



NEWS RELEASE

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84 Award Recipients, One Defence Community

1. Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen officiated at the Defence Scholarship Awards Ceremony at Temasek Club this afternoon. The awards ceremony saw the presentation of 84 scholarships this year – The Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) Scholarship to five recipients, Public Service Commission (PSC) Scholarship (Engineering) – Defence and Security to seven recipients, SAF Merit Scholarship to 20 recipients, SAF Engineering Scholarship to five recipients, Defence Merit Scholarship to 14 recipients, SAF Medicine Scholarship to eight recipients, SAF Local Dentistry Scholarship to two recipients, and Defence Science and Technology (DSTA) Scholarship to 23 recipients.

2. Speaking at the ceremony, Dr Ng highlighted the significance of holding a physical Defence Scholarship Awards Ceremony following the virtual ceremony in 2020. He said, “The *raison d’être* for the Defence Scholarship Awards Ceremony is a public commitment by each recipient to our country and her defence, as well as to each other in the SAF and the MINDEF-related organisations. It is a prestigious award and cause for celebration for you and your family members. But those who received the award today, also acknowledge the responsibility and accountability to lead in the defence of Singapore’s sovereignty and interests; to honour through your words and deeds, the high expectations set by a distinguished alumni of past recipients, many of whom are here today; to uphold the values and uncompromising standards of integrity and probity. This physical meeting acts as a physical handshake to seal that pact, which you make with your country, your organisation and each other today. I say this to you as custodians of our nation’s defence.”

3. Dr Ng also spoke about the diversity of the 84 scholarship recipients and reminded them of the important responsibility they have as part of the SAF. “I am also glad that the 84 scholarship recipients this year come from many pre-tertiary institutions – in fact, we have the highest ever, from 19 institutions. This reflects that our entire school system is of a high standard, with more schools able to nurture and groom leaders of our society. Whatever your diverse backgrounds and differences, the commitment each of you make today binds you all as one to our nation’s defence, and because of that, to constantly seek to improve MINDEF and the SAF when you join.” He added, “your responsibility and task when you return from your studies is to make sure that SAF’s heart remains pure and beating strong. The SAF will always defend Singapore to keep it secure and independent, peaceful and prosperous. We will always serve Singaporeans first to protect their well-being, livelihoods and way of life.”

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4. The SAF Scholarship, introduced in 1971, is a prestigious scholarship second only to the President's Scholarship. The SAF Merit Scholarship and Defence Merit Scholarship were introduced in 1983 and 2002 respectively. The SAF Engineering Scholarship was introduced in 2016 to attract engineering talent to join the SAF under the Military Domain Experts Scheme. The SAF Medicine Scholarship and SAF Local Dentistry Scholarship were introduced in 1991 and 2010 respectively. These scholarships are awarded to those who aspire to serve as military medical professionals.

5. Both the PSC Scholarship (Engineering) – Defence and Security, and DSTA Scholarship nurture top engineering talents for Singapore's defence and security sector. The PSC Scholarship (Engineering) was launched in the 2017 to build and strengthen the Public Service's leadership pipelines in the engineering and technology sectors. The DSTA Scholarship was introduced in 2000 to attract budding engineers and scientists with a keen passion for Science and Technology to provide leading-edge technological solutions for Singapore's defence and security.

6. All scholarships aim to recruit top students from each cohort of school-leavers to join the defence sector. This year's scholarship recipients, who have demonstrated academic excellence and outstanding leadership qualities, will be pursuing their undergraduate studies at reputable local and overseas universities.

7. Upon completion of their tertiary education, recipients of the uniformed scholarships – The SAF Scholarship, the SAF Merit Scholarship, and the SAF Engineering Scholarship – will return to the organisation to assume a variety of challenging appointments that will groom them for senior command and leadership positions in MINDEF and the SAF. Recipients of the SAF Medicine Scholarship and SAF Local Dentistry Scholarship will return as Medical Officers and Dental Officers, and be groomed for senior medical positions in the SAF Medical Corps. The Defence Merit Scholarship recipients will return as Defence Executive Officers, and be groomed for senior management positions in MINDEF by taking on varied job challenges to hone their skills in critical defence areas. The PSC (Engineering) – Defence and Security, and DSTA Scholarship recipients will be groomed through multiple career pathways for engineering and technological leadership positions in the defence technology community.

8. Also present at the awards ceremony were senior officials from MINDEF and the SAF, DSTA, DSO, and members of the PSC. In-service scholars, school representatives, as well as other officials viewed the awards ceremony virtually.

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