

BEYOND A LEVELS



PHOTOS: TED CHEN

The hands-on approach

SIT's emphasis on applied learning is what made it the obvious choice for radiography student Devanshi Patidar

BY BRYANT CHAN

Ms Devanshi Patidar has never hesitated to get her hands dirty — especially when someone needs help.

Under no circumstances could the 21-year-old ever be accused of being “all talk, no action”. From taking X-rays for patients in Tan Tock Seng Hospital's accident and emergency department, to building fences for a kindergarten in Vietnam, to helping organise Chinese New Year and Hari Raya celebrations at Thye Hua Kwan Nursing Home, Ms Patidar feels most alive when she knows she's personally making a difference.

So one might be surprised to find out that she chose to pursue a degree in radiography, rather than education or social work.

It was her post-JC hospital attachments which convinced her that radiography was the right path for her. While it may not be immediately obvious to most, diagnostics is the primary step in treating patients.

According to Ms Patidar, radiographers are essential not just in ensuring that a patient receives the appropriate treatment, but also that their pain and emotional status are professionally managed.

“In sickness, people place their trust in healthcare professionals,” she continues. “Being part of the team that bridges the patient to the cure is the most meaning-

ful thing I could do with my life.”

Ms Patidar had only one school in mind when applying for her diagnostic radiology degree: the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), due to its strong focus on applied learning.

To her, SIT's applied learning approach not only lets graduates integrate into their respective industries easily, but it also provides a much more multi-faceted learning experience.

For instance, several trimesters for the Diagnostic Radiography curriculum are structured such that eight weeks of lectures and textbooks are followed by six-week clinical placements, letting students learn by applying their knowledge to actual clinical cases.

Collaborative agreements with other universities and institutions mean that students have ample opportunity to practice with the fully-functional radiography procedure rooms at Singapore General Hospital and National University Hospital, and even take classes at the National University of Singapore's Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine.

“Our curriculum goes far beyond just the basic information we need, and exposes us to topics such as psychology, change management and patient care,” says Ms Patidar.

For instance, the Psychological and Social Perspectives for Health Sciences module exposed her and her fellow students to patients with a variety of psychological disorders.

This equipped them with the knowl-

edge of how to better care for patients with said conditions.

Such a hands-on approach doesn't just stop at the curriculum: SIT makes sure that it gives its students plenty of opportunity to get personally involved in co-curricular activities and projects.

Last year, Ms Patidar served as the secretary and treasurer of the SIT Community Service Club, organising events for a variety of beneficiaries, and providing a myriad of opportunities for SIT students to give back to the community.

After serving her tenure on the Community Service Club's executive committee, she was later given the opportunity to join Project Vietnam, one of several student-led overseas service learning initiatives under SIT Student Life.

Even with her extensive experience in community service, Project Vietnam still marked many firsts for Ms Patidar, such as working on infrastructure, and teaching classes to children speaking a different language.

Most recently, she was also given the opportunity to emcee the annual SIT Scholarship Awards and Appreciation ceremony — an experience that she feels was integral to her growth as a person and student.

“I hope that by the end of my time in SIT, I will be able to say that I've tried new things and discovered new strengths about myself which I had not previously known,” she says.