



Star Education Fund 2010 scholarship recipients and contributors pose for a group photo after the ceremony.

**Star Education Fund recipients are grateful for the chance to pursue their dreams.**

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**F**OR Florence Lim Peh Ching, 20, getting a scholarship to complete a Degree in Physiotherapy at Initi International University was more than an opportunity — it was a life-changing moment for her.

The eldest among three siblings, she is responsible for her two siblings as both her parents have passed away.

"I do not have sufficient funds to continue my studies, so if not for this scholarship, I would not have the chance to continue with my studies," said the cheerful lass at the Star Education Fund awards presentation ceremony on Wednesday.

Working part-time as a nurse after her STPM, Florence said, "I managed to print out one copy of the application form, and it was so precious! After I filled it out, I took a taxi to The Star to send it in myself. I'm just so happy and relieved that I got it."

Determination and hard work paid off for recipient Ding Pennie, 20, who obtained a scholarship to pursue a Bachelor of Business degree at Sunway University College with Victoria University.

Working as a part-time customer service executive in Penang at the time, Pennie had to travel interstate back and forth just to make it for the interviews.

Having attended four interviews in total for the scholarship, she said worth her coming back was her determination to obtain an overseas degree.

"My parents are both retired, so my only way of getting an overseas degree was if I got a scholarship."

With all that hard work, Pennie said, "I am so happy to have been selected. It shows that if you keep on trying and giving your best, you will eventually get somewhere."

#### Broadening opportunities

Both Florence and Pennie are among the 186 recipients of the Star Education Fund 2010 who were awarded scholarships worth more than RM6.3mil to pursue their post-school and tertiary education.

They join the 2,500 who have obtained scholarships since the fund started.

# Fund gives hope



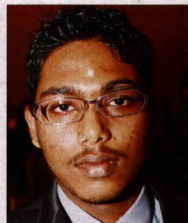
KDU University College pre-university students performing a heartful choir piece during the ceremony.



Abbas has big ambitions of bringing Malaysia forward in the gaming industry, once he completes his degree.



Florence: If not for this scholarship, I would not have had the chance to continue on with my tertiary studies.



Vinod's passion for cars drove him to apply for a scholarship to pursue a course in automotive technology.

The Star's deputy group chief editor II Leanne Goh shared examples of how the fund had shaped the lives of previous recipients.

She said they were now doing well with good jobs.

Goh thanked the fund's partners-in-education, some of whom had been with the Star Education Fund since its inception in 1994.

"As always, our heartfelt gratitude to our 41 partners-in-education this year," she said at the presentation ceremony.

She said the fund was honoured to have three new contributors this year — Swinburne University (Sarawak Campus), Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) and The Otomotif College (TOC).

SIM's Business and Marketing Relations director Judy Wong said "the fund is a worthy cause and allows deserving young people to pursue their tertiary education."

"We would like to have a greater mix of international students at our campus; this will be beneficial to

the local students in terms of giving them exposure to different views and ideas," she said.

TOC chief executive officer and founder Adelaide Foo said the fund will allow passionate students to follow their dreams.

"It's all about nurturing the new generation and providing them with the tools they need to succeed," she said.

With a score of 9A's in his SPM, Vinod Ammalanathan, 18, could have chosen almost any course he wanted, but his strong passion for the automotive industry prevailed, when he decided to undertake a Diploma in Automotive Technology at TOC.

"I have always wanted to work with cars. When I was young, I used to collect lots of Hot Wheels cars, and watched Top Gear on television. I was just curious about how cars work."

"I chose this course because it is more specialised into vehicles. I believe the automotive industry is

growing in Malaysia."

Similarly, Abbas Ridzuan, 18, said he chose to do a degree in games art development at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology as he loves gaming.

"When I completed my PMR examinations, I told my parents that I wanted to go into gaming and they have been encouraging. I hope to make Malaysia famous for the gaming industry in future."

#### Producing quality graduates

University of Nottingham Malaysia's vice-president and chief executive officer Prof Ian Pasby said that student quality was one of the reasons for the university's continued involvement in the scholarship scheme.

"The (previous) scholars with us have always performed really well, and it's a pleasure to have these students at our campus," he said.

"Also, it makes sense to support such a positive initiative that widens the opportunity for higher

education to those who might not otherwise have the means to do so."

Echoing the need to provide more opportunities to worthy students,

INTI International University education counsellor Mohd Nazri Mohd Ramli said scholarships are a way to develop human capital.

"As expressed by our Prime Minister, it is particularly crucial at this juncture to double our efforts to ensure that we have a skilled workforce."

"We need to tap into the talent of these young people and allow them to build a better future for themselves and the rest of the country," he said.

When asked about what she looked for in a scholar, UCIS University's vice president of Group Corporate Affairs Margaret Soo said academic achievement alone was not enough.

"As we take an active involvement in the interview process, we look for the 'X factor' — in our case, this means leadership ability, confidence and sincerity," she said.

"I think that those who will best use the scholarships are the ones who have the potential to do good to society."

"UCIS's role is to stretch this potential by exposing them to a sound academic education as well as community involvement — they need to be aware of the world around them and make a contribution to it."

Similarly, Sunway University College's Public Relations Department senior manager Jerinne Koo said that the scholars should go on to further heights while giving back to society.

"My hope for these students is that they will continue to work hard and go all out to achieve the best they can."

"Perhaps in the future, when they are successful themselves, they can be the ones to lend a helping hand to those who need it."