

# SIT Students Get Increasing Support from Private Donors

*Philanthropic support for students has grown since the first cohort was admitted in 2010.*

From a starting base of zero in 2010, private donors have since made gifts to Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) to establish six scholarships to encourage excellence, 12 bursaries and study grants in aid of students facing financial difficulties and 19 performance awards such as outstanding student awards, gold medals and book prizes to recognise good academic performance.

There is now even an emergency fund to assist full-time SIT students who encounter unforeseen financial emergencies or personal catastrophes that may prevent them from continuing their education and graduating from SIT. The Xiao De (孝德) Emergency fund was made possible by a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Some of these gifts are endowed to benefit SIT students in perpetuity. What this means is that only the income generated by such gifts will be disbursed to recipients leaving the initial capital sum untouched, continuing to generate on-going income.

Another interesting point to note is that all private gifts to SIT attract a Government Matching Grant which in effect multiplies the sum bestowed.

So far, a total of 122 SIT students have benefitted as scholarship holders, performance award winners, bursary and grant recipients. Supported by philanthropic giving, these awards are bond-free.

While the total quantum of private gifts that SIT has received to date is as yet modest, the growing interest from donors is an encouraging start for a new institution in its formative years.

Prof Tan Thiam Soon, President, SIT, said, "We are very grateful for this support from private donors. Their giving toward scholarships and awards to recognise good academic performance will encourage our students to fulfil their greatest potential."

"The gifts toward student financial aid are especially crucial for many talented SIT students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. More than three quarters of our students who matriculated in the Academic Year 2013 come from households

with a per capita income (PCI) that is below the 2012 National Median PCI of S\$2,130. Such gifts help ensure that all deserving students are able to access a quality education, regardless of their financial circumstances."

Donors are now not only giving more, they are also taking a deeper interest in the students they support. More donors are now attending donor stewardship events (organised all year round by SIT's Advancement & Alumni Division) where they get to meet their student beneficiaries face to face, and vice versa.

Among these donors is Mr Choo Chiau Beng, whose philanthropic support has made possible the Choo Chiau Beng Outstanding Student Award in Naval

Architecture, the Choo Chiau Beng Overseas Immersion Programme Scholarship Fund, and the Choo Chiau Beng Bursary at SIT.

Said Mr Choo, "I hope the outstanding student award will encourage deserving students to strive for academic excellence, and that the scholarship will enable them to access a quality specialist education that gives them international exposure through a good Overseas Immersion Programme. In time, the industries will also benefit from

having workplace-ready, practice-oriented and globally-oriented talents to drive their growth."

"It is important that we nurture a diverse pool of talents to fuel our economy and encourage upward social mobility. Giving to education is an investment for the future that will transform society and I am happy to support outstanding and deserving students at SIT."



Recipients of the KKH Scholarship and Wilmar Scholarship awards: (front row from left) Saihah Binte Mohamed Salleh, Lam Hue Chi, Goh Su Fong, Chia Pei Fen and Low Mei Liang. Back row from left: Mr Woon Kok Meng, Ling Qiurong, Alvin Ee Wei Liang, Ms Jocelyn Ang, Mark Lee See Min, Mr Kuok Khoon Hong, Mr Tay Thiam Peng, Prof Tan Thiam Soon, Yeo Han Ming, Chua Chong Huan, Lee Poh Sein and Prof Patrick Chua.

## SOME OF THESE GIFTS ARE ENDOWED TO BENEFIT SIT STUDENTS IN PERPETUITY.

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## LIFE CHANGING GIFTS

'Thanks to the Wilmar Scholarship, I no longer had to juggle my time between work and my studies. I was able to engage more fully in my student life and thereby benefit from it – something that I had missed out on during my polytechnic days because I had to take up multiple part-time jobs to finance my studies. This scholarship also gave me an extra boost of confidence. I am glad that I was empowered to achieve better grades and attain First Class Honors in my final semester. Being the holder of a scholarship supported by a renowned multi-national company has definitely benefitted me in my job hunting process as well. I was looked upon favourably by potential employers.'

**- Ms Goh Su Fong, Wilmar Scholar**  
*B Eng (Hons) Chemical Engineering  
Newcastle University, Class of 2013*

'It was not easy for me to pursue nutrition as I had to take a longer route. Nevertheless, I made the decision of going to Singapore Polytechnic to do a Diploma in Nutrition, Health and Wellness, instead of getting a degree in a university right after completing my A-Levels. Going overseas was the only way to become a nutritionist/dietitian, but the costs were prohibitive. Thus, the KKH Scholarship is a great encouragement and help to me; allowing me to continue pursuing my passion and motivating me to continue to strive for excellence in my studies.'

**- Ms Ling Qiurong, KKH Scholar**  
*BSc (Hons) Food & Human Nutrition,  
Newcastle University, First year student*