Making an impact on the world stage

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A number of students from New York University Shanghai’s second cohort of graduates will be joining international organizations, marking a breakthrough for the university’s efforts to cultivate quality talent, said its chancellor Yu Lizhong.  
“We believe there will be more NYU Shanghai graduates joining high-profile international organizations as some have received multiple job offers but have not made a decision yet,” said Yu.  
“We are delighted that we are able to produce graduates who can assume serious responsibility and make an impact on the world stage after gaining a global perspective following four years at the university.”  
At present, NYU Shanghai graduate Ye Lin is the only one who has decided to join an international organization called the Asia Pacific Model E-port Network which focuses on facilitating trade within the region. Ye has been working part-time at the nonprofit inter-governmental organization since January.  
“I feel honored to work in this nonprofit organization and play a part in promoting information transparency for the trade supply chain so that the cost of cross-border trade can be brought down,” said Ye, who majored in business and finance.  
“I’m grateful to the university for helping to cultivate us and making the world our classroom.”  
Joint venture universities such as NYU Shanghai, the first Sino-US research university established by New York University and East China Normal University, and Duke Kunshan University, another Sino-US partnership between Duke University and Wuhan University in Jiangsu province, are a part of China’s efforts to reform institutions of higher learning in recent years to promote open-mindedness.  
Xu Fei, president of Chengdu-based Southwest Jiaotong University, told National Business Daily that this change in the talent cultivation approach is key to the reform process. He added that, like many other domestic schools, the university has collaborated with different cities and provinces as well as industry leaders from around the world to equip students with the right skills required by various industries.  
NYU Shanghai’s second batch of nearly 300 graduates — around half of them are from 38 foreign countries — will bid farewell to the school later this month. The graduation ceremony will be held on May 23.  
Yu added that a large number of the Chinese graduates will go on to further their studies at prestigious institutes, including Ivy League universities. A number of major financial corporations have also showed an interest in hiring some of the graduates.  
In addition, three foreign graduates have received scholarship offers from Peking University and Tsinghua University in Beijing, and he believes more offers would follow.  
NYU Shanghai students are encouraged to spend at least one year at one of the university’s global network of 11 global academic centers so that they can gain new perspectives of the world.  
For instance, Ye studied in New York and Florence where she worked as a part-time tour guide for the Florence Santa Maria Cathedral for half a year.  
“I felt that the building was so amazing and I thought that was a way I could make a contribution,” she explained.  
During her stay in Florence, Ye resided with a local couple who have a son and daughter as well as two other international students from Sydney and California. Every day during dinner, Ye would spend three hours chatting with them about current affairs and exchange their views on various topics.  
“Such experiences allow me to see my own culture from the eyes of others, and this has made me appreciate my culture even more,” Ye said.  
Another graduate, Li Chang, said what he appreciated the most from his time at NYU Shanghai was the chance to learn industry insights through valuable internship opportunities at high-profile institutions. Li, who will further his studies at Princeton University, interned as a research assistant at Harvard Center Shanghai.  
“The internship experience empowered me with stronger confidence that the world is able to cope with challenges in environment, healthcare and education through financial aid,” he said. “Take for example a group of scientists carrying out a research project that could reduce industrial pollution by 90 percent. Though the success rate is only 5 percent, the return on investment would be very high.  
“If the investor invests in 100 such projects, the success rate of the investment could be much higher and it will be easier to attract investment so that more research on environment and health can be carried out.”  
For US graduate Allison Chesky, it was gaining a global perspective through interactions with her peers that proved the most valuable. After all, statistics show that the proportion of international students at NYU Shanghai is higher than all the universities in the US.  
The Massachusetts native used the class on international investment transactions in developing countries as an example.  
“If this class was conducted in NYU New York, the classroom would not be filled with as many international students. Here in NYU Shanghai, we have a better chance of getting to hear the stories of those from the very developing countries mentioned in class,” she said.  
Chesky, who was the editor-in-chief of NYU Shanghai’s student newspaper, has chosen to work in the US for two years after graduation. She added that she aspires to work as a journalist specializing in China.

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