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Luqmanul Hakim, one of five recipients of the SPH Journalism Scholarship this year

## SPH scholarship recipients ready to take on post-pandemic journalism

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### Singapore

STEPPING into *The Straits Times* newsroom as an intern amid the pandemic, Luqmanul Hakim felt nervous about his stint. With much of the newsroom working from home, it was an unusual experience for the 21-year-old and his peers, who spent about three weeks of their attachment working remotely when Covid-19 infections spiked.

Over six months this year, Mr Luqmanul learnt on the job, reporting on businesses affected by the pandemic, the dangers of jaywalking especially for the elderly and the resumption of Ramadan activities.

The alumnus from Tampines Junior College was one of five recipients of the Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) Journalism Scholarship this year. He will be reading Global Studies at the National University of Singapore (NUS).

SPH and Singapore Press Holdings Foundation gave out 34 scholarships in total during a virtual scholarship awards ceremony held on Friday.

Mr Luqmanul, who had applied for the scholarship during his internship stint, said he was nervous at first because he was not sure how he was going to learn the basics of the job. He added: “I believe SPH is the best and right place for me to train and hopefully pursue bigger and more impactful stories as a journalist.”

Another journalism scholar, Sheryl Wong, 21, will be reading Chinese Studies at NUS. She said: “During my last semester break, I had the privilege of doing an internship with *Lianhe Zaobao*. The exposure has cemented my belief that journalists play an impactful role in shaping our society, which affirmed my aspiration to join the profession.”

Among those given awards were 13 recipients of the Lim Kim San Memorial Scholarships. The bond-free scholarships have helped deserving students from modest family backgrounds further their degree programmes in languages, linguistics and the humanities at local universities since 2006.

Children of SPH staff and newspaper vendors were among those who received scholarships. These awards serve as recognition of the children’s hard work and the service of their parents to SPH.

Lee Boon Yang, chairman of SPH and SPH Foundation, congratulated the recipients and their family members in his opening address during the ceremony.

He also addressed the challenges faced by the media industry brought about by the global digital disruption. “Worldwide, traditional media organisations have seen readership and revenues drop while search engines, social media networks and e-commerce have emerged as dominant players in the advertising market,” he said.

“Given these trends and taking into consideration the best interests of all stakeholders, SPH has decided to restructure the media business into a not-for-profit model to ensure its long-term viability... if approved, the restructuring will enable the media business to dedicate increased resources to transformation efforts and quality journalism, and to invest in talent and new technology to strengthen its digital capabilities.”

“To the SPH journalism scholars who will join us after graduation, this signifies a new chapter filled with hope and promises for you,” he added. THE STRAITS TIMES