



DIVE INTO A SEA OF OPPORTUNITIES

Liu Yongsheng and Wong Qing Le are pursuing their dream careers, with the support of the MaritimeONE scholarship.

When asked for their first impressions of the maritime industry, Liu Yongsheng spoke of pirates and naval ships, while Wong Qing Le thought that it was largely male dominated. However, both have since learnt that there is so much more to the industry.

"I thought maritime careers consisted only of engineers and people who worked on vessels, like ship captains, but I've realised this industry is actually very diverse," said Yongsheng, 30, who is a naval architect with Sembcorp Marine after pursuing a degree in naval architecture at Newcastle University, Singapore Institute of Technology.

"While there are fulfilling careers on board vessels, there is also a wide range of opportunities for shorebased roles, such as in marine insurance, ship finance and maritime law."

Fellow scholar Qing Le, 27, who is pursuing a degree in maritime studies at Nanyang Technological University, shared he was surprised that the male-to-female ratio of his classmates was about 50:50. "There are career and education paths for everyone. It's up to the individual's interest and preference," he added.

Having previously served in the Republic of Singapore Navy,

he shared that this experience influenced his career choice. "I wanted to take up something a bit different, so I decided on maritime studies. Moreover, I had spent time on board a frigate, which affirmed my decision to pursue this course."

Another reason was the major role the industry plays in Singapore's economy – it contributes 7 per cent to the Gross Domestic Product, and is home to over 5,000 maritime establishments that employ more than 170,000 people.

Yongsheng said of this role as a naval architect: "I have to draft drawings, plan and create design concepts, as well as study and solve engineering problems. I also review designs from those that work closely with me."

He explained that ship design is complex – one has to understand different aspects of how a ship works and how everything comes together to build a vessel.

"I'm naturally curious – I like finding out why and how things are done. I also enjoy the process of designing a ship."

Both Qing Le and Yongsheng are recipients of the MaritimeONE Scholarship, which provided them with opportunities to connect with the industry.

"Besides the financial incentives, the scholarship has expanded my social circle and deepened my knowledge of the industry. We get to network with maritime professionals, who are generous with their advice," Qing Le said.

Yongsheng echoed Qing Le's sentiments, adding that the scholarship gave him direction, which eventually pointed him to this career.

"These are exciting times. Currently, the industry is undergoing digitalisation, and some examples of this include the 3D printing of spare vessel parts used for ship construction and repairs, and the increased use of smart systems such as robotics in fabrication workshops."

Qing Le added: "Other technologies include blockchain and artificial intelligence, which has helped improve our work processes. The industry is always on the lookout for those who can support these developments."

Any words of advice for someone considering a career in the industry? Yongsheng said: "Have an open mind – it is never too late to learn. Explore the diverse opportunities the industry has to offer, and be a part of something bigger."

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