



Department of  
**Applied Social Sciences**  
**Serves the Society**



# Make Every Second Count Bloom like the Cherry Blossom

Time flies like a shooting arrow here. I have already become a student at Columbia University for more than a half year. Studying here, every day is an adventure that I broaden my horizon. Columbia has an enormous campus consisting of many residence halls, academic spaces, and recreational facilities. It is nice, but at the same time there is a lot of walking (running, actually). As there are only four school days per week (from Monday

to Thursday), most Columbia students have their 4-6 classes back-to-back in order to make the best use of their time. As a result, students of different skin colours and clothing styles rushing back and forth between buildings has become a normal phenomenon. With such a hectic class schedule, I treasure my spare time by efficiently spending it on meeting friends, relaxing, and exploring the New York city.



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# Student



Columbia offers its students various academic and career opportunities. Taking the Psychology Department as an example, they recruit psychology-major undergraduates to assist in lab research projects, hold public seminars of various psychology-related topics, and provide students with internship programmes of different fields of psychology. I am one of the beneficiaries of these resources. Working in a laboratory as a research assistant, I engage in the whole process of designing and conducting an experiment, collecting and interpreting data, as well as presenting the results. This is undoubtedly an invaluable experience to me because it equips me with knowledge of experimental research in psychology, which will be the focus of my future study. Meanwhile, the lab work allows me to have a face-to-face interaction with the professors in charge so it broadens my social network as well. I also attended some seminars in the fall semester. Usually, off-campus scholars are invited to Columbia to present their novel findings on particular topics, and students can freely attend. From these public seminars, I learned knowledge beyond class and even beyond textbook. It is also a great chance for me to greet students and experts from other universities and to share personal comments with them. The school cares much about our career development as well. There is a career department—Center for Career Education—that is specifically responsible for assisting students in their job search. For instance, the staff members organise regular workshops and personal meetings to help students with their interview preparation and resume composition. If I want to seek help from a person who knows me more, meeting the GS (School of General Studies) advisor will be the best alternative. The advisor, who was assigned to each GS student at the moment the student was admitted into Columbia, plays a significant role in our school life. They not only advise students on their course and career plans, but also keep track on their physical and mental fitness.

Apart from professors and staff members, classmates and friends are also great sources of knowledge. Columbia is a huge melting pot—people from different countries share their own point of view while respecting each other. In class, discussions among classmates are highly encouraged. I am stunned almost every time when I hear some

brilliant ideas raised by my fellow classmates. Sometimes, we may have a relatively intense debate on a topic which nearly triggers quarrels. But even that is a good chance for learning—I hear new supporting evidence from my side as well as strong counter-arguments from the opposition. It is also exciting to realise that people from different cultures think of the same issue with variant mind-sets or perspectives.



I remember that one time I talked about the current relationship between Hong Kong and the mainland China, a veteran asked me why the two parties did not use military force to fight against each other. I was a bit shocked by then because wars and military conflicts were not common concepts in my mind. However, in that veteran's mind, sending troops was once part of his daily life and fighting might be a usual way for him to solve problems. I thanked him for showing me another way of thinking. While explaining to him why his suggestion was not applicable, I had a deeper understanding of the issue as well as my own self.

Outside the classroom, I have also joined the Japan Society, a student society that contains people who are interested in the Japanese culture. The events organised by the board members provide us with a platform to learn the foreign culture and also to introduce our own culture to others—while I was appreciating the spiritual wealth that the Japanese tea ceremony offered, the Japanese were captivated by the language of Cantonese I spoke. As a cultural ambassador representing Hong Kong, I hope I can make an effort in adding a colour into Columbia.

New York is absolutely not a dull city; rather, it is so colourful that I need more time for exploration. Every corner of this city, ranging from the underground to the highest point, shows you a different face of New York—the business of the white-collar workers in the subway, the energy of the baseball fans at the Yankee Stadium, the magnificence of the city view at the One World Observatory etc. During the fall break, I even stepped out of the New York City and visited Washington D.C. and Philadelphia, which were just several hours away, with two friends from Hong Kong. I can foresee that there are still many adventures waiting for me. The sunlight, the red leaves, and the snow at Columbia have witnessed all my wildest dreams coming true one by one. I am thankful that I am here. The scent of cherry blossom is filling the air. I have to make every second count. I have to make myself bloom, just like the cherry blossom.

By Gloria Ma Wai Shan,  
one of the first cohort of SS students to attend  
Columbia University under the Joint Bachelor's  
Degree Program between City University of Hong  
Kong and Columbia University



## Career and Leadership Fund

Career and leadership development are essential elements in university education. To be young professionals, students have to explore every possibility and broaden their horizon by living through different experience. They also have to learn various knowledge and skills to enhance their employability. Certainly, students have to apply what they have learned in order to transfer their knowledge to practice.

The Career and Leadership Fund (CLF) provides financial support to help CityU students enhance their leadership skills and employability. In 2016, SS Department has received funding to implement 7 CLF projects successfully:

1. Applied Sociology Study Tour (Seoul);
2. Criminology Study Tour (Osaka);
3. Psychology Study Tour (Singapore);
4. Social Work Study Tour (Year 4 students) (Vietnam);
5. Social Work Study Tour (Year 2 & 3 students) (Tai Chung);
6. BASW Study Tour (Cambodia);
7. SS Peer Network Scheme 2016

These projects were all initiated by SS students. Through event organizing and action planning, students demonstrated their leadership ability and enhanced their capacity in different professions. Over 200 students participated in these projects. They stated that their participation in these projects enriched their life experience. Here is the sharing from three students participated in the projects.

**Criminology Study Tour - Women employability and gender equality in Japan: A case study** Different Japanese companies, such as UNIQLO, Muji, and AEON have set up their offices in Hong Kong. A good understanding of Japanese working culture would enhance students' marketability to Japanese companies hiring in Hong Kong. As such, a group of students majoring in Criminology visited Osaka and Kyoto in May to explore the theme of gender equality in Japan, especially in the workplace. They also explored the cultural differences between Japan and Hong Kong, as well as the cross-cultural difference in women's career competency.

CHENG Sui Hung (BSS4-CRIM, cohort 2012)

This was my first time to visit Japan. My impression about Japan was mostly framed by those Japanese TV dramas. Females in Japan have



been portrayed as accessories of males. With low social status, they could only rely upon their husbands or fathers. Stepping into the 21st century, it seems impossible that females are having such a low social status in a well-developed country like Japan. Therefore, I wanted to understand the real situation of gender inequality there.

We visited three organizations, namely Young Women's Christian Association Osaka (YWCA), Graduate school of Letters of Kyoto University, and Osaka Prefecture University, which allowed us to understand the gender situation in both an academic and a practical way. The problem of domestic violence was the main topic of discussion during the whole study tour. YWCA showed us how it provides services to women who are victims of domestic violence. I am quite surprised that domestic violence is still a taboo in a Japanese society. Women refuse to tell their neighbors or friends that they have been battered by their husbands. They fail to realize the seriousness of violence occurred and insist that it is inappropriate to tell their family issues to others. Most women rely on their husbands financially; it is hard for them to live without their financial support. Therefore, they choose to keep their mouth shut when facing domestic violence.

### **Social Work (Year 3) Study Tour to Tai Chung – Project E (Explorers' Enhancement)**

This project aimed at gaining insights into professional values and skills in Social Work through visiting a disadvantaged group in the Son of Man





Estate in Taiwan, as well as listening to the sharing from guests before and after the visit. During the 7-day study tour, students lived with the locals in the Son of Man Estate, a small community which promotes the idea of 'living with the nature'. Immersing themselves in the local community, students gained an understanding of their culture—trying to minimize materialism and living in a mutual support circle. Contrasting the differences in Hong Kong, students gained insights on alternative approaches in providing social welfare services for people in need in Hong Kong. During the whole trip, students also gained experiences in self-initiated learning, autonomy in daily life, and consciousness in reflection. Through division of labor, they were sufficient in self-care with respect to food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. They were given opportunities to exercise their initiatives and program-planning skills, which are indeed essential elements for being a social worker in the future.

**Angel Phuong (BSSSW Year 4 student)**

Children in Hong Kong seldom have a sense of control towards their own life. Parents would take the lead in arranging their daily schedule, which usually is cramped with studying and lot of interest classes. The rise of these helicopter parents probably contributes to an increasing number of "robot" children with no dreams in the Hong Kong society. Quite the other way, the Son of Man Association emphasizes in their education of children the concept of collective living with self-learning, self-growth, and the right to self-determination. The children living there can choose the subjects they want to learn, as well as the interests and strengths they want to develop. The Son of Man Association believes in the children's rights to choose so that they can pursue their own dreams and grow independently. This is inspiring and reminds us of the need to evaluate the education system and the parenting approach in Hong Kong.

### SS Peer Network Scheme 2016

Since 2008, Department of Applied Social Sciences (SS) has established a student development project called Project of Learning Excellence (Project X), which aims at facilitating students' personal, inter-personal, academic, and professional development. Through various activities and trainings, students can have better adjustment in their transition from secondary school to university. Eventually, students become valuable community contributors as they graduate.

SS Peer Network Scheme is a core activity of Project X. As Project X encourages student-initiated projects, training student leaders is of great importance to SS. After training, student leaders are expected to facilitate and organize various student development activities for their fellow students. After seven years of development, Project X has built up a cross-major, cross-year and interdisciplinary network that facilitates students to develop within the network.

**WONG Chung Yu Christopher (BSSPSY Year 4 student)**

I used to be a task-oriented person and believe that one's abilities and contribution were the main determinants for a stable interpersonal relationship. However, participation in SS Peer Network Scheme has broadened my horizon and allowed me to realize my misconception. Sessions of mentorship training not just provided me with practice skills in activity leading and management, but also opportunities in self-exploration. Through organizing the training camp with other mentors, I have become more extraverted and considerate towards the feeling of others. These precious experiences enable me to establish a quality relationship with others and recognize that there is more to life than a number on a psychological scale.



## SS's City-Youth Empowerment Project (CYEP) – Motivating CityU Students Toward Volunteering

CYEP Caught the Eyes of International Volunteerism Scholars:

**A “Teleconference” on CYEP’s Use of Social Media in Promoting Volunteering among University Students Presented at the 8th Conference of the European University of Volunteering by Dr. Elaine Au**

– by Katty P. HO, EdD

VOLUNTEERING IS ONE INVALUABLE SOCIAL RESOURCE and phenomenon that has interested social scientists. Large-scale endeavors can be seen in national and international voluntary organizations, such as the Points of Light Foundation in the U.S. and the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), which brings representatives from local non-profit community service organizations together to work toward developing a global volunteering culture across the world.

In our local context, SS’s City-Youth Empowerment Project (CYEP) is a non-credit-bearing student volunteering project at City University of Hong Kong founded and led by Dr. Elaine Au since 2005. It has been operating under the SS Department in promoting volunteering opportunities to CityU students across disciplines. In March, 2016, CYEP’s work has caught the eyes of the current Vice President of IAVE, Dr. Eugene Baldas from Germany, who came to Hong Kong to meet up with representatives from the Agency for Volunteer Service (AVS) and CYEP for exploring the possibility of hosting the next IAVE conference in Hong Kong.

Dr. Eugene Baldas expressed an immediate interest in learning how CYEP works in promoting volunteering among university students in Hong Kong. He then invited Dr. Elaine Au to present at a symposium on “Social Work and Voluntary Service Communications in the Digital Age” at the 8th Convention of the European University of Volunteering (EUV). Dr. Elaine Au did a teleconference for her presentation, entitled “The Use of Social Media in Promoting Volunteering Service Enrolment and Communications,” on October 6, 2016 at the CYEP office. I have been honored to be invited by Elaine to present a few slides on the types of social media used by CYEP in boosting communications between project staff and student volunteers, as well as the registration of CYEP services.

“Before our use of social media, our average annual number of volunteers between 2006 and 2011 was about 360, but after our installation of internet service registration and use of Facebook and whatsapp in promoting and communicating with students, our average annual number of volunteers between 2012 and 2016 has risen to 1,346 per year!” said Dr. Elaine Au. The average number of volunteers per year has increased 3.7 times.

“This is our first time setting up a videoconference at our CYEP office!” said Ms. Beatrice Yip, Project Supervisor, who helped set up the internet videoconferencing as well as sending correspondence to Dr. Baldas in Germany. Our presentation went smoothly with the help of our experienced technician at SS, Mr. Able Ho.



Proportionally, the average total number of service/training hours committed by our volunteers has also increased 3.8 times per year. In short, the increases in both the total number of volunteers per year and the total service/training hours resulted have been huge over the last few years. Moreover, the average number of services organized and offered by CYEP per year has also increased 2.7 times from an average of 17.5 service projects per year during 2006 to 2011 to an average of 48 service projects per year during 2012 to 2016. Ms. Man Law, Project Service Team Coordinator, pointed out that because of the lessened workload after the use of electronic registration method, CYEP project staff have been able to work on organizing more services in partnership with a larger number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the last few years. With more services to choose from, interested student volunteers are more likely to participate as they can select services that better suit their schedule and interest.

Indeed, CYEP’s contribution to the voluntary service engagement sector in Hong Kong has been widely recognized at both institutional level and societal level. For example, because of her effort and vision with CYEP, Dr. Elaine Au has been awarded the prestigious UGC Teaching Excellence Award in 2014. Recently this year, with a total of 22,933 hours of service to the communities accounted for by the Agency for Volunteer Service, CYEP has been awarded with the Bronze Medal of the Largest Number of Volunteering Hours of Contribution by AVS in recognition of CYEP’s work to the Hong Kong society in the academic year of 2015/16.

–Katty P. Ho., EdD, is a Postdoctoral Researcher and Research Team Coordinator with CYEP after earning her doctorate in educational-career psychology from CUHK in 2016. She also worked as an Instructor of Psychology (2001-2005) and Deputy Coordinator of Project X (2008/09) previously at SS after moving back to HK in 2001 from her 13 years of education and work experience in the U.S.



## Expanding the Scope of Mentorship to the Multiply-Challenged:

Our Volunteers Took Disabled Students on a Plane to Experience Taiwan's "Barrier-Free" Culture

—by Bob LAI, Man LAW, and Katty P. HO, EdD

MENTORING AND HELPING THE PHYSICALLY-challenged secondary students has been one of the most popular volunteering services at CYEP every year. Through this service program, 80 volunteers socialize with and tutor a group of high school students with physical and multiple disabilities residing at the Hong Kong Red Cross Princess Alexandra School. However, this service is not limited to just a series of seven to eight weekly two-hour tutoring/socializing visits to these service recipients in a semester's time.

Mutual Empowerment. Beyond the institutional setting, volunteers and volunteer ambassadors enrolled in the "Working with Children and Youth with Disabilities (Special Educational Needs)" service program currently led by the Officer-In-Charge, Mr. Bob Lai, and Service Team Coordinator, Ms. Man Law. They have had a tradition of bringing the disabled mentees out on local trips to explore barrier-free facilities

in Sheung Wan, Central, and CityU, in the past. With such rewarding experience, the current service-receiving disabled students have felt empowered and wanted to see more. Two years ago, one disabled student suggested to visit Macau! This was a classic example of mutual empowerment. That humble suggestion from a disabled student had brought the group to the next level in 2014. The service group took up the suggestion and challenge to bring a group of six multiply-disabled students to Macau on a two-day trip. Both our volunteers and the participating disabled students felt such a breakthrough in their mindset and learning. They analyzed the differences between the two cities while overcoming the realistic obstacles of being in a place outside of their comfort zone.

Since 2014, enthused by former participants of the Macau trip, more disabled students in the service program continued to feel empowered by CYEP volunteers and officers. They wanted to explore the possibility of expanding their perspective through an airborne trip to Taiwan!

A Dream Come True. "Since small, I have had a dream of taking an airplane. Finally, my dream has come true! I feel very happy about it," said Fong, a Form-six student, in his self-reflection essay that each





participating disabled student had to write and submit to us after the trip. This past year of 2016, eight disabled students from a total of 17 interested applicants at the Alexandra School have passed interviews to secure their spot for the Taiwan trip. This group of eight disabled students became the eight “Barrier-Free Ambassadors” from Hong Kong to Taiwan.

To organize such a daunting and challenging enterprise, our volunteers and the eight “Barrier-Free Ambassadors” formed three groups. Together, we selected learning objectives, searched for and selected partnering NGOs, corresponded with Taiwanese partners, and planned for the itinerary. Prior to the trip, a series of preparation sessions were conducted to enable our volunteer and disabled-student participants to share their feelings, practise their Mandarin speaking skills, prepare souvenirs, as well as getting ready to share their perspective on the barrier-free culture in Hong Kong with other disabled students in Taiwan.

Self-Determination. Through an utterly democratic process, the eight disabled students determined the whole itinerary together by voting. After a nine-hour long meeting, they finally got to enjoy their dinner together that evening.

In the five-day trip from August 17th -21st, the group decided to visit five NGOs/institutions, including the Special Education Center at the National Taiwan Normal University, the Eden Social Welfare Foundation, the New Taipei City Government’s Bali Ai-Hsin Home for Persons with Disabilities, the North Union Driving School, the National Palace Museum, and Our City Love Social Enterprise.

The whole trip was co-led and serviced by ten volunteers from the service project, including Wong Ka Kit (Year 4, Information System Management), Bi Siming (Year 5, Law), Ng Hoi Yan (Year 4, Psychology), Lau Yik Lam (Year 4, Criminology), Shih Yao Lun (Year 4, Finance), Yu

Wing Tung (Year 4, Social Work), She Heep Ching (Year 4, Psychology), Yao Xi (Year 4, Mathematics), Mak Ao Ling (Aluma, Social Work), and Lai Kwing Hei (Alumnus, Engineering). These volunteers were selected to serve on this trip through interviews by our project officers.

Our volunteers and disabled students kept paying close attention to every barrier-free facility that they encountered while commuting to different places in Taiwan. Some even noticed the look and attitude of Taiwanese strangers at the sight of this group of 22 healthy and disabled young people from Hong Kong.

Their learning has never stopped after they came back to Hong Kong. The group is now planning on putting together sharing sessions to be held at their residence school and at CityU to promote the discussion on how Hong Kong may become a more barrier-free community and city. Certainly, there are a lot more we can do in promoting a barrier-free culture here in Hong Kong. It would be worthwhile for CYEP to play a more active role in increasing policy makers’ awareness on the need to cultivate a barrier-free environment for disabled people and to strive toward the equality ideal.

–Bob Lai, Service Project Officer-In-Charge, was a CYEP Volunteer Ambassador of 2013/14; upon earning his Bachelor’s degree in International Studies from CityU, he joined CYEP as a Project Officer since 2014.

–Man Law, Service Team Coordinator, has been a CYEP Project Officer in charge of the parents’ and ethnic minority youth services since 2012, after earning her Bachelor’s in Business Economics from CityU in 2011.



Testing out how to drive a car.



Meeting Taiwanese disabled students.



Trying out the facility at the Bali Ai-Hsin Home for Persons with Disability.

# Message from Head

Department of Applied Social Sciences



This year, we are very pleased to have Dr. Ho Man Yee (Counselling), Dr. Kim Tae Yeun (Social Work), Dr. Rebecca Wong (Criminology and Sociology), and Dr. Vivien Chan (Psychology) joining our department. Dr. Ho was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education and Counselling at the Education University of Hong Kong with an expertise in forgiveness and forbearance, character development, and well-being. Dr. Kim was a postdoctoral researcher in the School of Social Service Administration at the

University of Chicago, and her research interest lies in area of child and youth development. Dr. Wong was a graduate of the University of Oxford, and her research interest is on the study of green criminology, with specific focus on crimes against protected wildlife. Dr. Chan was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at James Madison University, and her research interests are foreign-accented speech processing and second language acquisition.

Our department has been granted by the University a new office space to house our City-Youth Empowerment Project (CYEP), which has just celebrated its 11th anniversary. Funded by external donors and university grants, CYEP has now ten staff members in providing and managing volunteer services for CityU students and alumni to engage in meaningful service learning and volunteering work on a systematic and long-term basis.

This year was the first year of the new departmental admissions for the four-year Bachelor of Social Sciences programme, which has gotten off

to a smooth start. SS received the highest number of applications in CLASS, reflecting the popularity of our degree programmes here in SS. As year 1 students were directly admitted to the department, we invited alumni to join the various sessions of Training Camp to help our freshmen learn the effective ways of adjusting to new university life.

Our department continues to actively engage alumni in enhancing students' learning. Alumni provided final year students with career counselling and training in job hunting skills. They collaborated with student mentors to organize a "Job Fair" for current students. Mock interview sessions were organized for final year students with the support of alumni who have rich managerial and administrative experiences.

We are very pleased to share with you that our social work alumnus, Mr Leung Tsz Tun, Arnold (graduate of BSW Programme 2004) was awarded the Outstanding Social Worker Award by the Hong Kong Social Workers Association in 2016.

SS is committed to promoting academic excellence and student success. The scholarship recipients of SS have been growing steadily, 40 students receiving government scholarships, 38 students receiving internal scholarships and 31 students receiving external scholarships. In particular, six students have received the Discovery-enriched Curriculum Award at CityU in recognition of their effort in discovery, innovation and community engagement. A psychology graduate received the HSBC Hong Kong Scholarship. Ten social work undergraduate students received the HSBC Social Work Scholarships.

Prof Wing Lo

Head Department of  
Applied Social Sciences

## Achievement of SS students

Miss Wong Yau-lai Yocky, a Year 4 student in Social Work won the undergraduate champion (Individual) with her project "Yes! I can" which was a creative art project for elderly living in nursing homes. Miss Ma Ka-yan Jessie, a postgraduate student of the MSSAPSY program won the postgraduate student champion (Individual) with her intervention research project on "Discover the power of creating art for mood improvement". Miss Lam Choi-ni Charlie, Mr Luk Tzu-wei Bryan, and Mr Cheung Chun-pong Derek from the Criminology major won

the Undergraduate Runner-Up (Group) prize for their innovative mobile app "FoneFraud Shield" which was designed to keep elderly people safe from phone scams. Miss Li Yu-ying Jenny from the Psychology major won the Undergraduate Runner-Up (Individual) prize for her experimental research project on "Huh! You know me but you exclude me?" Miss Li Si-yeung from the Psychology program is the Poster Winner in the Hong Kong Psychological Society Annual Conference 2016. Her research project is entitled "The relationship between reading anxiety, reading self-efficacy, verbal working memory, and reading ability in Chinese children".