

MEDIC WEEK 2000 - 23 JAN TO 2 FEB 2000



Medic Week 2000 was a series of 5 events organized by students of the Medical Society, NUS early this year. The overall charitable aim was to raise funds for The Children's Cancer Foundation, Dover Park Hospice and the Alumni Association Rotating Professorship Fund. Over a period of 10 days, over 120 medical students from both clinical and non-clinical years participated in the organization of the 5 events, which included a Free Public Health Screening, a Medic Band Concert, a Medic Bazaar, a Community Service Day, and the Medic Play.

Free Public Health Screening

The Free Public Health Screening was the maiden event for Medic Week 2000. Held on 23 Jan 2000 at Suntec City, it was the culmination of weeks and months of planning. The aim of this event was to screen the public for common diseases in Singapore like cardiovascular diseases and diabetes mellitus, and to promote the importance of healthy lifestyle and good health.

The health screening included BMI measurements and tests for blood pressure, blood glucose, and body fat percentage. The doctors would then analyse the results and advise the public. There was also a colorful and informative health exhibition, which attracted and captivated everyone. Furthermore, delightful freebies were given to the participants, and attractive prizes were awarded to those who won the 'guess the number of cigarettes' contest.

The response to this event was overwhelming. From 11 am to 7 pm, we managed to screen some 600 members of the public of different age groups and from all walks of life, rendering valuable service to the public.

This successful event was an inspirational milestone in the MedSoc history. It will be the motivation and the driving force for all future MedSoc endeavors.

The Medic Band Concert featuring the New Millennium Artistes

Some of the greatest musicians, though not from the rock or pop genre, nearly became doctors; conversely some of the best doctors, if not adept musicians themselves know, and enjoy their music very well indeed. In this, their second public concert, the Medic-Band, Medicine Faculty's one and only rock and pop band showed that performing held no terrors for them. Performing alongside them were the 6 up-and-coming *New Millennium* artistes – Cai Lizhang, Wayne Lim, Lydia Koh, Lorraine Tan, Cai Chunjia and Juliet Pang, all outstanding singers, and competition-winners in their own right. Although the Health Checkup at Suntec City preceded the concert by two days, the official opening of Medic-Week was to be on this night. Dean of Medicine Prof Tan Chorh Chuan graced the occasion with a short but meaningful speech, kicking off what was to be a truly memorable concert on all fronts. If the M1 and M2 Medic-Band out-sang and out-played themselves in front of the great full-house audience in the first half, the New Millennium Artistes and the M3 and M4 members brought the level of entertainment to another level altogether in the second. No chopped liver, our guys, but these dudes were another thing, vocally and instrumentally. Leaving NUS theatre, one couldn't help but think "Medicine heals the body, music the soul" – how true.

MEDIC BAZAAR

On 26 & 27 January, the NUS science foyer was home to the Medic Week bazaar. Despite its short 2-day lifespan, the bazaar raked in revenues of over \$7,000, with part of the proceeds going to the Children's Cancer Foundation, Dover Park Hospice and the Alumni Association Rotating Professorship Fund.

The Bazaar saw a myriad of different wares being peddled by their enthusiastic stall keepers. One could find colourful sari-skirts, handphone accessories, and even an apple-peeling machine! Many of those who were transversing the science foyer fell prey to the food stalls which were dishing out delicious delights like Portuguese egg tarts, Haagen Dazs ice cream, chappati and rice pancakes. Crafts, cookies and almond-centred chocolate made by the patients and staff of Dover Park Hospice were also on sale. Those seeking wisdom (mainly the clinical students and staff members) were drawn towards the McGraw-Hill books, some of which were heavily discounted.

Exhibitions were also put up to educate the public about heart diseases, cancer and smoking. A competition to guess the number of cigarettes in a large reinforced the anti-smoking point. In an attempt to raise awareness on campus of bone marrow transplantation, a bone marrow donation drive was held. Thanks to the heartwarming response of the NUS staff and students and Dr Ren Ee Chee and his team of staff, the drive was a successful one. There were 70 donors over 2 days!

This Bazaar not only saw the willingness of the NUS staff and students in supporting a worthy cause by patronising the stalls. It also saw the willingness and enthusiasm of the many M1 and M2 students (at least 150 were involved) who volunteered their time and energy, be it by organising the bazaar or manning the stalls and exhibits. It was truly a class act!

COMMUNITY SERVICE DAY

Community Service Day was held on 26 January 2000 with a group of 40 enthusiastic Year 1 and Year 2 medical students celebrating the millennium's first Chinese New Year with 25 patients from Hospice Care Association and Dover Park Hospice.

"To do good, to bring cheers" – that's what the volunteers carry in their hearts. The caring student volunteers accompanied the patients for a shopping trip at Suntec City and filled the patients' bags with goodies in preparation for the Chinese New Year. All the patients were presented with a hongbao of \$30 for their shopping. They were divided into five small groups so as to enable the students to interact with the patients better. New friendships blossomed as the students extended helping hands to assist the patients in selecting New Year cookies, clothes and other daily groceries from the display shelves. Enjoyable chats and laughters filled the corridors of the shopping centre as all the volunteers and patients immersed themselves in the festive mood of the Chinese New Year.

To round off the day, the volunteers and the patients also had an early Reunion Dinner at a vegetarian restaurant together. Special and prior arrangement for preparation of a nutritional and appetizing meal was made. All chatted and joked about the various encounters of the day with one

another as they reminisced about their shopping trip made in the earlier part of the day.

As medical students, we felt privileged to be part of this event and to share the festive joy of Chinese New Year with the patients. The greatest joy is to learn that the patients had enjoyed the shopping trip as well as the food, which was specially catered for them. The smiles on the faces of the patients were heart-warming gestures of thanks and appreciation to the students; perhaps, that was the greatest gift for all the medical students who had made this outing a memorable event for each and every patient.

The Medic Play "*To Freedom with Love*" marks the grand finale of Medic Week 2000. The idea of doing a play was received enthusiastically following the success of another public play, "A Tomb with a View" two years ago, and the interest generated by the annual Faculty of Medicine Shield (FMS) Playhouse inter-level competitions. A play was seen as a unique event, and would showcase the artistic talents of medical students.

Held on the 1 & 2 February, at Jubilee Hall, Raffles Hotel, "*To Freedom with Love*" was received enthusiastically; with tickets selling out on the first night, and 90% seating on the second night. Dr Tony Tan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, graced the occasion as the Guest-of-Honour. Professor Lim Pin, Vice Chancellor of NUS, also attended the play.

"To Freedom With Love" features 3 one-act plays, "I am Selva", "To Love and Be Loved", and "He Is Listening", adapted from Professor Arthur Lim's book "From A Doctor's Diary". The plays had all the ingredients for a stirring, entertaining evening, embracing the universal themes of freedom, love, and friendship. The storyline examines the relationships the protagonist, Ming, shares with his friends, as well as a fleeting romance between himself and a lounge hostess. Brutally truthful, sensual and poignant all at once, the plays give an exquisite depiction of the life of a young medical student during those difficult times, and vividly portray the significant moments that influenced his life thereafter.

"To Freedom with Love" saw tremendous student participation, drawing at least 70 students throughout the various years. Given the short time frame of about 2 months, our fellow colleagues worked extremely hard to put up a first class performance. Their dedication is especially commendable considering our heavy academic workload. It is indeed heartening to see such unity of mind and spirit towards a charitable cause.

In addition, "To Freedom with Love" is unique because this is the first time we are seeing a joint effort between medical students and alumni members in a major project. This bodes well in forging an important link between members of the medical fraternity, and will form the basis of collaboration in future projects.

"To Freedom with Love" will set the benchmark for future stage events organised by students. We have gotten professional guidance from our Director, Nicholas Lee, of "Under One Roof" fame and production support from "Behind the Scenes", a local production company, well known for its involvement in "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Coat", numerous corporate productions and concerts.

The success of "To Freedom with Love" can only be measured by the favourable reviews accorded by the audience and the press; as well as the funds that we have helped to raise for our beneficiaries. It was indeed an enriching and fulfilling experience for all involved, and a true embodiment of the medicine spirit!

We would like to thank all our the generous sponsors for their support of Medic Week 2000.

We would also like to express our utmost gratitude to Prof Arthur Lim for giving us invaluable assistance, advice and guidance for the Medic Play, and also for his contributions to the Community Service Day.



Free Public Health Screening at Suntec City.



Sharing the festive joy with the patients at Dover Park Hospice.



Medic Play – "To Freedom with Love "