

# College of Business

## *Alumni focus*

eNews for Alumni and Friends of the College of Business.

## Message from the Dean

*Welcome to the inaugural issue of CB Alumni E-Newsletter!*

The College of Business is a globally-oriented business school with alumni all over the world. I want to take this opportunity to welcome graduates, current students, and friends to connect with us. Our aim is to reunite alumni, students, and faculty members of the six departments under the College of Business.

As the New Year begins, we hope to encourage you, our valued alumni and friends, to take a look at your achievements and your network. Our editor has spoken to some of you about your CB journey and challenges at work. These inspiring stories are presented in this issue.



**I hope that these featured stories can RE-ignite your passion.**

Professor Yan Houmin  
Dean of College of Business, City University of Hong Kong



## Recent News



### [2012 Congregation](#)

Congratulations to all Graduates of 2012! The congregation in November 2012 marks a new beginning for **1193** of our CB BBA Grads and **978** CB Postgrads! We wish you success in your future endeavors and hope that you stay connected to CB and CityU.



### [EQUIS Reaccreditation Visit](#)

The EQUIS Peer Review Team visited CB from 20-22 November... CB thanks all faculty, students, alumni and corporate members who participated in the various meetings and who have otherwise contributed to CB's EQUIS reaccreditation process.



### [CB International Advisory Board Meeting](#)

The College International Advisory Board held its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting last November. Matters affecting policy, goals and strategies for internationalization within the College were discussed. The Board will consider strategic opportunities in the international education market, such as identifying suitable overseas academic institutions and business corporations as strategic partners, and make policy direction recommendations for the development of international programmes within the College.



## Is Big 4 the ONLY way out?

Many would have imaged that choosing the accounting major would mean going to a Big Four firm after graduation and slowly working up the hierarchy. **In fact, it is true and our professors encourage students to apply for Big 4 firms.** And so under the advice of her professors, parents, and peers, Hilda Lau started working at one of the Big 4 firms immediately after her graduation.

### But is Big 4 the only path for accounting majors?

Working at Big 4 firms is great; you have the chance to learn the practical sides of accounting with

sufficient training and resources, but the tradeoff would be working longer hours due to high turn-over rates.

The cycle begins with the increase in HR and related training costs for hiring new employees, which leads to budget cuts and fewer new hires. This will then increase the workload and working hours of current employees ---some of them actually resign.

**This vicious cycle continues until the firms realize the root problem behind the high turn-over rates--- LACK OF EMPLOYEES.** These are not new employees, but experienced employees that are familiar with the company operations and culture.

Hilda endured long working hours and experienced low team morale during her first 2 years with the company. **She started to wonder if Big 4 was her only way out.**

"I learned a lot of specific and technical skills in the past, but now I want to see a broader view, from a different angle." Hilda explained why she switched job recently. Previously, she was an auditor and now she is a financial analyst at the accounting department of a large logistics company in HK and China.

Hilda believes that the benefit of working at an accounting department is the opportunity to learn about the company's different operations. She can see other parts of the business outside the accounting department. Even though many professionals prefer to specialize in one or two fields, Hilda wishes to develop a broad skill set, interact with people, and work with numbers.

**"Think about what you want in the future. If possible, apply for internships and use this time to understand the nature of the jobs. There's always more than one path to success."** – Hilda Lau ([hildahlau@gmail.com](mailto:hildahlau@gmail.com))

So, Big 4 is definitely NOT the only way out for accounting majors.



## My Hike to Passion

In the past, there were many moments in my life when I felt bored. Inspired by fascinating travel stories of others, I often have the impulse to escape from my work and my quarter. I believe that I can better understand myself through travel and exploring the world.

This mid-autumn festival, I went to the Dragon's Back for hiking with my friends. I discovered a different HK during this trip. I once thought that HK was a place only filled with high-rise buildings and fast-paced workers, but I was wrong. I never imagined that there were such beautiful sceneries located not far away from the busy streets.

Along the hiking trails, I saw the stunning views of Shek O, Tai Long Wan, Stanley, Tai Tam, and the South China Sea. I have been to many famous scenery locations around the world, but none of them gave the same peaceful feeling that I had when I stood on the Dragon's Back, looking at the mountains across the sea.

My friends and I sat on the mountain top to share our life stories. The



Graduates of 2012 from left to right: Tracy Pan Ruxi (AC), Irene Pei Xiaoying (EF), Cynthia Guo Yushan (EF), Echo Fu Yifan (EF), and Olivia Guo Haoyue (MKT).

day went by quickly and I learned to appreciate life. The magnificent view is not miles away and friends are not unapproachable. Discover and treasure what you have around you. The beauty of life is not far away.

Work may be hard and tiring, but if we think back of the happy and sad moments, we will realize that these events have taught us life lessons. The experiences have transformed into a driving force that motivates us to move forward in life. How we view the world and how we live life depend on our attitudes.

The city seems different to me every day ever since the hiking trip. I no longer feel bored or depressed during the long transits to clients' offices; instead, when I am on transit, I will discover things that I have never paid much attention to before. I reduced my Internet surfing time and spent more time with my friends to share our life slices. Whether it is the new holiday decorations placed outside my office or the classic Pancake Shop I spotted on

the tram, they all inject me with energy and happiness.

**College of Business**  
A Key Business Education Hub – in China for the World



## The ONE-man Team

“Day 1 of my first full-time job— I wasn't too sure what to do.” Freeman Chan said. He is a Graduate Executive at the [DBS Bank](#). His first project was to produce a training manual that records the internal processes of the 8 teams in his department. He was given the project deliverables, a rough draft of another department's report, and 6 months' time to work on this assignment. With little to no experience, limited information, and working alone, how did Freeman cope with all these challenges ahead?

The FIRST step was to understand the company. “At the start, I spent most of my time researching, digging into the company's databases, and exploring its resources.” Freeman combined his IS knowledge along with his personal experience to determine the content of the report.

It may seem impossible to finish a detailed training manual with 8 sub-reports within 6 months, but Freeman is confident and believes that he has the ability to complete this task.

The SECOND step was to build relationships with his colleagues for advices and documentations needed in the report. “It was challenging at first. No one knew who I was or what I was doing.” He said. Even Freeman himself cannot clearly explain what documentations he needed since it was all at a conceptual stage.

Despite having the rough start, his “never-giving-up” attitude over the progress made his colleagues realize what he has been doing, and they have been more willing to cooperate with him. Freeman's interactions with others added to enhance the team's relationships. In 5 months' time, he has completed 7 team reports, and 1 remaining to be completed shortly.

Believe in your ability to succeed in things that you have never done before. Understand that everyone has their priorities in life. Be appreciative if they are willing to help; be considerate if they don't.

### Words of Advice

“Find your career goal early in your university years; the goal does not have to be specific, but should have a general direction of where you want to go in the future. Use **elimination method** to narrow down what you want to explore; you never know what you like until you try it!”

– Freeman Chan

([freeman103hk@hotmail.com](mailto:freeman103hk@hotmail.com))



Freeman Chan at the DBS Bank Annual Dinner Dress Competition.

Janice Shek lives a simple life, just the same as everyone else.

“I am thankful that everything went smoothly in my life; from secondary school form 7, to post-secondary BBA HRM at CityU, to Year 3 exchange in New York, to grad trip to Europe, to 1<sup>st</sup> full time Human Resource job at [Tsui Wah](#), and now to Customer Service Officer at Cathay Pacific (CX). They all seemed like a dream that just happened yesterday.”

### Working at Tsui Wah

During her one year at Tsui Wah, she had the opportunity to be part of the preparation team prior to Tsui Wah becoming a listing corporation in the market. Shortly after the announcement of the Tsui Wah Listing Plan, a team leader was assigned, and the rest of the team came together as “followers” to complete the tasks.

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## Back to Zero

Everyone contributed to the success of this Listing Plan. It takes more than individual leadership to achieve corporate goals, team work is also important. If there were no “followers”, then the leader alone would not be a leader.

You must have the heart to move forward, to face and tackle the challenges ahead with a positive attitude. Be motivated and you will have the “will” power to succeed in anything, and everything in life.

### A change in life – back to Ground Zero

“A couple months ago, I felt ‘empty’; my job at Tsui Wah was doing well, but I wanted a change.”

“My classmates influenced me to become a diligent person; I am working hard to achieve my goals. My exchange study gave me courage to speak up; I have expressed my views to others. My university experience made me realize the importance of setting goals; I have planned my future paths. And my Tsui Wah job directed me to finding a job in the customer relations field.” Janice explained her reasoning for choosing CX.

Janice is starting a new page from ground Zero at CX. She is looking forward to the new challenges that lie ahead and hopes that these challenges can lead her to new aspirations and new goals in life. ([janiceshek@hotmail.com](mailto:janiceshek@hotmail.com))



Janice Shek at New York during her exchange study.





## From Nothing to Something

In Form 7, like other secondary school students, Eddie Lam dreamed of attending university; but it turned out that his A-level exam scores were insufficient for entering into a bachelor's program. Later that year he went into an Associate Degree program in Accountancy. **The choice was influenced by his parents' "4-Profession Concept"** — i.e., being a doctor, a lawyer, an accountant, or an engineer is the most ideal career choice.

Not wanting to fail, Eddie worked hard to prepare for his 2<sup>nd</sup> challenge, the Non - Jupus interviews. Luckily, he was offered entrance to the BBA Management Sciences Program (MS) at CityU as 2<sup>nd</sup> year student. Although he was not sure what MS was about, **he was willing to accept the something new.** **he was challenge and to try**



“MS tells you how to think about complex problems from a mathematical and information technology perspective.” Eddie found interest in MS soon after. He enjoyed the flexibility of applying his own way of thinking and exploring different application methods. **He convinced his parents that the “4-professions” were not the only way out.**

The short two years at the College of Business passed by quickly with a cultural and academic exchange at the York University in Canada and an eye-opening business in-

ternship in a multi-national corporation (MNC).

These experiences led Eddie to decide on his career path. “I loved the multiculturalism in Canada and what I did during the internship, so I set my goal to work at a MNC that offers career opportunities in a global scale.” **Eddie was determined to achieve his goal, so he did.** He is now working as the Asia Pacific Team Lead at [Johnson & Johnson](#), one of the largest pharma-

ceutical companies in the world. Eddie has been to 7 cities in 6 different countries in his 1.1 years with the company. This translates to **65% of Eddie's time being on business trips to meet new people.** This definitely broadened Eddie's horizon!

**“Things don't always go as planned, unexpected things and uncertainties often arise. Thus, we need to embrace new ideas. Find your passion, don't just listen to others. Keep true to yourself and expect the unexpected!”**  
—Eddie Lam ([eddie.lamky@gmail.com](mailto:eddie.lamky@gmail.com))

## A Marketing Story, Alexander Choy, BBA in China Business '09

### “Love what you Hate”

After 2 years of Associate Degree study at HKU and 3 years of Bachelor's study at CityU, Alex Choy entered the work force 3 years ago. He thought he would find a job of interest, related to China Business, **but the “door” was not yet open.**

**“When God closes a door, somewhere [else] He opens a window.”** This “window” was something Alex never thought of going into--- a professional sales position in China Mobile (Hong Kong).

“Like many others, I was reluctant to become a salesperson.” Alex said. He had never thought of becoming a salesman, but life forced him to become one. Yet, **the true**

**challenge was to commit to what he had chosen.**

It is normal to assume that if you are doing what you “hate”, your job performance will be poor. Ironically, it was the opposite for Alex. **He learned to “love” and excel in an unexpected career path.**

In recognition of his hard work, he was one of the top 5 salespersons in HK to be awarded the “Outstanding Young Salesperson Award” in 2010. In 2011, he was also the top salesperson in his company and promoted to Senior Account Manager-- just after two years at his sales job.

# Call for Contribution

- ◆ [Submit](#) your story to us! — let us know your update and we'll share it with other alumni (Website/ Alumni Focus E-Newsletter)
- ◆ Refer a "lost" alumnus / alumna.
- ◆ Join [CB Alumni Volunteer Club](#) — become an ambassador and assist in CB events: Admission Interviewer, mentors, event coordinator, etc.

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Despite of these achievements and recognition, Alex recalled asking himself: "I am doing well in my sales career, but [is this what I want 5, 10 years down the road?](#) The answer was No." He has a shared dream with his dad, that is, to open a wine business in China and in HK.

2012 marked a new beginning for Alex, he resigned from his job. With solid work experiences gained and knowledge learned from his bachelor program in China Business, Alex felt that he was ready to take on a new start, to turn his dream into reality. [He saw the "door" opening.](#)

With 6 months of preparation, 5-digits funding, 4 united family members' support, 3 connecting networks, 2 entrepreneurs, and 1 dream, Alex's [MegaWill Wine](#) Company was established.

Looking back at his post-graduation work experience, Alex reflected: "Even though you may not always be able to choose what you like at the beginning, but you must persist; [learning doesn't stop upon graduation.](#) You must have the courage to do things that you don't necessarily like, explore different fields and aspects of life."

["Learn to accept reality and let go some of your 'unwillingness' in exploring the world ---try jobs that may not be of your absolute interest; learn to accept the unavoidable in life or work. Excel in what you 'hate' most and you will exceed beyond expectation."](#) – Alex Choy ([alex@megawillwine.com](mailto:alex@megawillwine.com))



CB  
Story

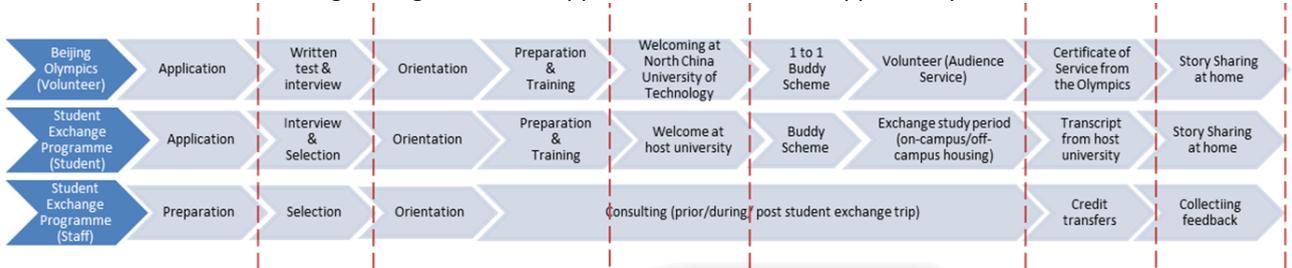
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## Small steps to Big achievement

With over ten years of experience at the College of Business (CB), Angie Cheung's passion in her work has never weakened. She is one of the founding members of the CB Internalization team. Angie witnessed the growth of CityU's Exchange network, from sending **5 students to 1 university** in 1996-97 to over **400 students to 120 universities** in 2012-13; needless to say, Angie and the team's contributions are invaluable!

2008 was a significant year for Angie. She volunteered at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. With over 3000 applications, she was chosen as one of the 300+ volunteers to assist the summer games. "My Beijing volunteer experience was like an academic exchange!" Angie said with appreciation to have this opportunity.



Being a volunteer for the Olympics involved a long 6 months process prior to arriving Beijing. The pre-departure, event volunteering, and follow-up processes were much like an Exchange Study, but this time Angie participated as the "student" instead of staff.

After two weeks of volunteering at the Shooting Range in Beijing, Angie returned home with an epiphany. She now has a better understanding of the needs of exchange students, and the real significance of cultural experience and international exposure.

Though Angie is familiar with the internal exchange processes with her accumulated experiences at CB, she thought it would be much easier to build relationships with exchange students when she had this first-hand experience. Even after more than 10 years at CB, Angie continues to enjoy the interactions with inbound students and the stories of outbound students.

Angie believes that choosing where to volunteer or which exchange university does not matter as long as it is a new location where you can learn a different culture; all CityU's 280 partners are renowned universities with great academic backgrounds. She urges students to apply for exchange studies and alumni to apply for work internships in other countries. Be proactive and initiate the first small step!



Angie photographed with Men's 25 meter Rapid Fire Pistol Olympic Gold medalist Mr. Oleksandr Petriv in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

### Impact of Volunteering

Angie has been volunteering at different events since her secondary school years. The 2008 Beijing Olympics experience encouraged her to become even more active in this field. She and a group of Beijing Olympics volunteers started the "[Hong Kong Volunteer Association](#)" to assist sports events in Hong Kong and in Asia, such as the Hong Kong East Asian Fames 2009 and Guangzhou Asian Games 2010. "Lots of people demand 'benefits' from their Country, but on the flip side, I believe that it is important for people to give back and support their Country." This conviction continues to motivate Angie for her commitment to the society. Thank you Angie, you're a proud member of CityU and CB!

"In the HK society with a heavy emphasis on economic interests, most people's priority is to earn a living, but they often forget the significance of life. You should join more activities, and develop yourself in all aspects. Life is not all about money and entering multi-national corporations is not the only path; finding your interest and helping people in-need are also important. Remember to strike a healthy work-life balance!" – Angie Cheung ([angie.cheung@cityu.edu.hk](mailto:angie.cheung@cityu.edu.hk))

Small steps add up to big achievement.

# Alumni Relations

## Vision

To promote a spirit of unity and loyalty among graduates, faculty staffs, and students worldwide.

## Mission

To advance the College with our former business students worldwide through meaningful programs, services, benefits, and communication.



城大商學院

College of Business

*A Key Business Education Hub – in China for the World*

## From the Editor

**Anna Lee**, *CB Alumni Relations*

Dear alumni, I encourage you to share your stories with us, of your journey to finding your dream job or a small episode of life that ignites you! ([cb.alumni@cityu.edu.hk](mailto:cb.alumni@cityu.edu.hk))

In the 2005 Stanford Commencement Address, Steve Jobs said “the only way to satisfy is to do what you believe is great work. **And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.** If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking and don’t settle.”

Alumni, students, and friends, I hope that you can find your passion and enjoy what you do. It may be difficult at first, be that of career, relationships, or other elements of life, but believe that one day you will succeed and have the ability to do what you truly love.

**The best is yet to come! – Anna Lee**



Contribution



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