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SCHOLARSHIPS

Powering young talent

ZULITA MUSTAFA
zulita@nst.com.my

THE financial aid given by Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB), under Yayasan Tenaga Nasional (YTN), to deserving scholars may seem like an annual agenda, but for some of its recipients, it is the decisive factor for them to continue their studies.

Growing up, G. Mahesan, 18, from Ipoh, Perak always wondered how his family would fund his tertiary education.

With this question constantly lingering in his mind, he makes it a point to seek out financial opportunities and work hard so that he will qualify for a scholarship.

When he broke the news of securing the YTN scholarship for a four-year civil engineering degree at Universiti Tenaga Nasional (Uniten), his family, especially his mother, was speechless but relieved.

"My parents only earn enough to make a living. My two brothers are still in school. I never knew where the funds for my studies would come from but I knew I wanted to study and make something of myself," said Mahesan, adding that lack of funds should not be an obstacle to higher education.

"I have been independent since I was 12 when I attended Maktab Rendah Sains MARA, Pasir Salak, a boarding school in Perak.

"I want my brothers to be proud of me and look up to me as an inspiration for them to strive even harder," he said, adding that he is eager to serve in TNB after graduation, as it is an ideal place to learn and grow.

His mother S. Sarala Devi said she could not be more proud of her son.

"My son has been away since Form One and has just spent the past few months with us. He is my eldest son and I want the best for him but we are a middle income family and are grateful for the scholarship.

"He will be away again for the next five years, in pursuit of his interest."

Fellow scholarship recipient Siti Husna Anuar, 18, does not want to be a financial burden to her father, a police officer, and her mother, who works at the Inland Revenue Board.

"I have studied hard and applied for four scholarships. With help from YTN, I will pursue a degree in electrical power engineering," said Siti Husna.

It is also a double joy for Siti Husna as she is one of 20 scholarship recipients to pursue a degree overseas.

She will begin her foundation year at INTEC Education College before leaving for Australia.

"I was speechless when I read the congratulatory message from YTN. My parents wanted me to become a doctor but I am interested in engineering.



Shaari Md Nor (seated, third from right) and Amir Hamzah Azizan (seated, fourth from right) with YTN 2019 scholarship recipients at the award ceremony held in Bangi Resort Hotel. PIC BY AZHAR RAMLI



G. Mahesan



S. Sarala Devi



Norisma Hanum Mior Ramli

After I attended TNB's Nurturing Future Leaders programme, which aims to tap the talents of bright students with a keen interest in the power and engineering sector, I am sure of my choice of studies.

"I do not qualify for TNB's My Brighter Future scholarship due to household income but the YTN scholarship is open for youth with excellent academic and co-curriculum background."

Her mother Norisma Hanum Mior Ramli said the chance for her daughter to join TNB after she finishes her studies is a bonus in light of the problem of unemployed graduates.

"I am thankful for the scholarship as it is not easy to apply for a study loan, let alone repay it."

The scholarship will provide Muhammad Afif Muhd Gaddafi Mustapha, 18, the chance to further his studies in electrical power engineering at Uniten.

"Like many students, I applied for other scholarships as well but was rejected. So this YTN scholarship is a blessing as I am able to stand tall among other scholars," he said.

His mother Dr Nurzam Suhaila Che Hussin said: "Muhammad Afif is my firstborn and I am so proud of him.

"He has a very good scholarship from an established corporation in the country and I hope that he will inspire his brothers and sisters," she added.



“This year, we have increased the number of recipients from low-income families to 2,000 and extended the scholarship to those undergoing TVET programmes at polytechnics and community colleges.”

AMIR HAMZAH AZIZAN
TNB chief executive officer

PIVOTAL ROLE

For decades, TNB has played a crucial role in pursuing social mobility through education and sports, apart from being the prime mover in powering the nation.

Since its Central Electricity Board days, TNB has offered scholarships to

YTN FINANCIAL AID FOR 2019

TNB, through YTN, has spent more than RM1 billion since 1993 to provide scholarships and convertible loans to 12,000 bright students.

Total number of applicants	7600
Shortlisted	900
Selected	130

INFOGRAPHICS: NST

students with good grades to further studies at public institutions of higher learning, locally and abroad.

YTN director Datuk Dr Shaari Md Nor said: "This year, we offered 130 scholarships to last year's Sijil Peperiksaan Malaysia school-leavers who have excelled not only in academics but also in co-curriculum activities. Twenty recipients will pursue their studies overseas after finishing a one-year foundation course in Malaysia."

Selected overseas students will attend the A Levels, International Baccalaureate and Foundation programmes at preparatory centres in the country and they must achieve the required excellent results before being allowed to continue their studies abroad.

"Those selected to study at Uniten

will also have the opportunity to study abroad for one semester under the YTN mobility programme to gain exposure overseas.

"This scholarship comes with great responsibility for scholars to succeed in the academic field as well as develop leadership qualities and integrity. They must always be cognisant of changes so that TNB is always relevant in the eyes of the people," he said, adding that TNB is committed to developing human resource.

Meanwhile, TNB chief executive officer Amir Hamzah Azizan, said beginning last year, YTN has allocated RM10 million for 1,000 students from low-income

families to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics at seven universities including Malaysian Technical Universities Network under TNB's My Brighter Future scholarship.

Scholars receive RM10,000 a year for tuition fees and living allowances until they graduate.

"This year, we have increased the number of recipients from low-income families to 2,000 and extended the scholarship to those undergoing TVET programmes at polytechnics and community colleges.

"I hope this financial aid will be able to help the families cover the costs of their children's education," said Amir, adding that the applicants do not have to attend an interview. "The students are selected from the Unit Pusat Universiti database and priority is given to those registered with e-kasih. This scholarship is a unique gesture to help poor students."



Siti Husna Anuar