



**“Success for me is living a valuable life by making positive impact on society and family.”**

**Phoebe Lu**, Purchase Specialist  
BASIS International Schools  
Hong Kong Baptist University, BBA ‘14

**Hinrich Global Trade Leader pathway to success in trade**



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Phoebe Lu has always dreamt of being an entrepreneur – she was a curious child, continually aspiring to learn something new. Growing up in a business-oriented family, she was exposed to the essence of international trade early in life, which ultimately inspired her to follow her aspirations.

**Connecting the dots**

“My father is a businessman. When I was a child, I remember receiving small gifts regularly from his business partners – sometimes it was a toy from Hong Kong, and sometimes it was a snack from Singapore. “That was my first impression of international business – having interactions with people from other countries or regions and seeing new things and a bigger world. “ Phoebe said.

Because of her upbringing, Phoebe learned to be goal-oriented, create her own opportunities and get things done. As the years passed, she was driven towards trade as she began to understand its impact on businesses, people and the overall well-being of the world.

“The decision to start a company was quite natural for me. I knew it was the right thing to do. Looking back, I can connect the dots – my personal and professional growth from education and work lead to the decision to become an entrepreneur,” she said.

**Opportunity knocks**

As life would have it, Phoebe came across the Hinrich Foundation just as her aspirations were forming in college. During her second year at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies in Guanzhou, China, she received an email promoting a Hinrich Foundation scholarship to continue her studies in Hong Kong.

With a keen interest in global trade and developing an international perspective, Phoebe applied. The Hinrich Foundation awarded her a full scholarship to continue her Bachelor’s in Business Administration (BBA) at Hong Kong Baptist University, where she graduated in 2014.

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“I chose marketing as my concentration because it encompasses an entire system of practice in business, including sales management, business communication, product marketing, market research, and so on,” Phoebe said.

Unaware at the time, the marketing courses she took as an undergraduate were paving the way for her entrepreneurial ventures later.



*Phoebe was elected as VP of Alumni Leadership Committee. In the photo is ALC President Muhammad Nurun Nobi (Bangladesh, HK PolyU GPEM '16) and co-Vice President Celeste Zeng (China, HKBU BBA '13 & NUS MBA '20), March 2018 at the HK - Golf Club, Hong Kong*

“The Hinrich Foundation scholarship offered the unique opportunity to learn a new way of learning and culture in Hong Kong, which would expand my horizon and help me grow,” Phoebe said.

“Studying in Hong Kong and being part of the HF family was life-changing. I have become more open-minded and am committed to lifelong learning. Many first-time experiences happened in my life because of this program, such as attending a networking event at Asia Society with top executives in Hong Kong – a scene I could only see on TV or a movie before,” she said.

### **Learning from the corporate world**

Phoebe worked as a marketing intern during her semester break at Global Sources, a B2B media company founded by the founder of Hinrich Foundation, Merle Hinrich. After graduating in May 2014, she worked in the Corporate Marketing team and at Global Sources Direct, where she addressed startups’ needs for crowdfunding, product design, cross-border e-commerce and logistics.

Later, Phoebe became part of the founding team of Global Sources Startup Launchpad project, now Asia’s largest hardware startup exhibition that facilitates global distribution between startups and buyers. She planned and

managed show production, tech conferences and startup workshops, rotating across different departments in the company.

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“The experiences with Global Sources allowed me to receive professional business-to-business trainings – gaining practical skills and inspiration,” she said.

Phoebe, who is now Vice President of the Alumni Leadership Committee of the Hinrich Foundation Alumni Association (HFAA), also noted the continued support from the Hinrich Foundation not just to its scholars but also to the alumni. HFAA is a great help to her and her peers in their overall personal and professional growth, offering networking opportunities, training and camaraderie.



*Phoebe and co-alumni Tevy Kek (Cambodia, HKBU MAIJS '12) helped HF team promote products from emerging Asia at the Global Sources trade shows during her scholar internship years, April 2014*

### **The highs & lows of being an entrepreneur**

Phoebe now runs AceEver, which exports mobile phone accessories around the world. Just two years in operation, the Guangzhou-based company which she co-founded with her brother has developed businesses with clients from over 20 countries.

“I personally enjoy working in an international environment with people from different cultural backgrounds because it enhances my horizon and brings me to a bigger world. As a person with a global vision and as a true believer of the positive impact of global trade, I enjoy being deeply involved in the trade process and contributing to the overall trading business.”

Despite her successes, Phoebe acknowledged that life as an entrepreneur is never easy. But, with determination and hard work, a career in trade is rewarding – the benefits are bigger than oneself in the end, she said.

### **Advice to future entrepreneurs**

Passing on the same support she received early in her career, Phoebe is eager to encourage future generations of global trade leaders and entrepreneurs:

“Working for your own company is full of challenges. The most difficult part is making strategic decisions which influence the whole company’s development

– an experience that I never had when I worked for a corporation. Although there is more freedom and flexibility when you work for your own company, sometimes the freedom can bring overwhelming pressure.

However, if you step out of the comfort zone, take on the responsibility and make decisions based on analysis, the whole experience is truly rewarding for professional growth.”

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“If you want to be an entrepreneur, get ready for the failures and challenges ahead. However, think of each challenge as a necessary expansion of your knowledge instead of a setback,” Phoebe said.

On a practical note, Phoebe also advises aspiring entrepreneurs to pick up another language, which she said could be vital in business dealings as it brings both efficiency and closeness to partnerships. She is currently learning Spanish.

Whatever direction you take, Phoebe advises everyone to figure out your passion first – then make the best use of your resources and connections to build up essential skill sets and knowledge.

Lastly, the best advice she ever received was from none other than Mr. Hinrich. During his acceptance speech for the Entrepreneurial Achievement Award by Beta Gamma Sigma at HKBU, he said:

“Be flexible. You must thoroughly understand your own capabilities before you can operate in a variety of cultures and cope with change.”



*As part of her professional development, Phoebe received sponsorship to join the Export Manager Advanced Training Course in Ho Chi Minh City, July 2018. Merle Hinrich (left most) and HF CEO Kathryn Dioth (2nd from right) awarded her certificate of participation*

### **Moving forward and giving back**

Aside from running her own company, Phoebe is looking forward to pursuing trade in various aspects and ultimately working to make the world a better place. She defines success as living a valuable life by making a positive impact to society and family:



*From manning the HF booth at trade shows as part of her scholar engagement, Phoebe now exhibits at international trade shows for her own company AceEver, which manufactures and exports mobile accessories*

“In five to 10 years, I would like to see myself as a person able to take on more responsibility and give back to society by helping the people in need and making a positive impact through trade.”

“Be forward thinking and willing to learn new things. With an open mind, more opportunities will be open for you.”

To those aspiring to be entrepreneurs and pursuing careers in trade, here is something to always think about according to Phoebe: “Be forward thinking and willing to learn new things. With an open mind, more opportunities will be open for you.”

## Read more stories of inspiration from our Hinrich Global Trade Leaders [here](#).



“A Hinrich scholar comes out of his comfort zone and keeps learning and sharing.”

**Matt Haldane**

Production Editor  
AbacusNews.com –  
South China  
Morning Post

Hinrich Foundation alumnus  
Tsinghua University, MA in  
Global Business Journalism '15



“Excel even in the small things because the quality of your work reflects who you are. Otherwise, how can you expected to be trusted with the big stuff?”

**Carmela delos Santos**

General Manager  
Genesis Quezon Tugs,  
Inc., Philippines

Hinrich Foundation alumna  
De La Salle University, BA  
Communication Arts '00



“When you view your work and everything around you with good intentions, you will bring about a positive change.”

**Khin Myat Thin Zar Tun**

Former Program Officer  
Korean International  
Cooperation Agency

Hinrich Foundation alumna  
Hong Kong Baptist University  
MAIJ Studies '12



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