

## Not long in the tooth, but Nishant's devoted to healing

### JANARTHANAN KRISHNASAMY

While his mother was bedridden for six months after being diagnosed with sciatica (severe lower back pain) last year, 2nd Lieutenant (2LT) Nishanth Balajee witnessed firsthand how medical specialists from different fields collectively rendered her treatment.

It was then that the 20-year-old developed a fascination for medicine and an admiration for those who worked in the healthcare industry. More significantly, the experience nudged him towards exploring a career in healthcare while he served his national service in the Singapore Armed Forces.

"During my research, I learnt about dentistry in the military and realised it's not just about providing routine preventive care and performing dental surgery, but also about addressing dental injuries that arise from training and operations," 2LT Nishanth said.

After enlisting in February 2023 and graduating as his company's "Best



2nd Lieutenant (2LT) Nishanth Balajee.  
PHOTO: MINDEF

Recruit", 2LT Nishanth was posted to the Officer Cadet School and was commissioned as an infantry officer last March.

The National University of Singapore

student was awarded the SAF Dentistry Scholarship two months ago.

"The Army has developed me as a person, and my time in basic military training (BMT) and the officer cadet course have taught me resilience, leadership and teamwork," he said.

He recalled an example of how, during his stint as a platoon commander in BMT, his words positively influenced a younger recruit.

"While addressing my platoon during their first week of enlistment, I helped them visualise how, four months later, during their passing-out parade, they would march proudly in front of their loved ones and throw their jockey caps up in the air with pride.

"I told them to push through the next four months and take care of each other so they could stand on the parade square with pride and joy."

A recruit who had initially struggled to adjust to military life later told him that his words had inspired him to persevere through BMT.

"Such simple words sometimes can inspire people to give their best," 2LT Nishanth said. "It was a life-changing moment for me, and I believe that as people go through national service, they experience growth in different ways."

On receiving the scholarship, 2LT Nishanth credits his family members for supporting him through the physically and psychologically challenging phases of military life.

"They ensured I always had sufficient nutrition and rest, and they listened as I shared my experiences," he said.

Aside from his exploits in the military and the dentist office, 2LT Nishanth is an avid floorball fan, having played the sport for a decade as a goalkeeper. He occasionally returns to his secondary school to help train younger players.

Looking ahead, he hopes to assist in humanitarian aid missions, where he believes the fusion of military discipline and medical expertise can make a real difference.

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