

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

**Malavika Menon**

Stepping into The Straits Times newsroom as an intern amid the pandemic, Mr 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 coronavirus infections spiked in May.

Over six months from December last 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 Tampines Junior College alumnus was one of five recipients of the Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) Journalism Scholarship this year. He is starting his first year at the National University of Singapore (NUS) this year, and will be reading global studies.

SPH and the Singapore Press Holdings Foundation gave out 34 scholarships in total during a virtual scholarship awards ceremony yesterday.

Mr Luqmanul, who applied for the scholarship during his internship, said: "I was nervous at first because I wasn't sure how I 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."

Another journalism scholar, Ms Sheryl Wong, 21, is a third-year undergraduate reading Chinese studies and theatre 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



Mr Luqmanul Hakim (left), who will read global studies at NUS, and Ms Sheryl Wong (above), a student reading Chinese studies and theatre studies at the same university, are both recipients of the SPH Journalism Scholarship. PHOTOS: KUA CHEE SIONG, COURTESY OF SHERYL WONG

IDEAL PLACE

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**MR LUQMANUL HAKIM**, one of five recipients of the Singapore Press Holdings Journalism Scholarship this year, on why he applied for the scholarship.

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 Scholarship.

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.

During the event, Tamil Murasu journalist Indu Elangovan spoke of her experience of working remotely during the pandemic and interacting with people from all walks of life.

The daughter of a newspaper vendor, Ms Indu had received a scholarship to read project management at NUS in 2016. She returned to SPH as a full-time journalist in June last year.

Dr 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 amid global digital disruption.

Given the current global trends affecting media organisations, Dr Lee said: "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."

He added: "To the SPH journalism scholars who will join us after graduation, this signifies a new chapter filled with hope and promises for you."

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