

16 MOH HOLDINGS

Making a positive impact

Koh Xiang Ting ventured into healthcare after volunteering at the Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore. Working with people with intellectual disabilities made her think about how she could help them beyond conducting exercise sessions.

"I learnt more about occupational therapy when I went for the Healthcare Attachment Programme organised by MOH Holdings. We were brought to the Hand Therapy department at Changi General Hospital. I was so inspired that I decided to pursue a degree in this field at Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT)," said the 20-year-old, who shares more here.

Tell us about SIT's programme.

The four-year occupational therapy degree programme comprises three terms per year, with clinical placements every third term.

As an occupational therapist (OT), one of our roles is to help people to regain their physical function, allowing them to return to their lives prior to their injury or disease. Intervention methods are diverse and include

home modification, rehabilitation services and counselling.

What are the benefits of being a Health Merit Award Scholar?

I get to meet members of the community whom I would eventually work with. The award also funded my week-long study trip to Hong Kong, where I examined the city's rehabilitation services and its healthcare system. I learnt that OTs have to work closely with other professionals, like engineers and social workers, due to the diverse nature of their job.

What are some challenges that OTs face?

That would be having so many options to work with that they are not sure where to start. There is no one definite way to treat a patient as each person's environment and personality are different. Rehabilitation takes a long time, so resilience and patience are traits that an OT should have. Helping others regain the confidence to return to their daily lives gives me satisfaction.



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