

# Healthcare Humanity Awards

## CELEBRATING THE WINNERS



Text by Dr Tina Tan

For those of us who worked through the SARS outbreak in 2003, there are often sad and traumatic memories. Yet, one of the bright spots from back then was the setting up of The Courage Fund, which helped support those affected by SARS. An offshoot of The Courage Fund's legacy is the Healthcare Humanity Awards. These awards are given out to those in the healthcare profession who stand out because of their dedication and the values they impart through their work. Incidentally, for those who may have missed it, *SMA News* interviewed former SMA President Prof Low Cheng Hock earlier this year, where he talked about his involvement with The Courage Fund (<https://bit.ly/5208-Feature>).

Fast forward 17 years to 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic, I was privileged to attend the Healthcare Humanity Awards ceremony on 8 December on behalf of SMA. In usual fashion, it was held virtually due to COVID-19-related restrictions. Despite the virtual awards ceremony not being quite the same as a live show, I found myself drawn to the featured stories of the award winners. Some of the doctor recipients included Dr Jamie Phang, Dr Joanna Chan, Dr Dennis Chia and Prof Lim Poh Lian.

There is a common theme running through their stories: a drive to benefit patients by changing the status quo for

the better. These folks saw something that could be done better, and rather than complain about it, they sacrificed their time and effort to research, strategise and implement changes. In other words, they were the change they wanted to be.

I'll admit I'm not much of a change-maker. But stories like those of the award winners' inspire me to continue the daily grind of my work, knowing that in every setting, there is someone out there going against the flow (or perhaps just kicking up some turbulence), for the betterment of our patients and society as a whole.

This theme will be especially relevant this year, when times are challenging for everyone involved. Each year's winners were selected from nominations submitted the year before. Can you imagine the stories we'll get to hear from this year's winners? I am sincerely looking forward to that.

"I wish I had superpowers," said my eldest, after we had watched part of *X-Men: First Class* together. How would you respond if your kids made the same comment?

I shan't reveal my off-the-cuff answer (because I honestly don't remember what it was). But here is what my ideal, mummy-scores-points answer would have been: "Humans can do a lot of remarkable and amazing things when challenged. Perhaps the difference is

that while humans can't accomplish something as show-stopping and eye-catching as the *X-Men*, the results are stunning all the same."

A big congratulations to the award winners, and to their predecessors who enabled these awards to come into existence. ♦

Dr Tan is a psychiatrist with the Better Life Psychological Medicine Clinic, and a visiting consultant at the Institute of Mental Health. She is also an alumnus of Duke-NUS Medical School. Between work and family life, she squeezes time out for her favourite pastimes – reading a good (fiction) book and writing.

