

# Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School

By Szymon Mikulski and Esther Low

The Duke-NUS Student Council serves as a channel through which students can engage in the formulation of institutional policies which impact academic and student affairs at Duke-NUS. The Student Council's team of five is elected annually to represent the student body and advocate on its behalf. In addition, we oversee the planning and execution of school-wide student welfare events and community service activities, authorise and support student initiatives, as well as maintain relations with our counterparts at the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, Duke University, SMA and other professional organisations.

The Student Council is committed to serve all Duke-NUS students, in the MD, PhD and MD/PhD programmes alike. It also works closely with the Duke-NUS administration to improve student life, refine the curriculum, foster professional development and facilitate interaction between students, faculty, and the greater medical community in Singapore.

To that end, the Student Council actively collects student feedback and makes appointments with various student and joint student-faculty committees, and task forces, thus enabling students to collectively express their views on matters of general interest to the student population. For example, just this month, members of the Student Council participated in a feedback session with the Minister of Health, Mr Gan Kim Yong, on the vision for postgraduate medical training in Singapore. With the transition towards Academic Medicine underway across all clusters, residency training prospects continue to occupy the forefront of many students' attention. For that reason, we are grateful for this recent opportunity to engage with the leadership and to establish a two-way communication process. At the same time, we hope that, as major stakeholders in this transition process, students and trainees will continue to be perceived as partners sharing the common goal of developing academic medical centers equipped to provide the best healthcare for Singaporeans and state-of-the-art education for future generations of doctors.

As a young institution, Duke-NUS is rapidly progressing, relatively unencumbered by inertia, and therefore, always welcomes students' constructive contributions. Likewise, the Student Council must be sensitive to ongoing developments,

# GAME PLAN 2013

***Student leaders from the two local medical schools share what their respective student organisations have achieved thus far and their goals for the upcoming year.***

and adapt to the changing needs and expectations of the student population. As the Student Council completes its fifth year of existence, its operational context has matured towards greater stability and predictability for the students. Thus, in the coming years, we expect the primary role and mission of the Student Council to gradually de-emphasise acute problem-solving and to address long term goals.

Due to its condensed design, the Duke-NUS curriculum is particularly demanding. One can become easily caught up amongst the seemingly never-ending exams and countless deadlines, forgetting that there is more to medical school than academic achievement. One of our goals as the Student Council is to remind our students to work hard, so that they can play even harder. Going forward, the Student Council will continue to promote vertical integration across students in all four years. In doing so, we hope to strengthen the sense of community and, in the long term, to nurture a Duke-NUS identity and foster a school culture dedicated to personal growth, as well as excellence in patient care, research and education. We hope that this will serve as a professional and social resource for future batches of Duke-NUS students and alumni alike. **SMA**



*Szymon is a fourth year medical student at Duke-NUS, and is currently President of the Duke-NUS Student Council. Esther is a third year medical student at Duke-NUS, and is currently Vice President (Welfare) of the Duke-NUS Student Council.*

## Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine

By Charles Ong and Lee Zi Yao

For 64 years and counting, the Medical Society (MedSoc) of the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSoM) has enriched medical student life through sporting, literary, social and community service activities. The past year has been no different. With your gracious support, we have been able to reach out to more communities, both locally and abroad, through projects such as the Public Health Screening and Project Lokun. Our sporting calendar was full throughout the year, with the Inter-Faculty Games, Inter-House/Intra-Faculty Games and the Malaya University-National University of Singapore Games. Moreover, before one forgets, our friends over at the Bukit Timah Campus also do their best to keep us busy with the annual Medicine-Law

Games and Debates. The past year has been packed with academic talks, workshops and conferences. In total, over 70 projects and events were held.

Undoubtedly, we have achieved a lot. However, the year ahead presents fresh challenges and demands. In the coming year, we hope to strengthen our identity – as a school, as a student body and as a Medical Society. We want to make this place more than just a school because this is where we learn our most valuable life lessons, where we test and build our characters, and where we form the most cherished friendships. To us, it also means thinking beyond medical school and reaching out to our future colleagues. The coming year will see continued active engagement with the Duke-NUS Student Council through various activities, such as the annual Medicine Debate, and the start of our ties with the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine through freshmen orientation activities. These activities serve to underscore the three schools' common eventual purpose – to serve patients.

We realise that to make this place more than just a school, we also have to reach out to those who have graduated. Here, we're talking about doctors who still have an interest in the school and who genuinely wish to help out. One key goal of our term is to build a strong alumni network for YLLSoM. We want our graduates to feel more connected to the place where they have spent five years of their lives.

While we aim to do more to take care of our graduates, we will not forget about our schoolmates. The work on the house system – a new initiative aimed at providing a social platform for all medical students – will continue. MedSoc will continue to champion students' rights and be the voice of the student body. From issues that range from student study spaces to career guidance, we want our schoolmates to be involved in advocating the changes they believe will improve their day-to-day experiences in school.

Medical school, as we all know, is tough. We want to smoothen the process as much as possible for our schoolmates and create lasting memories beyond the classroom and wards. With support from everyone, we truly want to make YLLSoM more than just a school.

Visit our website at <http://medsoc.tumblr.com> if you want to find out more about our activities for the upcoming year 2013. **SMA**



*Charles (left) and Zi Yao are both third year medical students at YLLSoM, and the current President and Vice President of YLLSoM's MedSoc respectively.*