



WHAT'S UP, DOC?



PRINT PDF VERSION



Radio-ing In On Life

by Dr Syed Aftab, Class of 2013

SingHealth, Singapore General Hospital, Department of Diagnostic Radiology

A lot of people have the perception that being a doctor is glamorous – a well-paying occupation with high social stature and noble, rewarding ideals of saving lives, especially at the most critical moments. It is also supposed to evoke a personal sense of pride and enable friends and family around us to bask in reflected glory. These are not totally false notions – being a doctor is certainly a fulfilling and honourable life-calling – but there is a lot of blood (pun unintended), sweat and tears shed that goes on behind the scenes that many are not aware of.

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An Always Learning MO

by Dr Felix Maverick Rubillar UY, Class of 2013

SingHealth, Singapore General Hospital, Department of Accident and Emergency

One thing that is prevalent in the world of medicine is that it is a never-ending journey of learning. Be it in the wards, labs or the operating theatre, there is always something to learn. Medicine is like a lifelong classroom where you learn from seniors and juniors, patients and colleagues, medical advancements and research – it is endless. For instance, each patient may present unique traits that may alter the way we diagnose and treat him or her. Even after years of experience, I am sure my mentors are still continuously learning.

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ALUMNI RELATIONS



Organising a Class Reunion?

If you are thinking of organising an annual class reunion event to catch up with your former classmates, Duke-NUS' Alumni Relations is happy to sponsor it! Just email us at alumni@duke-nus.edu.sg, and we will get in touch with you. It's that simple!

Update your particulars

Stay in contact with us! If you have changed your home address, contact number, or any personal particulars, remember to update your information by contacting us at alumni@duke-nus.edu.sg

ALUMNI COMMUNITY



Have you joined the DNMA (Duke-NUS Medical Alumni) Society? Graduates from the MD programme are eligible to join absolutely free of charge! If you wish to be a member, simply drop us an email at alumni@duke-nus.edu.sg.

EVENTS



PAST

- Inaugural Night at the Medical School
- CDAC – Duke-NUS Community Health Screening
- Faculty Appreciation Soiree



UPCOMING

- PhD Alumni Networking Dinner
- Alumni Movie Matinee – “The Divergent Series: Insurgent”
- Journeying with our Deans
- Class of 2015 Graduation Dinner
- Class of 2015 Graduation and Hooding Ceremony
- White Coat Ceremony 2015
- DNMA 3rd Annual General Meeting and Alumni Reunion

NEWS BITES



- New Dean to helm Duke-NUS



Choy Ming Ju Milly

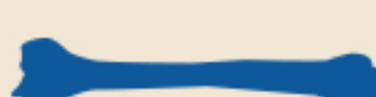


Eugenia Ong

Congratulations to our PhD graduates!

Congratulations to our newest batch of PhD graduates from the Integrated Biology and Medicine (IBM) Programme! We warmly welcome them to the Duke-NUS Alumni family!

HUMERUS SECTION



Contributed by A/Prof Antonius M J Van Dongen

PhD student Brain Structure

© Hugh Kearns



Things you shouldn't say to a PhD student...

1. How's the PhD going?
2. Have you written up yet?
3. Lazy students, heh?
4. My taxes fund you
5. Students know nothing of the real world
6. Of what practical importance is your research?
7. How many papers have you published?
8. When do you plan to get a real job
9. So you won't be a real doctor?
10. When do you finish?

But what about the
Brain Structure of an
MD/PhD student?

After your PhD





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A lot of people have the perception that being a doctor is glamorous – a well-paying occupation with high social stature and noble, rewarding ideals of saving lives, especially at the most critical moments. It is also supposed to evoke a personal sense of pride and enable friends and family around us to bask in reflected glory. These are not totally false notions – being a doctor is certainly a fulfilling and honourable life-calling – but there is a lot of blood (pun unintended), sweat and tears shed that goes on behind the scenes that many are not aware of.

After graduating in 2013, I chose to join the radiology specialty. I am now in my second year of residency and just like any other grand journey in life, it has its ups and downs. I chose

radiology for many reasons. It offers a wide spectrum of specialties to subspecialise in 'including those that are more hands-on or otherwise, with varying amounts of patient contact. Radiology is challenging and exposes you to a wide range of medical pathologies and problems – all of which I figured would give me a sense of satisfaction in knowing that I will be required to have an extensive knowledge of various aspects of medicine.

Radiology also deals a lot with cutting-edge technology, which is exciting and necessary and challenges me to keep pace with the latest advancements in medicine. It also offers a small potential of having some work-life balance, which is always a welcome perk. We are always kept on our toes and have to be constantly updated with the changing medical landscape. Having a positive outlook certainly helps, no matter what happens.

As a resident now, one of my biggest realisations is that sense of responsibility. As a qualified doctor, you become the first line of defence against everything and anything that goes wrong. How your patient reacts is a reflection of your competency to a certain degree. Although this huge responsibility can be daunting, it is also an indicator of our growth. We have definitely grown in terms of having the confidence to make the best decisions for our patients and being competent doctors: a far cry from the uncertain, jittery medical students we once were.

I was recently awarded the 2014 Journal of Vascular and Interventional Radiology (JVIR) Editor's Award for Distinguished Clinical Study for my third-year research study as a medical student. My study focused on the efficacy and safety of cutting balloon angioplasty (CBA) versus high-pressure balloon angioplasty (HPBA) for treating haemodialysis fistula stenosis, which are resistant to conventional percutaneous transluminal angioplasty (PTA).

While I am definitely thrilled and ecstatic about winning this prestigious award, it is even more gratifying to know that my study will benefit patients. Now, physicians and interventionists have scientific proof that CBA may be superior in treating resistant stenosis and thus are more confident in making the decision of choosing CBA over HPBA. This should in turn reduce patient visits (given the superiority of CBA patency rate), physician/interventionist time, and costs for the patient and healthcare system.

Winning this award has certainly affirmed and inspired me to be a good radiologist and doctor overall. If anyone is considering balancing residency and research, my advice would be to select your projects carefully and exercise prudence in picking your mentors.

As I am writing this article, I am also preparing for my Fellow of the Royal College of Radiologists (FRCR) Part 1 exams. A lot of people may not know this but specialising in radiology requires me to sit for a lot of exams. I take each exam as a challenge and an opportunity to learn and grow, both professionally and personally. One way I keep myself motivated is to always keep my future goals in mind so that I do not lose sight of the bigger picture.

Therefore, being a doctor is not about the perceived glamour. It is about hard work, perseverance, dedication and a deep-seated desire to bring comfort and hope to humanity. But above all, it is certainly rewarding.



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I never held any formal “let’s sit down and I’ll teach you this topic” sessions with a group of students, be it from Yong Loo Lin or Duke-NUS. But I do try to teach what I know to the

students who are attached to my teams. As a senior House Officer (HO), I also helped the junior HOs adjust to the new working environment. I can empathise with them because when I was a medical student, I remembered feeling very lost when no one in the team told us what was going on. Even now, while I sometimes forget to make the conscious effort to talk to the medical students in my team, especially when I have a ton of changes to do, I try and check in with them every now and then.

At the same time, as a Medical Officer (MO), I am still learning. I did not choose a residency straight after graduating in 2013 because I think many aspects of medicine are interesting. I found things that I liked in the different rotations and for me, I need to actually try working in the different fields before I can commit to a certain one. I think medicine is about finding a niche and for some of us, it takes time to find this. In a way, I do envy those who have found their callings straightaway in medical school but the way I see it, what’s a few more years if you’re trying to find out what you are going to do for the rest of your life?

Interacting with patients is a joy and has left me with many memorable moments. One of them was when I was pressing an 80 plus-year old uncle’s groin to remove an arterial sheath(I don’t press patients’ groins for fun) and he was telling about his father who had nine wives all living in the same house. We were both laughing at all the stories he had to share about how his dad managed to keep all of them happy at the same time.

Winning the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine Junior Doctor Teaching Award definitely came as a surprise to me. I did not think that what I did getting the students involved in the team dynamics was anything extraordinary, but it is always nice to be recognised; and the book vouchers that came with the award will certainly come in handy!

I am definitely open to the idea of mentoring juniors but I will have to learn first. I am no expert in mentoring and teaching students. To be honest, I am nowhere near qualified to teach clinical medicine but I know that if you teach or at least try to, you end up learning a lot in return.

I am looking forward to my residency and the experiences that come with it. In the meantime, let us all remember that we are learning all the time and we should share our knowledge, because you learn when you teach and you can teach when you learn.



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PAST EVENTS

Inaugural Night at the Medical School

On 13 November 2014, parents of Duke-NUS medical students gathered for an evening at the university, to connect with alumni, deans, and other parents.

At the event, Duke University's President Richard Brodhead and Duke Global Health Institute's Prof Mike Merson also shared their insights on how American universities have been increasingly engaged with the world through research, and the need for global connections in healthcare and research.

It was certainly a night to remember, and a small step forward towards building heartfelt connections between the school, and the people that matter most to the students – their parents!

CDAC – Duke-NUS Community Health Screening

Several Duke-NUS alumni, together with current students, ran the health screening booths at the Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC) 'Ready for School' Carnival on 7 December 2014, and screened a total of 358 participants. Alumni also had the opportunity to mentor the student organising committee, as well as aid operations on the ground.

The Carnival helped many children from low-income families gear up for a new school year, and also included the distribution of vouchers, talks, and plentiful fun activities.



Faculty Appreciation Soiree

Duke-NUS students feted their faculty to much feasting and joy at the annual Faculty Appreciation Soiree on 12 December 2014. Everyone ho-ho-ho-ed all night long with songs and dance, and a festive spirit was in the air as all went home with not only full bellies, but also hearts full of love and goodwill.

Click [here](#) for photos.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Check your email for regular updates and invitations to these events!

PhD Alumni Networking Dinner

Date : 27 March 2015 (Friday)
Time : 7:00pm
Venue : MU Parlour (Holland Village)

Class of 2015 Graduation and Hooding Ceremony

Date : 30 May 2015 (Saturday)
Time : 4.30pm
Venue : The Academia Auditorium, Level 1

Alumni Movie Matinee –

“The Divergent Series: Insurgent”

Date : 28 March 2015 (Saturday)
Time : 3.30pm
Venue : GV VivoCity

White Coat Ceremony 2015

Date : 14 August 2015 (Friday)
Time : 6.30pm
Venue : The Academia Auditorium, Level 1

Journeying with our Deans

Date : 7 April 2015 (Tuesday)
Time : 5.00pm
Venue : Duke-NUS Atrium, Level 2

DNMA 3rd Annual General Meeting and Alumni Reunion

Date : August 2015
Time : tbc
Venue : tbc

More details will be released closer to the date.

Class of 2015 Graduation Dinner

Date : 29 May 2015 (Friday)
Time : 7:00pm
Venue : Hotel Intercontinental