

ADVISOR CONFIDENTIAL

DOUBLE TAKE

Working with the wealthy unleashes altruism.

BY HEIDI STASESON

THE 'FESS UP

Super Bowl Pick—Patriots or Giants: The Giants; definitely the underdog.

Choice Philanthropist: Bill Gates
As an immigrant, Canada stands for: Diversity

Winter Getaway: San Francisco—to see my sister.

Facebook or MySpace: Neither.

I prefer to network face-to-face.

First Set of Wheels: It was a week after I got my driver's licence, while attending the University of Texas. I was driving a Mercedes 190E, imported from Germany, with standard shift and custom rims. I picked it up from the dealership in Houston and drove it all the way back to Austin. It's not practical in this Canadian climate, so now I'm driving a Toyota RAV4—automatic, of course.

Change Purse or Couch Cracks: There is never any change in my couch!

BRIAN SUMMERS

It's little wonder Phaby Utomo is a financial advisor. People, problem-solving and preparedness are values she adopted early on while growing up in Indonesia. At the tender age of 10, her parents, eager to provide their children the finest of educations, packed their daughters' bags and set them on a plane to Singapore.

During the first year, Utomo and her 9-year-old sister lived with a foster family, until their father bought them an apartment and hired a maid to handle the cleaning and cooking. The sisters stayed there, home alone, for the next 10 years. "[In Canada], to think of a 9- and 10-year-old living on their own, is a bit out of this world," Utomo says.

But similar setups were the norm in her homeland. It wasn't as though the siblings resembled Macaulay Culkin-like urchins playing house, wild-eyed and mouths agape. "I was playing the role of eldest sister but at the same time taking responsibility of the household finances. My dad would come once a month to give me enough allowance for my tuition fees and for grocery money," Utomo recounts, adding she would even set curfews for her baby sister.

Though the pair would visit home once every few **continued on page 11**

PHABY UTOMO
UBS Wealth Management, director,
senior client advisor, Toronto

THE
VAULT

Texas Irony: Singapore is a very restricted country; it's a fine country—they put a fine on literally everything! You feel like you're constantly being watched. Moving to Texas was liberating.

PANIC AND PLAN

A major civil riot broke out in Indonesia in 1998. Rick, my husband-to-be and I were in Vancouver, taking a week off from our jobs at Citibank in Jakarta. He had just received his papers to land in Canada and he wanted to report himself to the government here. We'd only planned to be here a week but we were told the airports were closed and our families told us not to come back. We didn't have the funds to stay much longer in Canada. Someone we got to know during our trip graciously took us in for an extra week until it was safe enough to travel back. During that time, Rick decided we should get registered for marriage—so that when we went back to Indonesia he would be able to pull me out of the country if necessary. So we did. When I got back, after the riots, I could see some of the residuals, like buildings burning. That was my closest encounter to anything resembling a natural disaster.

I take the same view with investments. Planning is everything.

For a year-and-a-half she worked at World Vision Canada in Toronto, fundraising and coordinating, within a group, the efforts to help developing nations. But it didn't take long before she realized something was missing. "I didn't get to see who the beneficiaries were of my efforts," she explains. "I was essentially doing all the work behind the scenes, to make sure that someone living thousands of miles away would benefit from what I do. I missed that one-on-one interaction with clients and I realized I didn't need to do that as my career to give back to the world."

And with that, she found a new desk at UBS, helping wealthy clients in the way she once knew and loved, but this time realizing she could have a greater impact in helping them to give back themselves. "The better I do for them, the more they have [and] the more ability they have to give away," she explains, adding whether or not they do give away is beyond her control. "But I have invested my time in people who I believe in; who have good characters and are potentially long-term clients. I take the time to listen, and I believe that in the long run things do come back full circle," she says.

A logical modus operandi that most definitely completes her circle of giving—a role she describes as a luxury, an opportunity and a privilege. ^{AE}

STASESON

continued from page 9 months, they were living independent lives, going to school and taking part in various activities. Utomo, a Girl Guide, competed in school sports such as badminton, short distance running, and relay. Before she knew it, she was heading off to university—in Texas—where she concurs everything really is bigger, and better.

Though she's now a director and senior client advisor with UBS Wealth Management in Toronto, managing assets of \$43 million, Utomo says her fondest memories are those from her four-and-a-half-year stint attending the University of Texas, in Austin. She took a double degree in business administration and arts.

Her Texas time may not have involved any two-stepping like a city slicker disguised as ranch hand, but Utomo says her pride in the Dallas Cowboys, the San Antonio Spurs, and rooting for the U T Longhorns, while hissing at arch rival Texas A&M's Aggies, accounted for a significant chunk of her time there.

That joiner mentality prepared her to cultivate a career in capital markets. Starting out in financial services with Citibank Global Asset Management in Jakarta, Utomo worked primarily on the institutional sales side, handling asset management services for pension funds and insurance firms. In 1998, she married her fiancé, Rick, also from Indonesia, and two weeks later moved to Toronto, joining Citigroup's Canadian private banking arm.

Working with high-net-worth clients allowed Utomo to channel that early learned independence as well as her uncanny ability to prepare, anticipate and respond to problems in a timely manner. She developed a knack for intuiting people's behaviour. "That's helped me in my business. I've learned how to read people's body language and to respond accordingly; to bring to the table the soft skills in addition to the hard skills," she says.

Helping clients sail, not meander, became Utomo's central career motivator. Working one-on-one, discovering their passions and finding the proper balance of risk and return, while subtly reinforcing the value of giving back wealth, reigned supreme.

Yet, along with the stewardship of her clients' well-being, she had an overriding penchant for making a difference for those who needed it most—the poor of the world. Indeed, playing the role of child sponsor for many years with World Vision Canada was of equal importance to her career. Maintaining regular contact with foster children globally, and being able to see that her benevolence was making a direct impact, was the ultimate in fulfilment.

It was almost parallel to the inroads she'd seen her efforts yield with client livelihoods, but even more compelling. So much more that for awhile, Utomo decided to shift gears altogether, exit the financial services industry, and cross over to the NGO realm. "I really wanted to find the opportunity to give back. It's a different sense of fulfilment," she notes.