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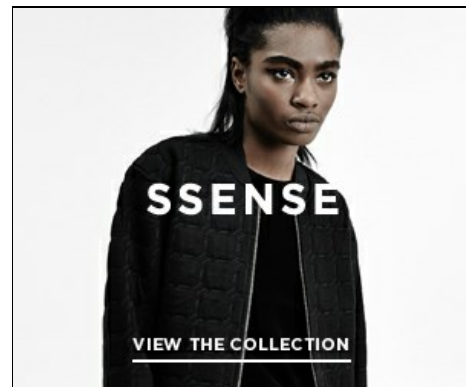
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Sue Chun: Today's Notable Young Professional

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Today's Notable Young Professional is Sue Chun, whose inspiring work covering new Canadians and women in the Jane-Finch community have earned her the prestigious 2014 YWCA Young Woman of Distinction, an award she will receive at the Carlu in Toronto on May 22nd...

Elevator Pitch: Describe your job in a nutshell.

I am a producer at Jane-Finch.com and created the Newcomer Tales multimedia project to highlight stories about new Canadians and women.

Why did you start working at your company? What was the inspiration for this career route?

I volunteered in high school then joined as a regular producer to promote female perspectives in the Jane-Finch community. The community has been my home for several years, and it's where I was able to grow both professionally and personally. I wanted to share my experiences – for people to see and appreciate the beauty that exists within the area.

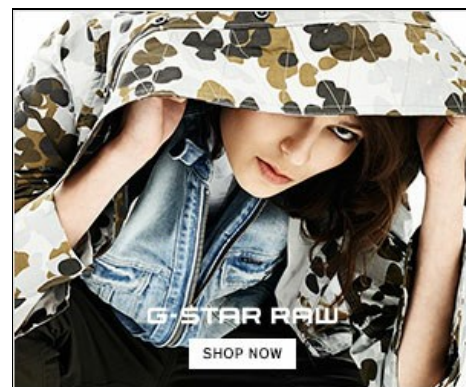
What is the best part of what you do on a day-to-day basis? The most challenging part?

I enjoy meeting the many diverse residents that make up the Jane-Finch neighbourhood. Sharing amazing and uplifting stories is important to show that the community is much more than its reputation or 'priority' label. It's a warm and vibrant area that continues to produce leaders in many fields and industries. The positive people and their stories need to be told in order to break the community's negative image.

What is one sign that you've seen over the years to suggest that your work/life balance is off?

I've met tremendous young community leaders and activists who have become jaded over time. It's important not to let negative or stressful situations overtake the good that you are doing. Meeting and talking directly with the youth you are trying to help can re-energize your spirit if you've become bogged down in challenging policy or systemic barriers.

Where do you see yourself in five years?



I want to direct more films and documentaries as a way to promote our local cultural diversity. Media and pop culture can be a powerful tool to inspire, educate and change the way people see each other. We need more understanding, hope and acceptance in the world. The more we share about each other, the closer we will all become.

What is one major challenge that you've had to overcome in your career? How did you overcome it?

I faced the same challenges that kids who are deemed 'at-risk' face in the community. Many of them deal with unique social, economic and cultural pressures that can negatively affect growth. Unfortunately, many youth in our society lack adequate resources to fulfill their dreams. I was able to reach my goals with the right guidance and mentorship. There are many community leaders who want to help the next generation succeed. You'll be surprised at how receptive and accessible these folks are when it comes to making opportunities for youth. All you need to do is reach out to them.

What does success look like to you? Does Money = Happiness?

Success can mean different things to each person. For me, it's being able to positively contribute to society in your own unique way. Because I was once voiceless, I find happiness in empowering other young people to discover their own talents and use that for positive change.

What is the most memorable milestone in your career?

I've been really lucky to have mentors that believe in me and support me along the way. If it weren't for them, I wouldn't have been able to dream or have big goals. A milestone for me was being able to touch a national audience through storytelling at a local level. It just proves that when you speak from the heart, people will listen.

Do you have any advice for other young professionals?

To the young professionals, particularly to young people facing difficulty in their lives, you should tap into the talent that is available around you. Meet and learn from other young leaders. Help each other grow and together you can reach great heights. Collaboration is a powerful tool – and it's free!

Where is your favourite place to wine/ dine in your city and why?

I enjoy cozy cafés and bars. Being around good friends and sharing good conversation can take place just about anywhere.

When you're not working how do you love to spend your "Me" time?

I love cuddling under the dim glow of Christmas lights with a great film or book, a large glass of wine and my cat.

Where is your favourite place to travel? Why?

Although I haven't been back in a while, South Korea is where many of my friends and family are. I love being surrounded by the culture's history and the warmth of the people. Plus the food is great!

If you had to choose a theme song, what would it be?

New Radicals – You Get What You Give

If you weren't doing what you're doing, what would you be doing?

I would be wondering what I should be doing...

Do you support any charities? If so, which one(s) and why is that important to you?

I support the causes that promote equality and diversity. I am a member of the Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada because their dedication to promoting equal voices in Canada is important to me.

What to you is notable?

To see someone rise above their situation and not have a victim mentality. In the Jane-Finch community, many youth lack the financial resources or connections to play the game of life. Nevertheless, I am always impressed by the young people who overcome tough barriers to succeed. The resilient young people in my community are notable!

BlackBerry, iPhone, Android, or Other?

I've had them all – and they basically all do the same thing. I like the freedom of Android. It took a while but many of my friends are also converts.

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