

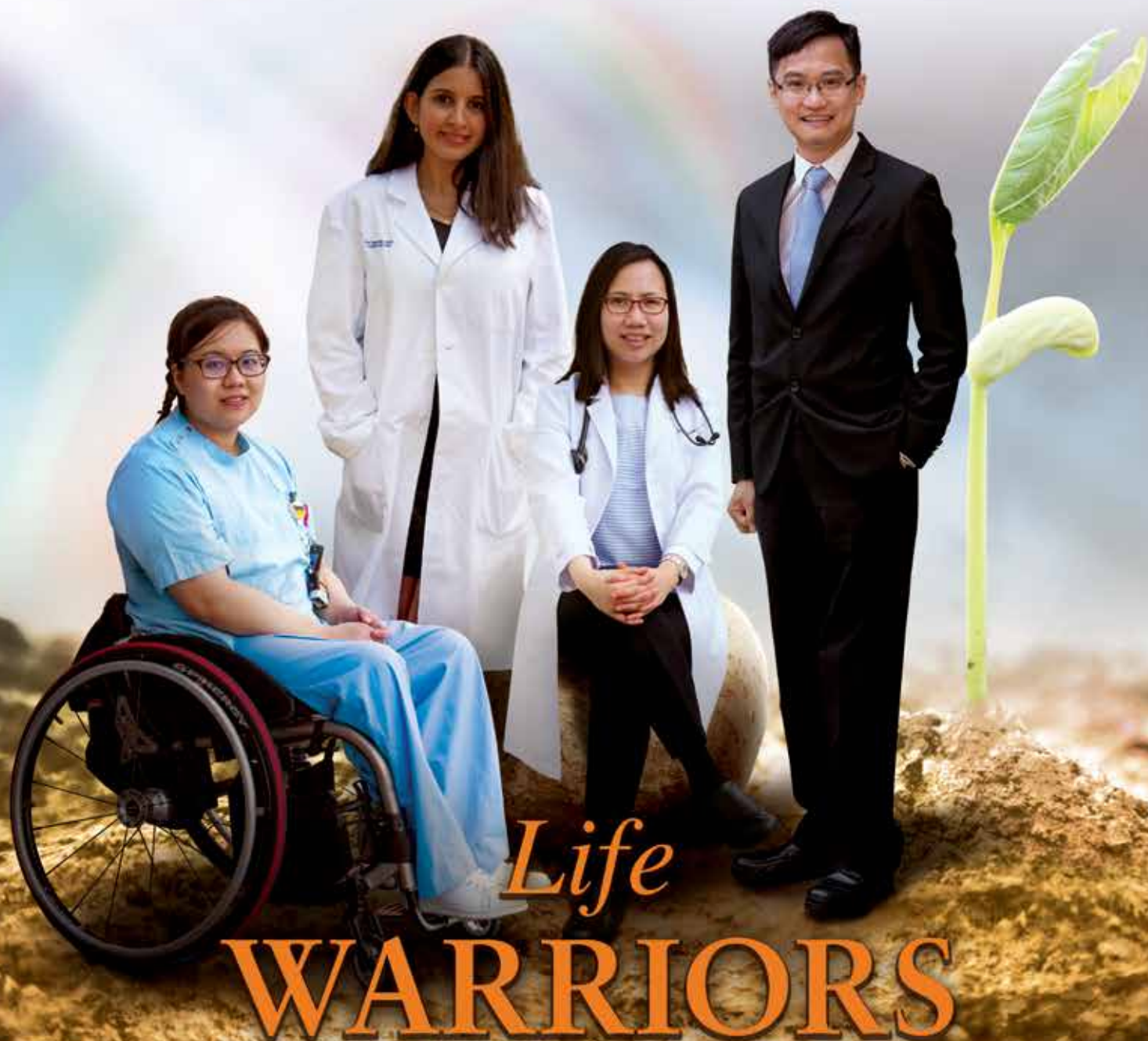


香港中文大學
The Chinese University of Hong Kong



香港中文大學醫學院
Faculty of Medicine
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

CUHK MEDICAL ALUMNI newsletter



Life
WARRIORS

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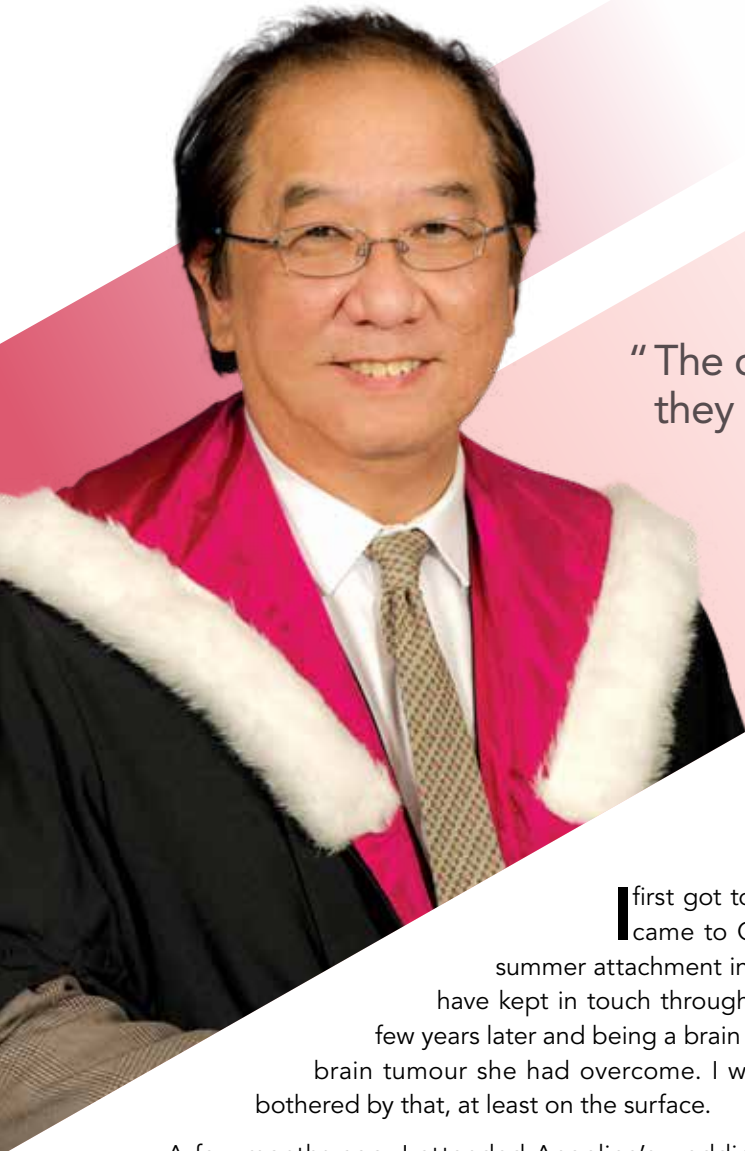
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WELCOME MESSAGE

“The commonality among all of them is that they always gave it their all.”

- Professor Ng Ho-keung

吳浩強教授

Associate Dean (Education)

I first got to know Angeline Lo (featured in this issue) a year before she came to CUHK. She was seconded by her secondary school to do a summer attachment in our Department. We got to know each other really well and have kept in touch throughout the years. I found out about her past medical history a few years later and being a brain tumour specialist, I was very curious about the rare malignant brain tumour she had overcome. I was struck by the fact that she never came across as being bothered by that, at least on the surface.

A few months ago, I attended Angeline’s wedding party and I felt privileged to be the only non-GI-CUHK professor there. And she invited all the paediatric oncologists and surgeons who had treated her too. I thought to myself – I have known Angeline for so many years and did not even know she is a real Life Warrior!

In the summer of 2007, Dean Fok Tai-fai told me we would be admitting a paraplegic student called Jennifer Lui (another alumna featured in this issue). Dr Fung Hong - the Hospital Chief Executive of PWH at the time - pledged all his support. I was the only doubter then. Perhaps not the only one as HKU had told Jennifer that she would never become a doctor. HKU and I were proven very wrong by Jennifer! During the next five or six years, I came to know firsthand how Jennifer overcame all odds to study medicine and become a doctor. She would always insist that she would be in the trenches like everyone else and we did our best to make sure she did just that. It was especially hard for her during clinical rotations and internship. Jennifer should be going into the record books as one of the few people in the world who have completed medical training as a paraplegic. One can only imagine the fire within the face of the apparent impossibility.

Arora Namrata and Gary Ng (the other two featured alumni) also faced the same long and winding road and their personal stories are just as inspirational.

The commonality among all of these Life Warriors is that they overcame hurdles and gave it their all. They always want to take rather than be given. We should salute them all.

These doctors battled against all odds to achieve their dreams - overcoming debilitating diseases and language barriers. They are indeed Life Warriors...

STRUCK DOWN BY PARALYSIS... SHE FOUGHT BACK TO BECOME FIRST CUHK MEDICAL STUDENT IN WHEELCHAIR

"I was lucky to have had many nice people popping up to help me during difficult times."

- *Dr Jennifer Lui Wai-cheung*
(呂慧翔醫生, MBChB 2012)

At age sixteen, Jennifer Lui was on top of the world - she was on the brink of adulthood and was looking forward to the future. She was active in sports - playing basketball, volleyball and taking part in X-country runs. But mid-way through her sixteenth year, tragedy struck. She was struck down by a disease that rendered her paralysed from chest downwards. However, the plucky teen would not allow self-pity or depression to get her down - she fought back and achieved her dream of becoming a doctor.

Sitting in her wheelchair in Tuen Mun Hospital where she works, she reminisces about how she overcame hurdles to be where she is today. "I was lucky to have had many nice people popping up to help me during difficult times," she says.

Dr Lui recalls the day everything changed for her. She had just started a first aid course after finishing her HKCEE in the summer of 2004. While learning to tie a bandage she felt an excruciating pain in her back. Her first aid coach



called for an ambulance and she was rushed to hospital. The prognosis was bad - she had to undergo an operation for spinal haemorrhage. After surgery, she was told nothing further could be done to repair the damage.

Dr Lui was shattered. "I found it hard to accept. I was so depressed and cried all the time during my stay in hospital," she recalls.

But support from her family and schoolmates helped her pull through. After being discharged, her parents took her to Beijing for a second opinion. Doctors there could not do anything either. Nonetheless, she stayed on for rehabilitation. After a year, there was no improvement in her condition - she still could not walk. So her parents brought her back to Hong Kong. "I thought now it was time to go back to my studies," Dr Lui says.

She returned to her old school, Holy Trinity College, in Shek Kip Mei. Luckily for her, there was a small lift at the school which could accommodate her wheelchair. She says staff and schoolmates were very supportive and helped her cope as a normal student. In 2006, Dr Lui - who was then 18 years old - was named one of the "Ten Outstanding Warriors of Regeneration". The rehab team at Kowloon Hospital nominated her because of her indomitable spirit.

She then started thinking about medical school. "There hadn't been anyone in a wheelchair who had ever done medicine

before," she says. She was determined to be the first.

At an Open Day event at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, she boldly asked them if they would accept a wheelchair-bound candidate to take up medicine. They said yes provided the students' academic results were good.

She studied hard and when the time came, she applied to do medicine at CUHK and was successful.

Dr Lui says she would never forget how the professors at the Faculty of Medicine and campus mates helped her overcome hurdles. "They were so helpful and nice," she recalls. "They took me on a tour of the campus and upgraded facilities I found inconvenient. The Faculty arranged for a standing electric wheelchair for me in the Dissecting Laboratory so that I could 'stand up high' to see the body as well as carry out dissections. Professors would sit on a wheelchair and demonstrate how I could examine patients who are lying in bed. Classmates would also assist me during ward rounds."

Dr Lui is now training to be a physiatrist - a doctor who specialises in physical medicine, rehabilitation and pain medicine and whose aim is to enhance and restore functional ability and quality of life to those with physical impairments or disabilities. As such, she will work with other specialists - such as physiotherapists - to map out a rehab plan for patients. Having overcome her own personal and physical hardships, she says she wants to help others do the same.

Her advice:
"Never give up!"



ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENT MASTERS CANTONESE TO ACHIEVE DREAM OF BECOMING HK DOCTOR

"I get the opportunity to give back something because this is the community I grew up in."

- *Dr Arora Namrata*
(羅南醫生, MBChB 2011)

Dr Arora Namrata was determined, ever since she was very young, that she was going to be a doctor. The fact that she had left her home country of India at the tender age of five with her father, a marine engineer, mother and older brother to a place where Cantonese - a totally foreign language to her then - was widely spoken, didn't discourage her one bit.

Growing up, she did not speak Cantonese. "I went to international schools. I didn't feel the need to pick up Chinese. I was living in an expat bubble," she says. And, like most expats in Hong Kong, she only knew the basics like "jo-sahn" and "mgoi".

When it was time to apply to a university to do medicine, she was faced with the option of either going to the UK or to a medical school here.

"Honestly, I didn't think I could take up medicine in Hong Kong because they always said language was the barrier. I realised it would be difficult but I thought to myself...let me try this."

When she was called for an interview by The Chinese University of Hong Kong, she faced Professor Paul Lai from the Department of Surgery and currently the Director of the Office of Medical Education. He asked her if she was willing to learn Cantonese in order to communicate effectively with patients. She replied: "Yeah...if you give me the opportunity, I would love to."

Going into medical school at CUHK as the only ethnic minority person in class, she received "funny looks" from

her classmates. "They were like... what are you doing here?", Dr Arora laughingly recalls.

Juggling Cantonese and studying medicine was a huge challenge. She attended Cantonese classes on campus and also took private tuition. That was not all. She urged all her campus friends and roommates to speak to her ONLY in Cantonese. "I told them if I didn't understand, I would let them know. So I immersed myself totally into it." Her parents supported her by taking Cantonese lessons with her when they visited on Sundays. Even today, her husband and parents are her biggest pillars of support.

Her first year was especially difficult. She had to face the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCEs) - a form of performance-based testing used to measure candidates' clinical competence. She had to face local patients - the first real test of her Cantonese-speaking ability. "I was dreading that exam more than any other exams in the first year." Still, she pushed on.

Her perseverance paid off and today, Dr Arora is a family physician in a public hospital. "Local patients will walk into the consultation room, take one look at me and go like 'Heyyy...!' and when I start talking in Cantonese, they go... 'Oh you speak Chinese.' With elderly patients especially, they feel they can connect with you when you speak in Cantonese."

Dr Arora is also happy to be able to help ethnic minority patients as she is able to communicate with them in her native language.

These days, she speaks Cantonese wherever she goes...she says it gives her a real sense of belonging: "I get the opportunity to give back something because this is the community I grew up in."

Dr Arora is especially thankful to Professor Lai. "I shall always be grateful to him for giving me this chance. He saw the spark in me and saw that I really wanted to be a doctor."

She also fondly remembers Professor KH Lo who was in charge of OSCEs at the time. He would constantly encourage her to speak Cantonese more.

She has forged lifelong friendships with her campus mates..."spending days and nights cramming for exams together and celebrating together," she says.

Her advice to ethnic minority students: "Pick up Cantonese as early as you can. It can be a bit overwhelming but don't let it scare you."

Dr Arora, who is now studying to do a diploma in paediatrics, is determined to teach her now six-month old son Cantonese when he grows up!



BONE CANCER SURVIVOR'S DOGGED DETERMINATION TO HELP OTHERS LIKE HIM PAYS OFF



"I promised myself then that I will also share my story with other cancer patients."

- *Dr Gary Ng Ka-wing*
(吳家榮醫生, MBChB 2005)

When Dr Gary Ng was in primary school, he wrote down "Doctor" as his dream occupation even though he did not know what the job really entailed. It was only after going in-and-out of hospital for months for a potentially fatal disease that he realised what being a doctor really means. "The attitude of doctors, nurses and support staff at Tuen Mun Hospital had a great impact on me. They didn't just focus on my disease but also dealt with the psychological needs of me and my family. They were more like friends and I was very much influenced by them." His stay in hospital reinforced his determination to become a doctor.

Dr Ng was 14 when he was given the news that he had bone cancer. To stop the spread, doctors amputated his left leg. After a year of treatment, which included chemotherapy, he returned to school. "I had a walking stick to help me manoeuvre as the school didn't have a lift at the time," he says. He had to go to school earlier than the other students so that he could climb the stairs at his own pace. "Fortunately my classmates and teachers were very supportive and were always ready to give a helping hand."

Dr Ng says he is grateful to a young woman - another bone cancer leg amputee - who he was introduced to while receiving treatment in hospital. "When I was told I needed amputation I had these thoughts.. would I be able to walk or run again and do things that I like? So when I met her, she made me realise that I could also be able to walk again with the help of prosthesis and do the things that I like. I could go back to school and be an active member of society. She shared her story with me which I found so inspiring. It gave me hope and optimism. I promised myself then that I will also share my story with other cancer patients as well."



True to his words, soon after he recovered, he would visit hospitals with his parents to give inspirational talks to cancer patients. After obtaining outstanding results in his HKCEE, he received wide media coverage for his achievements. "I got more invitations to go to high schools and universities to share my story after that," he laughingly recalls.

Eventually, he joined some NGO's for the disabled, most notably the Hong Kong Federation of Handicapped

Youth. He served in the association for more than ten years and has been its chairman for more than three years. "Actually, before being sick I had trained to be a volunteer. During summer time, I would go to some non-governmental organisation centres to do voluntary work," he explains.

Despite his physical limitations, Dr Ng represented Hong Kong in the 8th Far East & South Pacific Games for the Disabled, and was named Outstanding Athlete in Swimming in Hong Kong. "To me it was a great encouragement," Dr Ng says.

After graduating in 2005 from The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Dr Ng joined the Orthopaedics and Traumatology Department of Tuen Mun Hospital. It was there that he had received his treatment and it was there that he wanted to return the kindness by serving its patients, he says.

After nearly eight years with Tuen Mun Hospital, he joined the Hospital Authority Head Office in 2015. Dr Ng holds a Master of Science in Health Services Management (MSCHSM) degree from CUHK. He says he hopes to help more patients at his current job.

Looking back on his days in CUHK, he says peer support got him through. "I was never alone. My classmates were always there. We supported each other and shared moments of laughter and tears together." As for the professors, he says he views them as role models.

His advice to medical students: "You'll always face challenges but if you have a strong will to become a doctor, then everything can be overcome."

BRUSH WITH CANCER EARLY IN LIFE SHAPED THIS DOCTOR'S CHARACTER

"The illness shaped my character because I met many good doctors along the way..."

- *Dr Angeline Lo Oi-shan*
(盧靄珊醫生, MBChB 2006)



In July last year, Dr Angeline Lo was one of five recipients of the 3rd "Outstanding Little Life Warriors Award" - a recognition for people who have had cancer, severe blood diseases or bone marrow transplant during their childhood and who went on to achieve notable success afterwards.

She was nominated by Professor Godfrey Chan Chi-fung, Chairman of the Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine at Queen Mary Hospital. "He thought I deserved the award because I was able to overcome the disease, continue with my studies, pass with flying colours and then get into medical school," Dr Lo says. She hopes the award will send a message to others that they too can achieve whatever they want if they put their minds to it.

Looking at Dr Lo, many would not know she is a cancer survivor. At just eleven years, she was diagnosed with fibrosarcoma. Her mum noticed a lump on her scalp and naturally concerned, took her to a private doctor for

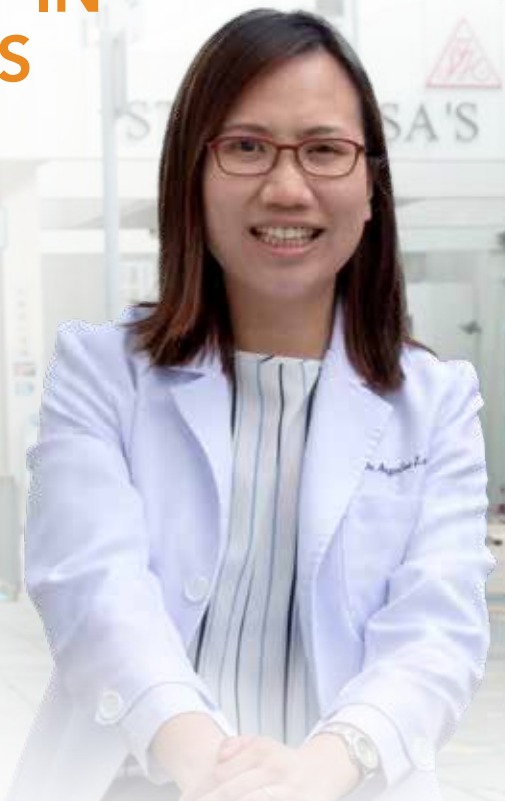
diagnosis. Noting there was a growth, the doctor performed an operation to remove it but he quickly closed her scalp after discovering that the tumour was too large for him to handle.

She was then taken to Queen Mary Hospital for the surgery. "I owe my life to Dr Fung Ching-fai who operated on me," she says. She was looked so well by the doctors and staff that it strengthened her resolve to become a doctor.

She underwent chemotherapy treatment for about seven months. She recovered fully but she was not told she had cancer. "I only knew I had cancer when I was in medical school," Dr Lo says. "At the time, my parents and doctors simplified everything. They just told me there was lump that needed to be removed and the chemotherapy was to protect me from future illness." She says she is not angry from being kept from the truth. "I know why they did it."

Dr Lo's path to medical school was not that straightforward. She failed in her first attempt to secure a place in The Chinese University of Hong Kong's Faculty of Medicine because her grades - though excellent - were not good enough. She was instead admitted to the Journalism Department. Undeterred, in the following year, she applied for an internal transfer to the Faculty of Medicine and was successful.

Dr Lo, who ended up specialising in gastroenterology and hepatology, worked at the Prince of Wales Hospital soon after graduating. She was a mentor to students for a few years there and is currently mentoring three medical students in the Global Physician-Leadership Stream (GPS) of



CUHK's MBChB programme. After 10 years with PWH, Dr Lo joined St Teresa's Hospital in February this year. "I wanted a career change to expand my horizon," she says. And, she is also hoping to get involved in voluntary work again in the near future. One of her last major voluntary projects - during her time with PWH - involved visiting drug abusers under the "The New Life, New Liver Project" HCV-eradication campaign.

Of the many happy memories she can recall, one in particular sticks out. When she was still a Year 4 medical student, she saw a boy with severe facial deformity at the Caritas Medical Centre (Project Sunshine). She recognised him as the very sick newborn baby in the bed next to hers when she was in hospital years ago. "I saw him in the centre, running around happily and I felt so happy. I think life is amazing," she says. She should know, having been given a second chance in life...and in studies.

Dr Lo is optimistic with what lies ahead. She has achieved her dream of becoming a doctor and is thankful to CUHK and its professors for giving her the chance. "The illness shaped my character because I met many good doctors along the way," she says.

Her advice: "Always be optimistic."

Prestigious New England Journal of Medicine selects two studies by CUHK researchers as among "10 Most Notable Articles of 2017". We spoke to the two Professors who led the studies to find out what makes them tick.

"We are now really at the edge of converting some of the cancers to chronic illnesses."

- Professor Tony Mok Shu-kam

莫樹錦教授

Chairman, Department of Clinical Oncology
Li Shu Fan Medical Foundation Professor of Clinical Oncology



The New England Journal of Medicine's "10 Most Notable Articles of 2017" included a research on lung cancer by Professor Tony Mok, Chairman of the Department of Oncology of The Chinese University of Hong Kong and Li Shu Fan Professor of Clinical Oncology. In the study, Professor Mok and his multinational team sought to find out the efficacy of osimertinib as compared with platinum-based therapy plus pemetrexed in patients with non-small-cell lung cancer.

The study suggests that for patients whose cancer had further mutated and developed resistance after first-line epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) targeted therapy, a new treatment could double the progression free survival rate when compared with standard chemotherapy.

"In other words, the impact of the study is that patients can have another chance to hope, just like in a video game. You play one level, you crash but then you can get another go. It's the same with patients on target therapy, you progress...and thnkkk!!! You get another chance to carry on with another drug," Professor Mok explains.

The study also calls for lung cancer patients to be continuously monitored on how the cancer evolves in their bodies. Once the disease progresses after first-line treatment, it says, then further tests on mutation should be considered in order to customise their treatment.

Professor Mok says he and his group are encouraged that NEJM editors found their study meaningful and they will strive to further their contributions to lung cancer treatment. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in Hong Kong, with some 4,000 new cases reported each year.

Professor Mok's contributions so far in the cancer field have put CUHK's Department of Clinical Oncology on the map. In fact, if not for certain turn of events more than 20 years ago, the now-famous oncologist would have still been in Canada.

Professor Mok says he joined CUHK "purely by chance". He had been visiting family in Hong Kong in 1996 and went to Prince of Wales Hospital to catch up with a doctor he had met during an international conference. The next day, the doctor's boss offered Professor Mok a job. "Not that I was any good but they needed a Chinese-speaking oncologist and I happened to be just outside the door," he says.

Professor Mok recalls that it took him two agonising weeks to decide.

If he joined CUHK, he would basically have had to change his lifestyle





from being a private practitioner in Scarborough, Canada, to an academic. In addition, as an academic, his salary would be much lower. "I was a private doctor for seven years then and I didn't do much academic work. I didn't have many publications and so didn't have any track record on research."

On the other hand, he knew if he had stayed in Canada, life would have been predictable - "I would have just carried on as before, have a bigger house, bigger car and bigger practice with a lot more patients."

Then, he thought of the chance to work with mainland scientists. "It was 1996 and Hong Kong was preparing to be reunited with China and it has been my vision to work with mainland researchers."

Finally, in 1997, he joined CUHK's Department of Clinical Oncology as an Assistant Professor. Since then, Professor Mok has written more than 200 papers and made several landmark discoveries. Studies on cancer - which had been stagnant in the eighties - are now a hot-pick, medically speaking, and treatments are being developed at a faster rate. "We are now really at the

edge of converting some of the cancers to chronic illnesses," he says. "I think this is a very crucial time for cancer therapy in the history of mankind."

Asked if he harboured any regrets leaving his private practice in Canada? His response: "Absolutely not!"

Professor Mok had not always wanted to be a doctor - he had set his sights on becoming a marine biologist. "As a student at St Stephens College in Stanley, we were by the sea all the time. I started to think what I was good at. I was good at Biology, I love the sea, I like eating seafood and so I thought, why not put them all together. I know it was naive thinking."

But when he left Hong Kong for Alberta, Canada to join his older brother, he realised the closest ocean was 2,000 miles away. "So I changed my biology interest from fish to human."

Then in medical school, it was a toss up between gastroenterology and oncology. He was accepted by Queen's University in Kingston in Ontario for gastroenterology and Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto for oncology. Both were the country's top institutions. He was in a dilemma.

At the time there were lots of new inventions and new technologies available for gastroenterology while cancer research was quite stagnant. To outsiders, it would have been an obvious choice, it would seem.

But Professor Mok's final decision came down to this - his love for Chinese food. "There was no Chinatown in Kingston and there was much better Chinese food in Toronto."

Besides being a clinician and researcher,

Professor Mok is a well-known TV personality. Asked about his showbiz career, he laughs: "I don't think the word showbiz is correct. In showbiz you get paid! I wasn't!" It all started in 2006 when he was approached by TVB to do a health show. He said yes. "I saw the educational value in it and I thought it might be fun."

However, after two seasons he found it boring. So they discussed turning the show into a food and health show. That routine saw Professor Mok doing restaurant rounds, flanked by two other female hosts. He became known as the "Food Doctor". He recalls an incident during a ward round. An elderly lady pointed a finger at him and asked: "Are you sure you are a doctor? I thought you were a doctor on TV. I didn't know you were a real doctor!"

Eventually, Professor Mok had to give it up: "It was extremely time-consuming and my research work also kept me really very busy so I couldn't spare the time to do this kind of extra curricular activity."

It is not all work and no play, however. He tries to squeeze in some fun activities whenever he can - like skiing and scuba diving.

Professor Mok says he does not see himself as a workaholic. "I don't see my work as a burden. In fact, I find it kinda fun to do. It is a blessing when you see work as something fun...I think I am a lucky guy."

His advice to young medical students: "Don't forget what you had said when you got called for the interview to do medicine...what you promised to do... that is, you want to be a doctor in order to help others and not do it for the money or glory!"





"We have urgent need for individuals who are both doctors as well as scientists..."

- Professor Dennis Lo Yuk-ming

盧煜明教授

Associate Dean (Research)
Chairman of the Department of Chemical Pathology
Professor of Chemical Pathology
Director of the Li Ka Shing Institute of Health Sciences
Li Ka Shing Professor of Medicine

One of the CUHK studies, selected by the New England Journal of Medicine, was led by Professor Dennis Lo and Professor Allen Chan. The study centres on how nasopharyngeal cancer (NPC) could be detected early with the help of plasma Epstein-Barr virus DNA.

Professor Lo, who is the Director of the Li Ka Shing Institute of Health Sciences and Chairman of CUHK's Department of Chemical Pathology, has been a recipient of numerous accolades and he says: "My team and I are very encouraged that the New England Journal of Medicine mentioned our studies. It shows the significance and importance of this work to healthcare."

Professor Lo says the study demonstrates the potential of circulating DNA analysis for screening early NPC and this cancer was chosen because it is very common in southern China. "NPC typically affects Chinese men between the ages of 40 and 60. If you are a Cantonese man in Hong Kong, your risk of having this cancer is about 1 to 39," he explains. "One of my best friends succumbed to this cancer when he was in his late thirties. This is a cruel disease that affects many patients in their most productive years."

NPC is common in south China because of an interaction between the Epstein-Barr virus, genetics and dietary habits. "Epidemiological evidence has shown that people exposed to salted fish before the age of eight have a higher chance of having this cancer," says Professor Lo.

This quest for a blood test for NPC, which started in 1999, took nearly 20 years to get to this stage. Professor Lo is hoping other types of cancers can be spotted early using such circulating DNA blood tests.

Professor Lo began taking an interest in medicine in his teens after watching his father rehearse for conference talks. "During these rehearsals, my brother and I were exposed to long funny words because my father was a psychiatrist and so he talked about terms like schizophrenia. He used to travel to exotic places like Egypt and it made me think...well, this is interesting...to have a career like that."

He also helped his father make photographic slides for his presentations. "We didn't have any PowerPoint presentations at the time and since I liked photography, I would help him by making slides using a camera and slide film."

Looking at his numerous groundbreaking discoveries, it is mind-boggling to think that Professor Lo was anything but studious when he was young. "I was actually a bit naughty in my younger days. I couldn't sit still. In my early primary school years, whenever the report card came out, I was ok academically, but for the bit about conduct, I always got C-minus," he laughingly recalls.

He believes his mischievous nature also didn't get him a place in a co-ed school but was accepted into an all boys school - St Joseph's College. Eventually, after reaching Primary six he decided to hunker down and study really hard. He also started reading science magazines. "I was fascinated by how science developed or how a scientist makes discoveries," he recalls.

While he was interested in medicine, he was also very keen on engineering, remembering fondly his first computer - an Atari - given by his mother.

So when it was time to apply to a university, he was still of two minds. "I applied to Cambridge to do medicine and Stanford to do electrical engineering. I was accepted by both," Professor Lo says. In the end, Cambridge University - with its relatively longer established tradition and history - won.

In 1997, Professor Lo made world headlines when he discovered the presence of cell-free fetal DNA in a pregnant woman's plasma. This project, he says, was partly thanks to a high-tech one-million-Hong-Kong-dollar machine which he got as a "Christmas gift" from his new employer.

Before returning to Hong Kong in January 1997, he was invited to a Christmas party by his new boss, Professor Magnus Hjelm, who owned a house south of London. "I thought maybe that was a good time to ask him for that machine, but I was worried that I might offend him by appearing too aggressive or greedy. After all, he was the head of CUHK's Department of Chemical Pathology, and I was going to start my work there in four weeks' time!"



Professor Lo plucked up courage, faced Professor Hjelm and said... "Ok, Prof, could I have this machine for Christmas?"

To his surprise and delight, Professor Hjelm said "yes".

"It was the biggest Christmas present I had ever been given," Professor Lo says.

With that machine, Professor Lo and his team were able to measure that 10 percent of DNA from a pregnant woman's plasma is from the fetus. With that astounding discovery - and over 10 years later - they were able to develop a non-invasive prenatal blood test that could, not only figure out the sex of the baby, but also detect if the baby had Down Syndrome. This method is now being used worldwide.



Professor Lo says his flashbulb moments can appear anytime and anywhere - while sleeping, eating or even watching a movie. He says he got the idea on how to decipher DNA fetal genome from maternal blood while watching *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* in a cinema with his wife.

"When the 3-D movie started, the words 'Harry Potter' appeared to fly out and somehow my eyes were attracted to the letter H. It looked to me like two strokes...like a pair of chromosomes. Suddenly I realised that for every pair of chromosomes that a baby has, one copy is from the father and one copy is from the mother. Then I thought to myself ... maybe I needed two algorithms - one to solve the father's side of the fetal genome and the other one to solve the mother's side!"

So while his wife was enjoying the movie, Professor Lo spent the next two and a half hours in the theatre thinking about genomes, chromosomes and algorithms. "As soon as I arrived home,

I rushed off an email to my team." A few months later, the puzzle which had eluded him for years, was finally solved.

"Research to me is a way of life. I don't look at it as my job. Every day I wake up and I will be thinking...oh, good! Another day where I can pursue and test something," he says.

Professor Lo lives by this philosophy... always be sceptical. He says he learnt this from a tutorial professor from Cambridge who continuously challenged his text book answers. "He was basically telling me not to blindly trust everything I read. You have to go back to the original source, he said."

So imagine his surprise when he was made Fellow of the Royal Society in 2011 - the oldest scientific academy in the world - to discover that its motto was "*Nullius in verba*", or in plain English: "*Take nobody's word for it.*"

Besides his love for science, Professor Lo is also into photography. He recently took up drone photography and was extremely proud of his first shot of the famed Glacier Lagoon in Iceland. He also admits to being a "gadget guy", always scouring the internet for news about gadgets that have yet to be released.

Professor Lo says medical students should consider becoming a clinician-scientist like himself. "We have urgent need for individuals who are both doctors as well as scientists to serve as the bridge that brings scientific advances to patients. And, with the Hong Kong government pouring new resources into innovation and technology, now is the best time to be a clinician-scientist."





WHITE COAT PARTY FOR MEDICAL GRADUATES 2018

Up to 200 medical students have been celebrating their graduation with a fun-filled get-together. The traditional White Coat Party, held on 23 March 2018, saw them toasting the successful completion of their six years of gruelling studies. They still have, however, to face a one-year internship before they can qualify as fully-fledged physicians.

For one day at least, they had their teachers, friends and family members - as well as representatives of the CUHK Medical Alumni Association - to help them celebrate the joyous occasion at the Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care at the Prince of Wales Hospital.

The White Coat Party is held every year to mark the graduation of final year medical students.



MEDICAL ALUMNI BUDDY PROGRAMME

The Medical Alumni Buddy Programme (MABP) has so far held two workshops for medical students this year. On 28 February 2018, students from Years 4 to 6 attended a talk, "Crash Course on Presentation & Viva Voce" in which specialist doctors shared their experiences. The speakers were all from CUHK - Dr Jimmy Lai, Resident, Department of Medicine & Therapeutics, Dr Ma Sze-ho, Resident Specialist, Neurology, Department of Medicine & Therapeutics, and Professor Grace Wong, Department of Medicine & Therapeutics.

Dr Siu Wing-tai, Consultant Surgeon from Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital and who is also the convener of MABP, was the moderator. The audience of nearly 100 students said the exam and presentation tips were very useful.

Another workshop, "Career Decision Workshop", was held on 6 April 2018. It was aimed at helping Year 4 to Year 6 medical students map out their future careers in the medical field. Speakers included Dr Siu Wing-tai, Dr Sin Ngai-chuen, Chief Manager (Patient Safety & Risk Management), Hospital Authority and Dr Yee Kwok-sang, Consultant, Department of Medicine, Kwong Wah Hospital. Around 60 students attended the session.

Other stress relief workshops as well as talks on extra-curricular activities and work-life balance are also being planned.



TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY 2018



This year's Awards Presentation Ceremony for Teachers and Students was held on 24 February 2018 at Sir Run Run Shaw Hall at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The event was officiated by Professor Sophia Chan, Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Joseph Sung, Mok Hing Yiu Professor of Medicine and Professor Francis Chan, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine. More than 800 Faculty members, donors, teachers, students and their families were on hand to witness the ceremony.

Top academics were presented with Teachers' Awards and outstanding students from within the Faculty - including Medicine, School of Biomedical Sciences, School of Chinese Medicine, The Nethersole School of Nursing, School of Pharmacy and The Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care - were given prizes and scholarships in recognition of their brilliant achievements.

The ceremony ended with a sumptuous tea spread in front of the University Science Centre.



FUN RUN 2018

This year's Fun Run, held on 24 March 2018, saw some 500 people, including top academics, taking part in the race.

The event, launched in 2001, is jointly organised by the Faculty of Medicine and Chung Chi College of The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The 5km Explorers route started at Prince of Wales Hospital and ended at Lingnan Stadium of Chung Chi College.

The 10km Challengers route also began at Prince of Wales Hospital, meandered pass Belair Gardens, Lion Rock Tunnel, Shatin Park and then onto the scenic On King Street Park promenade and eventually ended at Lingnan College.



Professor Enders Ng, Associate Dean (Alumni Affairs), Faculty of Medicine, and Professor Fong Wing-ping, Head of Chung Chi College, were the officiating guests. CUHK's former Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Joseph Sung, also donned his running shoes and joined in the fun.

Trophies were awarded to the Champions while those coming in Second and Third walked away with medals. But trophy or no trophy, a tea reception at the end of the races made up for all the participants' "hard work"! And, they all agree that Fun Run is certainly a healthy and fun way of socialising.

The annual event is open to alumni of the Faculty of Medicine and Chung Chi College.



Fun Run

INTRODUCTION OF FOUNDING PROFESSOR DAVID DAVIES

Professor David P Davies joined the newly established Faculty of Medicine of The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1984 and set up the Department of Paediatrics. He had a string of impressive credentials to his name before joining the CUHK Faculty team. He had studied medicine at the University of Wales in Cardiff in 1960 and three years later, obtained an intercalated Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Anatomy (with Honours). He did his clinical studies at the Welsh National School of Medicine until he graduated as an M.B. B.Ch. in 1966 with distinctions in medicine and surgery.

Professor Davies worked at several hospitals after his graduation before returning to his alma mater in 1972 to become a lecturer in Child Health. In addition to his teaching and clinical duties as Senior Registrar, Professor Davies managed to conduct research in growth and nutrition in low birth weight infants, for which he was awarded an MD in 1976.

After that, he joined the University of Leicester where he played a major role in setting up a neonatal unit at the Leicester Royal Infirmary Maternity Hospital. His research interests centred on growth

and development, as well as nutrition and neonatology. In 1978, he was awarded the prestigious Guthrie Medal by the British Paediatric Association in recognition for his work on growth.

Dr Michael Yung (MBCChB 1986), a paediatrician in the private sector, remembers Professor Davies as a "classical British gentleman".

"I cannot recall him ever scolding anyone," Dr Yung says.

Dr Yung was one of the first graduates of the Faculty of Medicine. Immediately after his housemanship, he was offered a job with the Department of Paediatrics by Professor Davies. At the time, there was only one vacancy.

"On my first day of work as a paediatrician, Professor Davies told me I had got the job - not because of my academic performance - but because of my working performance during my housemanship," recounts Dr Yung.

Dr Yung says Professor Davies taught him a lot of things. "The classical phrase I learned from him is... "Time will tell".

"Professor Davies would teach us that



Professor David Davies
(Second from left)

a patient's signs and symptoms may not be obvious initially, but if you follow the patient closely, you will know the diagnosis," he says. "Whether Professor Davies is seeing patients or doing other work, he would always look at the whole picture."

With a foundation firmly set by Professor Davies, the Department of Paediatrics at Prince of Wales Hospital has been able to provide advanced patient-based diagnoses and treatments to the children in Hong Kong in the last 30-plus years...and the Department's reputation continues to grow.

CONGRATULATIONS, DR SIU WING-TAI!



We are proud to announce that our very own medical alumnus, Dr Siu Wing-tai (MBCChB 1989), has been conferred Honorary Fellow of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Dr Siu is the first CUHK medical graduate to receive this honour.

As an undergraduate, Dr Siu won many prizes for distinguished academic performance, including the *City Lions Club Gold Medal* - an award for best student in all professional examinations. In 1988, he was awarded the *Young Clinician Award* at the 11th World Congress of Gastroenterology.

In recognition for his academic excellence, he was invited to be a member of *International Reviewer Panel of Medical Science Monitor*, reviewer of *The Alimentary Pharmacology & Therapeutics* and *Indian Journal of Surgery*, and is an editorial board member of *Surgical Practice* (the official journal of the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong). He is also President of the Hong

Kong Society of Upper Gastrointestinal Surgeons and a Council member (and ex-President) of the Hong Kong Society of Minimal Access Surgery.

Dr Siu is currently Honorary Consultant at Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital, Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital and Prince of Wales & New Territories East Hospitals.

Dr Siu has been pivotal in organising educational activities for medical alumni and medical students - such as the "Medical Alumni Buddy Programme" - since the inception of the CUHK Medical Alumni Association. His work ethic is based on his philosophy of "just wanting to be a good doctor".

CU SURGERY ALUMNI GATHERING 2018

Some 40 surgeons and trainees from CUHK Faculty of Medicine met at Adrenaline, Hong Kong Jockey Club on 12 May 2018 to have some fun. They set aside their busy schedules to meet up with old as well as new friends. The "Guest of Honour" naturally was Surgeon Bear!!!



REUNION GATHERING OF CLASS 1998

The MBChB class of 1998 held a reunion gathering at the Staff Common Room Clubhouse at The Chinese University of Hong Kong Pentecostal Mission Hall Complex on 24 March 2018. About 90 graduates turned up, with some bringing along their children.

Before dinner, they gathered at the lobby of Choh-Ming Li Basic Medical Sciences Building to take photos and selfies with our adorable giant Medic and Surgeon Bears. By the looks of it, everyone had a great time!



Class 1998

ARTICLE AND PHOTO CONTRIBUTION



For all those who love to write ... here is your chance.

Send us stories about memorable moments in your life or encapsulate your daily activities with us. Articles can be in English or Chinese (approx: 500 words). Photos are welcome.

Only selected stories by the Editorial Board will be published.

Send your articles to: [✉ medical_alum@med.cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:medical_alum@med.cuhk.edu.hk)

** Please provide ① your name ② graduation year ③ email ④ contact numbers

