

Stepping Stones and Building Blocks

By Arthi Bahadoor

Almost 200 students from all corners of the world came together in 2013. They shared a dream- a passion to study the art of medicine. It was their individual roads that merged in Jinan, China and so Shandong University Cheeloo College of Medicine became their home...for the next 5 years at least.



The Winter made the start of that journey seem dismal but then there was a warmth of light in the form of a humble man, Professor Dr. Syed Mohsin Ali. I remember the first day he spoke at our orientation for that is when he became an inspiration to me. From that day onward, he has continued to be the epitome of philanthropy. There is a manner in which a good doctor should conduct themselves and I have learnt this from Dr. SM Ali in every aspect of life: consideration of humanity; dealings with the university; hospital/medical ethos; patient care; social skills; skills development; family matters; core values and belief. I cannot share my story without including him because he is a pillar of our community and he should know that his continuous efforts are acknowledged and greatly appreciated!



The spirit on campus improved during Summer every year as Summer meant sports. There was a new atmosphere about sports with the entry of my class, G2013. The competition definitely increased upon our arrival but there was a bond formed between us. This was something that set us apart from other years. We had an understanding between us where everyone's voice was heard regardless of gender, nationality or cultural belief and through that platform many matters were resolved. My most valued memories with my classmates stem from the sports field. I wish to see them prosper tremendously in the future.



There have been many difficulties faced by us, as foreign students, here on campus and in China. I've assisted in many cultural, sporting and volunteering events to enrich my life here. I have also assisted in many self-funded events lead by the humanitarian I have mentioned above.



From these events emerged the establishment of the Student Representative Council (SRC). My co-founder, Dr. SM Ali, and I wanted the students to have a voice and an identity that they could unite under. We are proud to see the improvements of the SRC and excited for the future as well.



SDU is a bridge to the world. I understood this through my participation in the Belt and Road initiative at Shanda as well as my involvement in SDU delegations to South Africa. In 2017, I was presented with the opportunity to lead the establishment of the SDU Alumni Alliance SA during my clinical rotation year. I have also been privileged to meet many humble leaders of our university as well as the Chinese Embassy in SA. It has been a great adventure to graduation and I was honoured to be chosen to speak at our commencement on the 24th of June. I delved into the journey of growth over these five years.



As I say farewell to this beautiful campus of ours, I admire the steps taken and hurdles crossed on this journey. I would not be a strong independent woman if it were not for the path I walked. I am grateful for the different personalities I have met along the way because they have all shaped me. I respect the hardships as they help me understand my purpose...When you study the natural sciences like the art of medicine, you can't help but marvel at the intricacies of this creation we call life.