

Citation of Professor Feng Pao Hsii

2000 SMA Lecturer

By A/Prof Low Cheng Hock

Sixty-four years ago a star was born, destined to light up the medical world in Singapore. The star has sparkled to become a giant, literally, metaphorically, and physically.



A/P Goh Lee Gan (right) presents the gold medal to Prof Feng Pao Hsii.

It is my great privilege and honour to present to you the SMA Orator for the millennium year 2000 - Professor Feng Pao Hsii.

Professor Feng is a gentleman, a scholar, and above all a great physician. The fact that a surgeon is standing here to deliver this citation is a testimony of the wide respect he commands across the entire medical community.

Sixty-four years (and 4 days, 31 Oct 1936) ago a star was born, destined to light up the medical world in Singapore. The star has sparkled to become a giant, literally, metaphorically, and physically.

Professor Feng began his medical education in Hong Kong. But his love for his homeland brought him back to Singapore, and in 1960, he graduated from the University of Malaya in Singapore. His brilliant career began with his scholarship to do MRCP in Glasgow in 1964. He started as a pioneer nephrologist. However very soon after, he fell in love with a beautiful butterfly. The name of the butterfly is called 'Systemic Lupus Erythematosus' (SLE).

That love led him to undertake the challenging journey to become a Rheumatologist. His knowledge and expertise in Rheumatology is legendary and is internationally recognised. (He obtained his MD in 1986 on the subject of this beautiful butterfly SLE). He went on to establish Singapore's first and only Department of Rheumatology and Immunology in 1992 at Tan Tock Seng Hospital. Today, he is acclaimed as the father of Rheumatology in Singapore.

He is still very active in clinical practice. Currently he is the advisor and Senior Consultant in the Rheumatology Department, and is the Director of Clinical Research at Tan Tock Seng Hospital. Previously he has held the position of Chairman of the Medical Board. He holds the fellowship of six internationally esteemed Colleges of Physicians.

Talking of butterflies, there is a saying which states, "Happiness is like a butterfly, the more you chase after it, the more it flies away. If you do your work quietly and peacefully, happiness, like butterflies, will come and settle upon you."

Professor Feng never chased after awards and honours, but, through his dedication, and total commitment to science and medicine, honour and awards kept descending upon him.

Among the many distinguished honours he has received are:

1. the Albert Lim Gold Medal from the College of General Practitioners
2. the Galloway Memorial Lectureship
3. the Seah Cheng Siang Lectureship
4. the TTSH Lecture, and today
5. the SMA Lecture 2000

In recognition of his vast contributions to public services, he was awarded the Singapore Government Public Administration Medal (Silver) in 1986 and (Gold) in 1997.

He was the Editor of the Singapore Medical Journal (SMJ) for twelve years and currently he is the Editor of APLAR (Journal of Rheumatology).

His membership in professional bodies, and the number of organisations he served, and the 120 publications he authored and co-authored, is so long that if I start listing them, Prof Feng will have no opportunity to deliver his lecture.

Professor Feng may appear stern at times, but beneath that stern facade is a heart that is gentle, soft and loving.

There is a belief that years of clinical practice may sometimes harden our hearts and numb our souls. Prof Feng's heart is neither numbed nor hardened. He constantly lubricate it with love and compassion. Those who have been so fortunate enough to be under his tutelage will testify to his care and concern for their welfare, and his quiet gentleness for his patients. Prof Feng is truly a great physician, a resourceful researcher, and an excellent teacher.

I cannot end this short citation without reminding you of that ancient saying "Behind every great man, there is a great lady."

Prof Feng is no exception. Mrs Feng Pao Hsii, or Alice, as we all love to call her, is a great lady in her own right. Besides being an entrepreneur, once, she also has an artistic talent. She is a well known Chinese Opera Artist, and her voice has thrilled many hearts. I am sure her beautiful voice has soothed Prof Feng's heart and soul on many a tired day.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is now my great pleasure and honour to invite Prof Feng Pao Hsii to deliver the SMA Lecture entitled, "Medicine in the Digital Era – Opportunities and Challenges". ■