

Charlene Ch...

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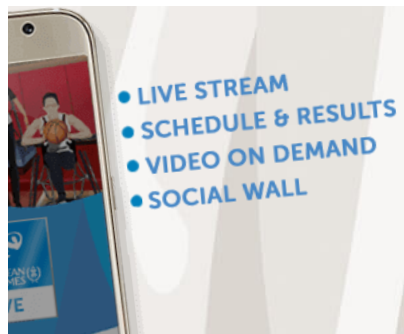
Miss World Singapore finalist headed for Harvard



SINGAPORE - She was over the moon when she recently found out she had been accepted for a fellowship in East Asian studies at Harvard University.

Miss Rachel Leng, 23, who graduated last year from Duke University in North Carolina with a double distinction in public policy and Asian studies, wanted to keep her achievement a secret at first.

She told The New Paper: "It's the name Harvard you know? I'm really sensitive about people thinking about me as a



snob and privileged, when what really got me here was my determination to raise awareness of issues often overlooked in society, like inequality.

"But the people close to me who knew said that I should be open to talking about it because it's something to be proud of.

"My goal is to study policymaking and I eventually hope to improve the sociocultural landscape in Singapore and also with educating the children here and making an impact on a global level. It all sounds very lofty but I think that the global perspective that I have will aid me in my goal."

Born in Singapore, Miss Leng attended CHIJ Katong Convent before she moved to Shanghai when she was six years old.

She stayed there till she was 18 as her dad had been posted there for work as an investor, and she spent the next four years living in the US after being accepted into Duke University.

Having returned to Singapore recently, she will leave for Harvard in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in September.

Miss Leng said that she may defer her studies - she has been accepted into the master's programme with the option to continue with a PhD - for a year if she wins Miss World Singapore 2013.

She said: "I joined because I'm big on educating children.

"I may have not lived in Singapore for long but I am very Singaporean.

"I love my nasi lemak, gado-gado, kueh lapis and bubur cha cha."



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Chinese university sacks professor who threw temper tantrum on flight

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