

2018 \$5,000 Jacobs WTS-LA Scholarship Winner: Emily Ng



Emily Ng (2018 \$5,000 Jacobs WTS-LA Scholarship Winner), 2019

An undergraduate student at Pitzer College, Emily Ng is double majoring in environmental analysis and sociology, where she carries a 3.9 GPA. Though she faced considerable skepticism from family and friends about her decision to pursue a career that was not in business, medicine, or engineering, Ms. Ng recognized her calling early on. “I discovered my passion for the environment in high school. The community support I received from my proposal to xeriscape part of the city-owned landscape in the midst of the 2015 drought was incredibly rewarding. My overwhelming passion for air quality in particular, however, was reaffirmed when participating in an environmental justice visit to Boyle Heights during my internship at SCAQMD...Additionally, this past summer, as an Air Quality Compliance Intern at Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in downtown Los Angeles, I got to expand my knowledge of the inner workings of transportation through economic and ecological perspectives. My internship at SCAG offered another discovery. My daily commute on the Metro trains each day made me appreciate the mass transit system for its accessibility, affordability, and the diverse areas and commuters that it serves.

While Ms. Ng certainly recognizes and respects her passion for policy, the environment, and transportation, there’s also another compelling reason for her vocation.

“As an Asian-American woman, and the first of my family to pursue a career relating to public service, I am the first woman, and child, of my family’s generation that aspires to go to graduate school. Being presented with this scholarship will allow me to begin to invest in furthering my education after undergraduate school, and to connect with a group of powerful and inspiring women in the transportation field.”

Ms. Ng is not the only person who looks forward to seeing this happen. According to Pitzer College professor Brinda Sarathy, “Student leaders like Emily are central to [the Robert Redford Conservancy for Southern California’s Sustainability’s] vision, and she has been involved in organizing a Toxics Tour for students across the Claremont Colleges as well as for high school students in Pomona and beyond.” Citing Ms. Ng’s coursework, internships, and work experience, Professor Sarathy adds, “She will go on to be a policy leader in the field of environmental justice.”

Professor Sarathy is most certainly right. And Ms. Ng is doing everything she can prove her so. At present, Ms. Ng is “currently abroad,” spending her fall semester in Quito, Ecuador, where she intends to complete an independent study project on transportation and air pollution in Quito. She also checked off a bucket list item, after recently completing a trip to the Galapagos Islands. For these reasons and so many more, Emily Ng richly deserves to receive the first-ever 2018 \$5,000 Jacobs WTS-LA Undergraduate Scholarship.