence the maritime sector, her story serves as an inspiration for those who dare to dream differently. Her career path demonstrates the value of resilience and adaptability, proving that true passion can craft not only a job but a vibrant, fulfilling life.

“I don’t measure success by earnings alone. True success, for me, comes from pursuing passions and achieving personal goals set early in life; it’s about the enriching experiences gained along the way.”
Meet the founder of Goodstuph, Ms Pat Law

Ms Pat Law founded Goodstuph, a one-woman social marketing agency, with a $10,000 loan from a friend, which she repaid within three months. This graduate of business at SP began her advertising career at the age of 20, initially learning the ropes at various agencies before joining Ogilvy, one of the few large firms engaged in social media at the time. Goodstuph emphasises its culture, hiring individuals who align with its values. The company values diversity, with half of its leadership being female and its 180 employees representing 10 Asian nationalities. Additionally, Goodstuph has been a seven-time sponsor of Pink Dot, the annual event supporting the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community.

SP launches Future Food Lab

SP launched its new Future Food Lab (FFL) on 17 April 2024. This initiative aligns with the national effort to expand Singapore’s capabilities in producing innovative food products and to attract investments in research and development. The lab will bolster Singapore’s “30 by 30” vision to meet 30 percent of its food needs through local production by 2030, focusing on research and the exploration of alternative food sources and manufacturing techniques. Beyond its educational role, the FFL also houses three food-tech companies. These companies will mentor students from the Diploma in Food Science and Technology, aiding those working on their final-year projects or aiming to create innovative food products. Students will also collaborate with these companies through SP’s Industry Now Curriculum (INC), which replaces traditional classes with real-world industry projects. Ms Ng Su Ling, Senior Manager at SP’s Department of Industry and Partnerships, describes the collaboration as mutually beneficial, providing companies with access to state-of-the-art facilities and talent, while exposing students to invaluable industry experience.

SP collaborates with Qualcomm to cultivate talent in 5G technology

SP has partnered with American technology company Qualcomm Technologies to offer free foundational 5G courses to students pursuing a Diploma in Computer Engineering. Announced on 8 April 2024, this collaboration allows third-year students to enrol at no cost in two introductory 5G courses provided by Qualcomm Academy. These courses will cover the fundamentals of 5G technology and its practical applications. Upon completion, students have the option to further enhance their credentials by taking the Qualcomm Academy’s 5G Entry-Level Certification Exam at their own expense, which grants a certification issued by Qualcomm. Dr Lim Joo Ghee, Deputy Senior Director of Engineering at SP, noted the rising demand for professionals skilled in 5G technology across sectors like telecommunications, automotive, healthcare, and manufacturing. He emphasised, “Graduates equipped with 5G technology skills will ensure that we have a competent workforce capable of meeting this growing demand.”

On-Campus Privileges

Off-Campus Privileges

SINGAPORE POLYTECHNIC GRADUATES’ GUILD
10% discount for ala-carte menu at SPGG F&B outlets
(SPPG Coffee Hub & The Restaurant)
Terms and conditions apply

THE ESCAPE ARTIST
10% discount for the entire bill
Terms and conditions apply

PLAY V-ROOM PTE LTD
10% off 1 VR headset per card
Terms and conditions apply

LAO JIANG SUPERIOR SOUP
10% off total bill
Terms and conditions apply

Source: 8 World, 17 Apr 2024
Source: The Straits Times, 31 Mar 2024
Source: Lianhe Zaobao, 8 Apr 2024
Let's Keep in Touch!
Stay notified on the latest alumni events by updating your particulars.

Looking to attain a Specialist or Advanced Diploma and get a head start on your career?
Good news! With Work-Study Programmes, you can achieve both!

Exploring new career opportunities?
Check out the SPAN Job Portal to discover various job listings.

NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO?
Just graduated from SP < 6 months ago and feeling like life’s thrown you a curved ball?
Contact our friendly SP counsellors for short-term counseling support if you need.
Email SP: contactus@sp.edu.sg with subject ‘Requesting for Counseling’

SP Alumni eCard
Enjoy exclusive benefits when you apply for your free SP Alumni eCard via the SP mobile app.