



Hilda Foo is the first female to win this school award

SINGAPORE — She chose to visit a Cambodian village and build a house there as part of her school's "Challenge Week".

Hilda Foo also cooked a meal for the villagers and rode on a motorcycle — the first time she had sat on one. With four other students. Hilda got lost in the village town and had to flag down motorcyclists to bring them back to the village.

"There were three of us on one motorcycle... I was recovering from a sprained ankle, so it was quite scary for me," she said.

The 18-year-old will score another first tomorrow when she receives The Josephian of the Year Award at SJI International's inaugural graduation ceremony — the first time a female student is receiving it.

The award is the highest honor given to an outstanding student

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Hilda Foo (picture)

of the school, which was started in 2007 as a privately-run arm of the all-boys' secondary school, St Joseph's Institution. There will be 25 girls in the batch of 58 students to graduate.

The vice-president of the senior school student council and school choir member, Hilda also volunteered to help the visually handicapped and the hearing-impaired.

In the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme — where

students are graded on a scale of 45 points, three points of which are made up by an essay component — Hilda scored 39 points for her preliminary examinations which excluded the essay test. Her final results will be out in January.

The daughter of a primary school teacher and an executive secretary is considering a degree in social sciences or law at a local university.

Her weekends are packed with church activities, family gatherings and schoolwork, so the keen sports-woman gets by with six hours of sleep each night.

"I go out with friends less often. I also save time by not going onto Facebook and MSN," she said.

"Surprised" as she was by the award, the teenager also said "... it's nice to make history".

ONG DAI LIN