

SUPPORTING OUR MEDICAL STUDENTS

IN EXTRAORDINARY TIMES



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It's been a year like no other. A year when a virus ravaged the world's population like no other before in recent times.

In the context of the economic fallout, SMA Charity Fund (SMACF) has once again stepped up to the fore in support of needy medical students at our three local medical schools.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we were able to support 55 medical students with SMA-Medical Students' Assistance Fund (SMA-MSAF) bursaries this year. In view of the Safe Management Measures, we met up with our bursary recipients virtually, with the event graced by SMACF Chairman Dr Chong Yeh Woei.

At this inaugural virtual event, Dr Chong delivered an impassioned speech on why diversity in the medical profession is critically important and urged the recipients present to pick up languages like Mandarin, Malay and Tamil, as well as dialects, if possible, so as to form a natural bond and connection with patients under their care. Dr Chong also shared that the aim of the SMACF was to try to address inequality by levelling the playing field in Singapore, particularly in the medical community.

Also present at this event were Dr Roland Xu, SMACF Board Member and a past SMA-MSAF bursary recipient, as well as Dr Ivan Low, SMA Council Member and a representation of the young doctors volunteering their time in SMA. Both Dr Xu and Dr Low shared some insights on their medical journey

thus far and offered their support should the recipients need any advice on their journey.

In this unique setting, more than 40 recipients, comprising medical students in different phases of their medical journey, came together to share their aspirations, dreams and why they chose to embark on medicine as their chosen profession. We could see, through their words and their eyes, the steely determination to make a difference, in spite of the challenges they faced.

An interesting question and answer segment ensued, where questions were asked of the students' hobbies and other extracurricular pursuits as Dr Chong sought to get to know the recipients more intimately. This uncovered some

very interesting pursuits like baking, volunteering at Meet-the-People Sessions and music, as well as a former fitness coach who offers fitness tips on his YouTube channel. As the event continued, we became more relaxed and shared much laughter especially when the recipients shared more on their interesting pursuits.

The evening concluded with a group photograph of all present. As always, it's been a wonderful gathering of like-minded people who hope to make a difference to the community at large here in Singapore. Together we can! ◆

Legend

1. Academic year 2020 bursary recipients at the inaugural Meet the Chairman virtual event on 30 October 2020.

