

62 attend virtual Duke-NUS ceremony to mark graduation

Yeo Shu Hui

Dr Low Zhen Luan was a nurse for four years at Singapore General Hospital, but felt she could do more for her patients.

The 31-year-old, who had graduated in 2013 with a nursing degree from the National University of Singapore (NUS), said: "There was a knowledge gap between what I knew and what I practised. I had a good learning experience in nursing, where I met many role models who motivated me to do and learn more."

So she decided in 2017 to return to school – enrolling in the Doctor of Medicine (MD) programme at Duke-National University of Singapore (NUS) Medical School.

She was among 62 graduands yesterday who attended a virtual ceremony to mark their graduation.

They comprised 54 who graduated from the MD programme, two from the MD-PhD programme and six with doctorates.

Manpower Minister Tan See Leng was guest of honour.

He congratulated the Class of 2021 for completing their studies under the tough conditions brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In his speech, Dr Tan, who is also Second Minister for Trade and Industry, said he hopes that the graduands can continue to transform the face of medicine in Singapore through research and innovation to improve the lives of Singaporeans.

He noted that equity in healthcare is a growing concern in Singapore.

Dr Tan said that as healthcare treatment costs continue to rise, there is a need to balance the equities of treatment options for lower-income families.

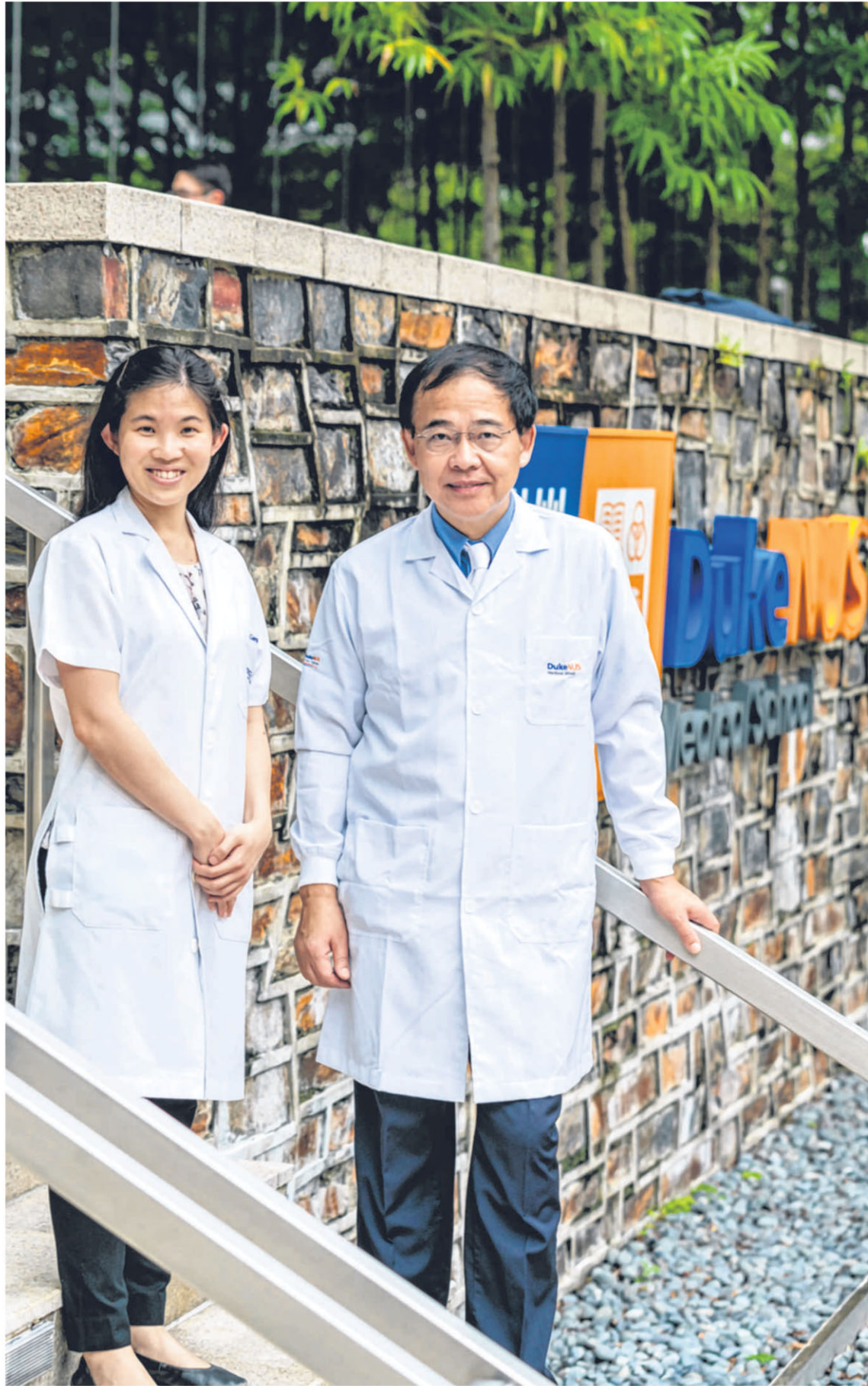
"There is a need for research and innovation to not just break the ceiling of technological advancement, but to also improve efficiencies and access to the care and support of the lower-income segments and the population at large who may need it more but have difficulty accessing it," he added.

Dr Tan was joined at the virtual event by Duke-NUS dean Thomas Coffman, NUS president Tan Eng Chye and SingHealth Group chief executive Ivy Ng.

Graduands were led by Duke-NUS vice-dean of education Ian Curran in reciting the Hippocratic Oath for the second time, having first pledged it during their first year. It is taken when one is admitted into the medical profession to profess to uphold professional ethical standards.

Dr Geraldine Goh, who received her MD-PhD, also bagged the Duke-NUS Achievement Prize for Outstanding PhD or MD-PhD Student.

She had worked with Professor



Dr Geraldine Goh, who received her MD-PhD and bagged the Duke-NUS Achievement Prize for Outstanding PhD or MD-PhD Student, with Professor Wang Linfa, whom she had worked with. PHOTOS: GERALDINE GOH, LOW ZHEN LUAN

Wang Linfa, one of the world's leading experts in zoonotic diseases, bat immunology and pathogen discovery.

Dr Goh, 30, said that she had focused her research on the immunology of bats because she was fascinated by how the animal's immunology differs from that of humans and other animal hosts.

Asked how she would like to contribute as a doctor, she said: "For me, it is never forgetting that we have a shared humanity and thus a great responsibility to our patients to be at a place where they can share their burdens."

"And, in that way, (we can) play a part in alleviating suffering and being a beacon of hope."

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MOTIVATED TO LEARN MORE

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DR LOW ZHEN LUAN (left), who was a nurse for four years at Singapore General Hospital.