

TO IPBA Scholarship Committee **LOCATION** The Inter-Pacific Bar Association
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RE **IPBA 2019 SCHOLAR'S REPORT**

My incredible journey as an IPBA scholar of 2019 started when I reached the Lion City of Asia – Singapore, from the Heart of Asia – Mongolia. By flying just 6-7 hours took me from snowy wintery Mongolia to rainy summery Singapore.

I was excited, and yet wondered how this journey would feel and what it would bring to my life.

I did not realize at that time that I was about to step into the river that flows into the Pacific Ocean – a modest beginning of a great journey.

1. MEETING WITH JAY LEMOINE AND MY FELLOW SCHOLARS

In the morning of the first day of the conference, I met with Jay LeMoine, Chair of the IPBA Scholarship Committee, and other Scholars, being Aaron (India), Amaraa (Mongolia), Anna (New Zealand), Hugh (Hong-Kong), Khurshid (Bangladesh), Ksenia (Russia) and Nikolaj (Germany) in the lobby of Grand Pacific Hotel.

Jay was a nice person and great supervisor who spoke fluent Japanese. He knew many lawyers from Japan and kindly introduced many of them to me, including Miyuki Ishiguro and Tatsuki Nakayama. Jay took care of us during our entire stay in Singapore and made a huge effort to make all Scholars feel comfortable and happy.

As for the Scholars, they were all talented lawyers and amazing individuals. We shared diverse legal background and experiences – some of us practiced civil law, others practiced common law and yet others practiced Islamic law. Even though we shared different values and traditions, we instantly and effortlessly became lifetime friends. Aaron was a planner who planned everything in advance and oversaw entertainment. Amaraa was kind and enthusiastic, and another Scholar from Mongolia. Anna was a sweet and energetic girl who attended all after parties. Hugh was a mood maker who always effortlessly made us laugh. Khurshid was a kind-heart who loved to talk and listen. Ksenia was a beautiful and lovely girl from Russia who loved to prepare everything in advance so that everything is in order. Lastly, Nikolaj was a charming lawyer from Germany who was kind and smiling all the time. We had so much fun and spent most of the time together. We were just inseparable. (Some of our pictures and great memories can be checked in Annex 1 herein).

2. SINGAPORE SUPREME COURT TOUR & MEETING WITH JUSTICE STEVEN CHONG

After the meeting and brief introduction, we headed to the Supreme Court of Singapore. Mahesh Rai from the IPBA Scholarship Committee kindly provided with us an opportunity to tour the Singapore Supreme Court and to observe a court proceeding.

The walls and barriers of court rooms of the Supreme Court were all made of glass that symbolizes a transparency of judicial system. A brief written introduction of the case was presented on the screen located outside of each court room. Also, documentary evidence was presented on a screen located in the court room so that everybody could see and understand what was being presented and discussed. It was a valuable experience to

know how Singapore was using technological advancements in the practice of law to ensure ease of access and reduce printed materials.

We were also accompanied by a local guide who kindly explained history of the Supreme Court and its unique architecture.

We then went up to the top floor of the Supreme Court where we could observe the beautiful architecture of Singapore's city center with a 360 degree view. It was interesting to know that the current architecture of Singapore was basically all planned by two general architects appointed by Lee Kuan Yew, a former Prime Minister of Singapore.

Also, we were able to meet with Judge Steven Chong with the help of Mahesh Rai. Judge Chong was a nice and respectful man who generously made time to us despite his busy schedule. He was even carefully studied background of each Scholar in advance of the meeting and asked questions that specifically relevant to each Scholar. We, all Scholars, had an invaluable discussion with Judge Chong, and he addressed the importance of sticking to the practice of law (without changing one's career) is a base to become a good lawyer (which was a response to my question "*How to become a good lawyer?*").

3. **VISIT TO NORTON ROSE FULBRIGHT**

Jay provided the Scholars with a priceless opportunity to visit Norton Rose Fulbright's Singapore office ("**NRF**") and meet with his colleagues. Many partners of NRF warmly welcomed us and gave us truly interesting and cutting-edge presentations and speeches on the legal aspects of the following topics:

- (a) Fintech, Data and Cyber space;
- (b) International Shipping Law;
- (c) Practicing at the Singapore International Commercial Court;
- (d) Smart Cities and Infrastructure; and
- (e) Developments in the Legal Practice in Singapore.

It was interesting to learn how Singapore, a small country with no natural resources, transformed into a very wealthy country within a short period of time. A main driver that supported Singapore's rapid development was considered an effective state policy implemented by the Singapore Government. Singapore specifically focused on certain key industries and aimed to develop these industries to a world-leading standard. For instance, as for the shipping industry, the Singapore Government met and talked with stakeholders of the shipping industry, lawyers and service providers to develop Singapore into a more attractive destination for shipping companies. As a result of this effective Government policy, I have learned that many major shipping companies moved their headquarters and/or started their operations from Singapore.

The partners of NRF also kindly shared with us current and future strategies of NRF that would differentiate NRF from other law firms. They addressed the importance of paying attention to sustainable cities and changes that emerge from it as cities all over the world would continue grow and need to change to deal with population growth. The NRF partners also wanted us to pay attention to digital revolution which would substantially reshape our landscape. They advised us to consider solutions that would make cities more sustainable, including with respect to new modes of transportation, new methods for energy storage, new housing, technological and waste management solutions and policies. Lastly, the partners of NRF reminded the Scholars to consider the issues that

concern our profession and how to keep law up-to-date as society evolves and new technologies emerge.

It was amazing to hear that NRF is now creating new income streams by using technological advancements in their practice of law. In my opinion, a level of use of technological advancements would certainly distinguish law firms in the future to survive or win over the competitive legal market. I was assured that NRF would never lose in this coming “game of technology” era.

4. **OPENING CEREMONY & OPENING ADDRESS BY PRIME MINISTER LEE HSIEN LOONG**

The Opening Ceremony was amazing and remarkable. It consisted of technology based colorful art performances and breath-taking drum performance, to name a few. The theme for this year’s conference “*Technology, Business and Law – Global Technologies*”, was perfectly reflected in the opening ceremony.

Following the eye-catching opening ceremony of the 29th IPBA Annual Meeting and Conference, the Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore arrived at the venue, welcomed members and guests of IPBA to Singapore and gave a great opening speech.

The arrival of and speech by the Prime Minister of Singapore clearly showed how important the IPBA community is and how spectacularly the IPBA Annual Meeting and Conference was organized.

The Prime Minister Lee addressed importance of impartial and objective laws that are passed following due process, and laws that are administered by courts that deliver judgements that are reasoned and open to criticism in order for people to feel confident that they are treated equally before the law and no one is immune from it. Laws are the means for rights to be recognized, justice to be obtained, and crimes to be punished.

He also mentioned vitality of stable and constructive international orders and the rule of law as these will enable various countries to co-exist peacefully, collaborate, make binding commitments, sign treaties and resolve disputes. It further promotes international trade and finance, boosts cross-border investments, and fosters growth and prosperity. With respect to this, the Prime Minister Lee raised issues relating to difficult trade-offs between personal liberties and collective securities, and rebellious campaigns that manipulate opinions and influence elections by utilising technological advancements.

5. **NEW SCHOLARS RECEPTION**

After the opening address by Prime Minister Lee and concurrent sessions, the new Scholars Reception was held. Many distinguished lawyers and former Scholars attended the Reception to congratulate and welcome new Scholars and members of the IPBA.

The Scholars were officially presented with a certificate of participation in the Scholarship Program. After the awarding of certificates, each Scholar was provided with an opportunity to speak in front of such distinguished audience.

The best part of the Reception was a heart-warming presentation made by Tatsuki Nakayama – the heart of the IPBA (as happily and proudly described by Jay). Tatsu presented us with many beautiful stories and aspects of IPBA. He said among others that “... *When IPBA members and friends meet, they do not just shake hands, but they hug each other like close friends or family members*” which I witnessed to be a fact during the IPBA conference. Tatsu’s presentation made me to truly appreciate and love this special family.

6. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

I was impressed with a variety of sessions hosted by committees and joint committee members. It was hard to choose only few sessions from a pool of many interesting sessions.

As sessions were held concurrently, there were overlaps in sessions that I wished to participate. If time travel were possible, I would have loved to attend each of them!

Jay once mentioned that “*having too much to choose from is a nice problem to have*” – and it was the best description of sessions and the real situation that majority of conference attendees faced.

After careful consideration, I decided to attend the following sessions that were relevant to (i) technologies as this year’s conference was themed “*Technology, Business and Law – Global Technologies*”, and (ii) energy and mining – sectors of my interest:

- (a) The Curious Cases of Technology in Construction
- (b) Crowdfunding and ICOs – Raising Funds for Start-Ups;
- (c) Fintech Panel – Hot topics for the Fintech Industry;
- (d) Mediation in Dispute Resolution for Cross Border Investments;
- (e) Best Practices in Financing Energy Projects;
- (f) From Saving the Planet to Saving the Universe: Challenges to Environmental Law Posed by the Growth of Air and Space Activities; and
- (g) Climate, Energy and Technology: New Developments and Directions.

I must say that all sessions were interesting, informative, carefully planned and well prepared.

As for the sessions relevant to technologies were illustrated with beautiful graphic designs and technological solutions and delivered by professional speakers. Although these sessions were not directly connected to my practice, I had a chance to observe and contemplate how technological advancements would gradually change our lives and impact legal practice in the future.

As for the sessions relevant to energy, I had a chance to listen to various speakers from various jurisdictions, such as New Zealand, China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Chile, Indonesia, Japan and the US. They expressed different ideas and point of views that originated from their jurisdiction and practice. I was also luckily to have my question relating to energy curtailment issue (which is currently the biggest issue and challenge in Mongolia) answered thoroughly with comparative perspectives.

During the concurrent session, I met and talked with many distinguished and experienced lawyers, including Gerald A. Sumida, a former General Counsel of ADB.

7. FAREWELL DINNER & AFTER PARTIES & NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

I attended many amazing events organized and initiated by the Organizing Committee and other committees, including the Welcome Reception, Opening Ceremony, Scholar’s Reception and Gala Dinner. In my opinion, this year’s best event was the Farewell Dinner & After Party.

The Farewell Dinner started with a great modern show that embraced technological solutions and colorful lighting. I think everybody had fantastic dinner while enjoying beautiful music and great dance performances.

After the dinner, we went to the Capitol Theatre for a Farewell Party. The Farewell Party was a costume party. Everybody was instantly turned into either an icon or a glamorous movie star. It was certainly a fun time greatly enjoyed by busy lawyers. The food was great – we even had a chance to taste local street food that have Michelin stars at the venue. We also witnessed performances of a local talented comedian and a professional rock band that consisted of members of the IPBA. Everybody sang and danced. The atmosphere was just amazing!

We Scholars attended almost all the after parties that organised in connection with the IPBA Meeting and Conference. For instance, we checked the after party hosted by Oon & Bazul at the beautiful Chijmes (where the wedding in “Crazy Rich Asians” (movie) took place) and an after party hosted by Loyens Loeff at the Singapore National Museum. We also checked many after parties at various interesting nightclubs where we able to observe the night scene of Singapore.

After parties allowed me to talk and exchange ideas with many accomplished lawyers and individuals, including David Grief, Matt Borrelli and Hiroe Kajiwara, to name a few. All people I met were super friendly and helpful and provided me with valuable advice in terms of career and other important life matters.

8. INSPIRATION AND PLANS

Overall, it was a privilege to attend the IPBA Annual Meeting and Conference as a Scholar. The IPBA provided me with an amazing opportunity to meet and exchange opinions with leading legal professionals from various jurisdictions and expand my professional network. The IPBA’s spirit of collegiality was truly strong and widespread, and the chances to meet new lawyers and friends were enormous.

The IPBA inspired me to grow professionally. It made me realize that I should never stop learning, honing my skills and aiming to become a better lawyer. Every second spent in the IPBA conference was fruitful. I learned that I must first grow as an exceptional lawyer to be admitted in the IPBA community so that I can contribute in the future.

I plan to participate every IPBA Annual and Meeting if possible, to always remember the vibe and stay inspired. I also plan to grow the IPBA community in Mongolia by organising events where all previous and future Scholars from Mongolia can have an opportunity to meet and network. Further, I still wish to hold the IPBA’s Partners Meeting, and then eventually this amazing annual meeting and conference in the steppes of Mongolia sometime soon.

Lastly, I am extremely thankful to the IPBA, the IPBA Scholarship Committee, Jay LeMoine, Mahesh Rai, Rhonda Lundin, Yukiko Okazaki, Tatsuki Nakayama and my fellow Scholars for making this journey incredible and unforgettable. I hope that the IPBA Scholarship Program will continue providing amazing opportunities like this to many young lawyers from Mongolia and other countries to inspire and encourage them to become better business lawyers and professionals and daring change makers who will contribute legal developments nationally and internationally.

Annex 1



Supreme Court Tour



Welcome Reception



Opening Ceremony



Scholars' Reception



Day 3



Farewell Dinner & After Part