



A HELPING HAND

• FOR OUR ASPIRING MEDICAL DOCTORS •

Seven medical students from Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School (Duke-NUS) were awarded the SMA Medical Students' Assistance Fund (SMA-MSAF) this year, almost doubling the awards given out to Duke-NUS students in 2014.

The bursary, a programme now under SMA Charity Fund (SMACF), was first awarded to medical students in Duke-NUS last year. Both new and existing medical students in the school are eligible to apply for the bursary. Applicants are then reviewed and assessed based on their financial situation.

One of the recipients, Ms Samantha Sim, a medical student in the AY2015/16 intake at Duke-NUS who graduated with a Bachelor of Science (Honours) specialising in Molecular and Cell Biology, from the National University of Singapore, shares more about her passion for medicine and how the bursary would impact her life.

HEARING FROM SAMANTHA

The main motivation behind my pursuit of medicine is the desire to help others. I first experienced the joy of helping others medically when I joined the St John Ambulance Brigade. Besides my desire to help others, I was also motivated by my interest in biology. The current emphasis on translational medicine attracted me and I decided to take my passion a step further. I would like to be able to balance both of my interests — helping people in a clinical setting and improving the treatment and diagnosis of life-compromising diseases through research.

By enrolling in Duke-NUS's Doctor of Medicine (MD) programme, I hope to acquire the necessary clinical and research skills to contribute to

Singapore's healthcare as a clinician scientist. As I have a great interest in psychiatry, I hope to learn more about treating mood disorders and participating in relevant researches during my MD programme, and aim to be a psychiatrist specialising in mood disorders upon graduation. I endeavour not only to treat patients clinically, but also to create more awareness about mental illnesses, which would hopefully alleviate the stigmatisation which is evident in our society.

During my undergraduate years, I taught the *guzheng* and actively performed at several public and private events as a means of income. Some of the most memorable events include:

- BILA World HQ 5th Meeting of the Fourth Board of Directors at Suntec Convention Hall (October 2009)
- First Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant (HSCT) Patients/Donors Reunion and Launch of HSCT Support Group at National University Hospital (October 2009)
- People's Association Youth Movement YOUths Care —

Project YEA (Youths of Eunios in Action) at Eunios Community Centre (October 2011)

It has been a challenging task having to balance my studies with the need to take on such assignments to help the financial situation at home. When I first heard of the SMA-MSAF bursary through an email from Duke-NUS, I immediately applied for it.

With this bursary, I hope to reduce my *guzheng* engagements and to dedicate more time to my studies. The acceptance into Duke-NUS and the financial help from SMA-MSAF have given me the chance to take my love of helping others to the next level. I am determined to give my best and make a difference in healthcare! ♦

Donation towards SMA-MSAF can be made online via the SG Gives website at <https://www.sggives.org/smacf> or by cheque or credit card donations. The donation form is available on our website at <https://www.sma.org.sg/smacares>



PROFILE

TEXT BY

JENNIFER LEE

Deputy Manager,
SMA Charity Fund

Legend

1. Samantha performing the *guzheng*