



Duke-NUS – Growing a Community

By Anu Pandey and Dypti Lulla

THE DUKE-NUS Graduate Medical School Student Council (comprising five council members, four class presidents and an MD/PhD representative) meets at least once a month to discuss issues and activities related to the student body. We work closely with Student Affairs to plan and organise activities as well as review proposals for various projects, and are very fortunate to have a newly appointed Dean for Student Life, Dr Mara McAdams, who is a strong advocate for our students, working energetically with us to foster the Duke-NUS community spirit. As our alumni community grows, we are also excited to engage them in our various programmes.

Over the past year, the Duke-NUS community actively built ties with the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSoM) and other tertiary organisations, while giving back to the community through various projects:

- Our students from Eugene Stead College worked together with the Chinese Development Assistance Council to organise a health screening for more than 300 people.
- Our paediatric interest group launched the Bravery Beads programme at KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital for paediatric oncology patients.
- Our overseas service learning trip was renamed DOVE, and made its first trip to Vietnam earlier this year (read more about it in Brian Chan’s article on page 40).

The Student Council also started a Student Council Bursary, which aims to encourage recipients to play an active role within the school community. During this year’s Annual Giving Campaign, which serves as a platform for both students and staff to raise funds for an identified

cause, Presidents of the Classes of 2015 and 2016 led their classmates in valiant efforts to raise funds for student aid.

The annual Medicine Debates organised by SMA provided us with the wonderful opportunity to interact with counterparts from YLLSoM. Besides that, the closed-door dialogue session that we held together with SMA earlier this year also showcased the Association’s willingness to discuss some of the more sensitive, but pertinent, issues at hand. We think these events add to the richness and diversity of our experience as medical students, and hope for continued collegiality when we are serving our patients collaboratively in the near future.

While Duke-NUS students work and play hard, we also have residency at the front of our minds, with worries about placement in the programme of our choice, or wondering which one is the right match. As the number of medical students in Singapore increases, we also wonder if there will be adequate training opportunities in the hospitals for all. We also met with the Minister for Health, and shared some of our challenges and concerns with him.

Our achievements stem from the hard work of our students, and the Council works to link students up with the resources and personnel they need. Moving forward, our goals would be to work more closely with our alumni, and to foster stronger relationships with fellow medical students at YLLSoM and the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine. We look forward to a year full of energy and activity! ■



Anu (inset, left) is starting her final year at Duke-NUS, and is the President of the Student Council. Dypti, from the Class of 2016, is Vice President of Welfare of the Duke-NUS Student Council.