An Anchorwoman Chases Her Dreams

By Amy MacMillan

A popular Boston band partially inspired Young-Eun Yang, MBA ’10, to study here at MIT Sloan. Growing up in Seoul, Young-Eun, 31, adored New Kids on the Block, the Boston-based pop group that sold 80 million albums worldwide in the 1980s and 90s. Like many from her generation, Young-Eun idolized NKOTB, and was determined to perfect her English in case she ever met any of the band members.

But Young-Eun also had other dreams to fulfill. Early on, her father, Jung-Hyun Yang, suggested she pursue a career as a TV anchorwoman. Anchormen and women were just starting to come into their own as recognizable “personalities” during this era. Young-Eun resisted the suggestion at first, but she studied hard and practiced her English. As a youngster, she watched “Sesame Street” videos, and as a teenager sang along to NKOTB videos and read American music magazines such as Big Bopper. “I firmly believed that reading those magazines improved my English. I read all those articles and they helped my studies,” she said.

The hard work paid off. Young-Eun was accepted into a prestigious foreign language high school in Korea and later was admitted to Seoul National University, where she double-majored in French Language and Literature and English. She also had the chance to meet her idol Joey McIntyre from the New Kids. Her English was proficient enough that she voluntarily served as an interpreter for a day when the singer visited Korea on a solo tour in 1999. “I got to meet him in person. I was really proud and happy to see my dream come true,” she remembered.

The next stop for Young-Eun was KBS, the Korean Broadcasting System, the largest of the country’s three major stations. The Korean television networks employ an entrance exam that permit young college graduates to apply for a broadcasting position. The test consists of a paper exam, an essay question which asks about reunification of the North and South, and a rigorous interview process. It’s quite different from the American broadcasting career progression which often requires journalism graduates to work for many years as a reporter before getting cast-on-air.

Young-Eun Yang, MBA ’10

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Young-Eun passed the exam in 2001, and six months later, went on-air as a news reporter and four years later as an anchorwoman, fulfilling one of her childhood dreams. She was cast on the “8 O’clock Morning Newstime,” a weekday one-hour news broadcast with tens of thousands of viewers. She was tense the first time the lights and cue signs came on and she was on the air. “I felt nervous… I thought, ‘What if I make a mistake?’ But, then I remember thinking that, ‘It’s my stage from now on. If I don’t do it well, it’s all my responsibility. If I do well, then it’s all my merit,’” she said. Following the advice of her senior colleagues, she simply spoke to the camera as if it was a close friend or her mom, helping her connect to the viewers.

When she wasn’t on-air, she was out reporting the local news. “Much of my job was to develop stories and follow up… as well as do all of the research and sometimes I had to beg people to be on our show. Not everyone wants to be on television!” she said. Young-Eun also hosted a weekly English economic news program, “Eye on Korean Business.” On-air guests included officials such as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, the Seoul city Mayor, and respected economists who discussed the Korean economy.

One of her most challenging on-air stories was interviewing famed Spanish tenor José Carreras. Young-Eun had just 20 minutes to prepare for the interview and was certain there was almost nothing new under the sun about a man with such an esteemed career. But, she cautiously approached the stoic singer and won him over by telling him about her father’s pleasant memories of a concert Carreras had performed years earlier. “I went in with a fan’s perspective… positioning is so important! I warmed him up, and he told me a personal story about his new granddaughter and he talked about his lovely family. Then, I asked him about his bout with leukemia and how hard it must have been for him. As a grandfather, you have a different perspective, so I got to hear some genuine things about his life,” she remembered.

After seven and a half years on-air in Korea, Young-Eun was ready to pursue America. She still had memories of her favorite band and its undisputed hometown of Boston on her mind. “She had no doubts about applying to graduate schools in Boston, and was thrilled when she was accepted here at MIT Sloan. “I really love the people around me – my classmates, professors, and this environment,” she said.

Young-Eun said an MBA will broaden her range of experience and will complement her broadcasting career, which she will continue when she graduates next year. “Management-related knowledge is very essential. I’m here to learn how businesspeople think. My goal is to continue to be a broadcaster, and then also run and manage my own media firm. I aspire to be like Oprah Winfrey,” she said.

In the meantime, Young-Eun is taking advantage of all that MIT Sloan has to offer. She’s in the Entertainment, Media and Sports (EMS) Club, the Marketing Club, and is a representative on the Dean’s MBA Student Advisory Council (DSAC). She’s especially
excited to serve on the DSAC. “I feel really fortunate...because it will give me the chance to think about the School’s future. Not just as a student, but as a strategy provider. I want to get more of a sense of ownership of the School, and this was my first step,” she added.

Last month, she was one of five student organizers of the 2009 Korean Study Tour, which was the most popular tour this year, with 28 students and two administrators who traveled to Korea for a week. “I feel really proud of my country,” Young-Eun said. “Thanks to MIT Sloan and the classmates who I was there with, I could see my country from a different perspective.”

She got to spend a few days with her family, including her father, and her mother, In-Ok, and her younger brother, Young-Jae, who is an entrepreneur. Young-Eun has been too busy to experience homesickness pangs. “I already know that I will miss this place [MIT Sloan] when I leave.”

**Engineering First Again In U.S. News Graduate Rankings, MIT Sloan Fifth**

*From the MIT News Office*

MIT’s School of Engineering was again ranked No. 1 in *U.S. News & World Report*’s annual evaluation of American graduate school programs, which hits newsstands this week.

The School of Engineering’s graduate program has achieved the top score in the *U.S. News* rankings each year since the rankings were created in 1990. In addition to having the top U.S. graduate engineering school, MIT placed first in six of 12 engineering specialties – aeronautics and astronautics, chemical, computer, electrical, materials, and mechanical engineering. The Institute’s nuclear engineering program was ranked second, civil engineering third, biomedical engineering fifth, and environmental engineering ninth.

The magazine’s criteria for determining overall engineering rankings include peer assessment, recruiter assessment, research activity, faculty resources and student selectivity. For the first time, MIT’s School of Engineering received a perfect 5.0 peer assessment score. In ranking the various specialties, the magazine relies on assessments by department chairs at peer institutions.

In business, the MIT Sloan School of Management was rated the nation’s fifth MBA program behind Harvard, Stanford, Northwestern and the University of Pennsylvania. MIT Sloan’s specialty programs in information systems, production/operations, and supply chain/logistics were each ranked first.

The magazine this year updated its rankings of several doctoral programs. The Institute’s graduate program in economics tied for first place with Harvard, Princeton, and the University of Chicago. MIT earned top honors for its specialties in macroeconomics, microeconomics, and public finance.
MIT Sloan’s XII Annual Latin Conference To Explore Opportunities In Times of Adversity

Nicholas Negroponte, founder of One Laptop per Child, to serve as keynote speaker

From the MIT Sloan Media Relations Office

How is Latin America responding to the economic crisis? Is its energy sector ready for a new wave of investment? What business models thrive best in the region? And what are the newest trends in entrepreneurship and venture capital?

On May 2, Latin American government leaders, entrepreneurs, and academics will answer these questions during the MIT Sloan School of Management’s XII Annual Latin Conference: “Opportunities in Times of Adversity.” This free conference, which draws more than 400 participants, will be held this year under MIT’s iconic dome.

Nicholas Negroponte, Founder and Chairman of One Laptop per Child, is the slated keynote speaker. Currently on leave from MIT, Negroponte was Co-Founder and Director of the MIT Media Laboratory. He has provided startup funds for more than 40 companies including Zagats, Wired Magazine, Ambient Devices, Skype, and Velti.

Panelists will include:

- Edemir Pinto, Chairman of the Brazilian Stock Exchange
- Marcos Troyjo, CEO of CBM and former Brazilian Ambassador to the U.N.
- Wilmer Ruperti, Chairman and CEO of Maroil Trading
- Guilherme Loureiro, CEO of Unilever Mexico
- Gesner Oliveira, a partner of Tendencias-Economic Consulting
- Frederico Renzo Grayeb, Vice President of Novo Nordisk, Latin America
- Luis Fernando Andrade, Director of McKinsey & Co.
- Rodrigo Teijeiro, Founder and CEO of Sonico
- Antonio Roberto Cortes, CEO of Volkswagen Trucks and Buses
- Richard Klien, Chairman of Santos Brazil

To register for the conference and to access a complete itinerary, please visit: www.mitsloanlatinconference.com.

The XII MIT Sloan Latin American Conference is organized by MBA students from MIT Sloan School of Management’s Latin and Brazilian clubs. Over the past decade, the MIT Latin Conference has emerged as a landmark event that gathers the most influential leaders of Latin America.

This Conference is sponsored by Gazeta Mercantil, Jornal do Brasil, and the MIT Sloan School of Management. For more information please contact Karen Bruck at karen.bruck@sloan.mit.edu.

Quote of the Week

“Success is simple. Do what's right, the right way, at the right time.”

—Arnold H. Glasow
MIT Sloan to Host Its First Ever Business in Gaming Conference

Red Sox’s Curt Schilling to lead discussion on Massively Multiplayer Online video games’ business model

From the MIT Sloan Media Relations Office

Digital distribution, marketing, and in-game advertising are the themes of MIT Sloan School of Management’s inaugural Business in Gaming (BiG) Conference being held on Friday, May 8, on the business school’s campus. The conference will bring together industry leaders, game developers, academics, and students from leading MBA schools to discuss the newest business trends and the future of the gaming industry.

The Boston Red Sox’s three-time World Series champion Curt Schilling is slated to speak on a Massively Multiplayer Online (MMO) Business Model panel. Schilling became involved on the business end of the gaming industry over a decade ago in a relationship with Sony Online Entertainment, and, later, as the official spokesperson for the 3DO Company’s High Heat Baseball. In 2006, he brought his passion for gaming to life with the inception of 38 Studios, a video game development and publishing company.

Ken Levine, President of 2K Boston, who led the creation of the multi-million selling, multiple game-of-the-year award winning title, BioShock, will handle the conference’s closing Q&A.

Other speakers will include:

Susan Bonds, 42 Entertainment’s President and CEO. Bonds, the brains behind creative publicity campaigns for games such as Halo, guided the creative team behind this year’s most successful ARG ‘WhySoSerious’ to promote the award-winning The Dark Knight.

John Rizzo, CEO of Zeebo, who spearheaded the creation of the first fully-managed digital distribution console.

Scot Osterweil, MIT Research Director and Designer of Zoombinis Island Odyssey and the games Switchback and Yoiks!

Panelists from Turbine, creator of the Lord of the Rings Online and D&D Online, and Mythic, creator of Warhammer Online, will talk about the future of this segment’s business model. Representatives from such companies as Google, Massive, GamerDNA, and Mana Potions will address in-game advertising.

Attendees, who will receive demo gift bags, will have access to gaming stations throughout the day featuring Rock Band 2 – which was created by a group of MIT alumni – and Alienware Extreme Gaming Laptops. In addition, some games used for non-entertainment purposes such as education and for the military, will also be showcased.

“Few gaming industry conferences focus exclusively on the business side of the gaming industry,” said Dennis Fu, MBA ’09, one of the organizers of the student-run conference. “MIT, in conjunction with MIT Sloan, is the birthplace of companies such as Harmonix Music Systems, giving it a unique edge to lead in this area.”

For more information and to register for the conference visit: http://www.mitbig.com/. For questions or comments e-mail: bigteam@mit.edu.
Call for Entries - Share Your Great Idea @ the Innovation Showcase at IdeaStream 2009

The Deshpande Center is providing an opportunity for MIT researchers to pitch their innovative technology ideas to the high-level, invitation-only, audience at the “Innovation Showcase” at our IdeaStream Symposium on June 9. The Innovation Showcase is a session that offers early-stage ideas to get market feedback at the research stage.

At IdeaStream 2009 you can get visibility for your work, make connections, and get real-world feedback on how you can commercialize your idea. Chosen applicants must participate in a “Practice Pitch Session” during which they will receive coaching/advice on presenting at the Innovation Showcase at IdeaStream 2009.

This event takes place Wednesday, April 29, 12:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., in 1-229. Submission guidelines are available online. The application deadline is Friday, May 1. For more information contact Carol Sardo, 617-253-0943, e-mail deshpandecenter@mit.edu, or visit the website at: http://web.mit.edu/deshpandecenter/ideastream2009/is09_showcase.html.

Movies

NOW PLAYING ON CAMPUS...

Apollo 13 (1995) A free Apollo Anniversary film series event

Apollo 13 will be preceded by a talk by MIT Professor and former astronaut Jeffrey Hoffman. This free event is part of the Giant Leaps: The 40th Anniversary of the Apollo Moon Landing series, and is sponsored by the MIT Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

“Houston, we have a problem.” Those words were immortalized during the tense days of the Apollo 13 lunar mission crisis, and the suspense, fear, and excitement of those days are captured in Ron Howard’s epic recreation of the 1970 crisis. When the commander of the original mission Ken Mattingly (Gary Sinise), bows out due to possible exposure to measles, astronaut Jim Lovell (Tom Hanks) leads command module pilot Jack Swigert (Kevin Bacon) and lunar module driver Fred Haise (Bill Paxton) on what is slated as NASA’s third lunar landing mission. All goes smoothly until the craft is halfway through its mission, when an exploding oxygen tank threatens the crew’s oxygen and power supplies. As the courageous astronauts face the dilemma of either suffocating or freezing to death, Mattingly and Mission Control leader Gene Kranz (Ed Harris) struggle to find a way to bring the crew back home, all the while knowing that the spacemen face possible death once the battered ship reenters the Earth’s atmosphere. Even though the outcome, in which all three astronauts miraculously survived is historical fact the film derives suspense from the situation itself and from the actions of the heroic astronauts and the men on the ground.

Jeffrey Hoffman is Co-Director of the Massachusetts Space Grant Consortium at MIT’s Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics. Selected by NASA in January 1978, he became an astronaut in August 1979. Dr. Hoffman left the astronaut program in July 1997 to become NASA’s European Representative in Paris, where he served until August 2001.

Showing on April 29 at 7:00 p.m. in 26-100. From the Lecture Series Committee website. This movie is free.
It Pays to Ask: Negotiating in Difficult Times

Turbulent times create new challenges as well as opportunities for you and your organization. Do you know how and who to ask for what you need to succeed? One effective way to maintain a competitive advantage is to enhance your everyday negotiation skills. Women are constantly negotiating on the job—for a choice assignment, a new client, or more resources.

This talk takes place Tuesday, April 28, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. at Simmons College, Boston. For more information visit: http://www.simmons.edu/som/exceed/.

Taza Chocolate Open House

If you ever wanted to see the inside of a chocolate factory, now’s your chance! See where chocolate comes from. Get up close and personal with our candy-apple red Barth Sirocco roaster, learn what a winnowing machine does, and examine the hand-dressed grooves in the millstones of our vintage Mexican Molino. More importantly, you’ll get to taste every one of our products, and sip a tasty chocolate drink made with Taza Chocolate Mexicano.

Now the fine print: our factory is small and we anticipate a high turnout. Because we can only accommodate a certain number of people per tour, we recommend that you come early orlate in the day if you’re unable to wait. Families and children are welcome, but are encouraged to come early, as we will be busiest from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. And don’t forget to visit our gift shop—we’ll have lots of tasty chocolate and Mother’s Day gifts for sale, at factory discount prices.

Elsewhere in our building at 561 Windsor St., Peter Rinnig of QRST’s will be screen-printing custom T-shirts for visitors. And Shelley Barendes will spell out the art of letterpress, hand-printing creative designs on 100-year-old machines. Also, this year we’ve timed our open house to coincide with Somerville Open Studios 2009. View the work of over 300 artists, presented as a walking art tour across Cambridge and Somerville.

Can’t make it out? Head to our website and take a virtual tour instead. You’ll enjoy a 10 percent discount on all of our products all weekend long. Visit www.tazachocolate.com.

Taza Chocolate crafts small batch, bean-to-bar chocolate that is good for farmers and seriously delicious. We are proud to be the only producers of 100 percent stone ground, organic chocolate in the U.S. We cultivate direct relationships with our growers and work together with them to meet our high quality standards. Our commitment to Directtrade means we cut out the middleman, and we always pay a premium above Fair Trade prices. We make chocolate that is good to eat, clean for the planet, and fair to farmers.

This tour will take place Saturday, May 2, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Check Here for Green Power

Getting green power may be as easy as checking a box on your monthly energy bill. In the United States, approximately 600 of the nation’s power utilities do offer a green power option of one kind or another. For example, the local utility may buy wind or solar energy, and then pass it along to the consumer. Sometimes it will cost a bit more, but it helps support the industry’s efforts in obtaining clean, green power. Be sure to ask where their power is coming from before you sign up—it’s from a source such as waste coal, you are better off buying your credits from somewhere else. (Source: PlanetGreen.discovery.com)
Arthur Holcombe, President of the Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund addresses the crowd at the MIT Sustainability Summit last week. (Photo by S. Foote)

Recycling has never been easier! (Photo by S. Foote)