



**Lee Kuan Yew  
Model Student  
Award**



**Teo Gek Khim  
Azaleagrace**

***Higher Nitec in Interactive Design  
ITE College Central***

# Designed to Thrive

Azaleagrace's journey is a remarkable demonstration of resilience and self-driven achievement. From a challenging childhood, including three years in a therapeutic group home and two unsuccessful foster placements, she transformed adversity into a resolute drive for a better future. She overcame the disruption of repeating a year in secondary school, ultimately earning a place in the Nitec in Urban Greenery & Landscape course. To support herself, Azaleagrace took on a part-time job at a web solutions start-up, which propelled her into the world of web development. Armed with nothing but pure determination and hard work, she mastered a no-code platform to create web and mobile apps.

Witnessing the tangible impact of design on her clients' lives, Azaleagrace discovered her true calling. She chose to further her studies through the Higher Nitec in Interactive Design, simultaneously immersing herself in freelance UI/UX projects. Her internship at the same start-up provided real-world experience in project management and execution.

In her personal time, Azaleagrace dedicates herself to Owena, the alumni association of her former therapeutic group home where she advocates for trauma survivors. As secretary and pioneer member, she orchestrates fundraising and anniversary events, giving back to the community that shaped her. Her story reveals a tenacious spirit, driving her personal growth, and leading to both independence and a deep desire to contribute meaningfully to society.

## From the Heart

*"ITE students are not failures, they are just youth who may have met with roadblocks in their lives. ITE can help students shape their goals and give them the confidence to tackle whatever life throws at them. My hope is to inspire other students to bounce back from setbacks and achieve their goals."*

## Life after ITE

Azaleagrace is currently enrolled in the Diploma in Media, Arts and Design at Singapore Polytechnic, specialising in Experience and Product Design. After obtaining a diploma, she plans to continue working in the design sector and hopes to pursue a part-time degree in the future.

## Top Achievements

- A diligent student, Azaleagrace graduated with a perfect GPA of 4.0.
- Representing ITE at the M1 Asia Pacific Golf 2024 fundraising event, she and another schoolmate inspired more than 300 guests with their testimonials of financial challenges, successfully contributing to \$308,000 in donations for the ITE Education Fund.
- As a Harmony Champion, she co-organised the 'Rise Above Racism Roadshow 2024', an event that engaged more than 200 students in fostering racial harmony.
- During ITE Student Leaders Forum 2024, she spearheaded her team's PR and publicity efforts, directing photography and videography for their project. She was also the narrator for her college during the closing presentation of the forum.
- Recognised for her leadership qualities, she was appointed Vice President of Yoga Club, where she successfully managed yoga sessions, team-building events, and CCA roadshows.