

Bright future thanks to Fund

A STEP closer to achieving her dream of becoming an accountant, Liong Yeen Fun has much to be elated about. As a recipient of the Star Education Fund scholarship awarded by FTMS-ICL, she is glad that her hard work has paid off.

The 20-year-old who spends her holidays helping her hawker father at his stall says she applied for a scholarship to complete a diploma in accounting and finance last year.

"My parents are very proud that I am the first in the family to attend college as the rest of my siblings dropped out in secondary school," says the youngest among four siblings.

Recognising Liong and her six coursemates who were also Star Education Fund recipients last year, for their diligence and consistent results, FTMS-ICL is awarding all seven a second scholarship to continue their studies through a Higher Diploma in Accounting and Finance at the college.

Pride fills the voice of Alice Lim as she explains how her daughter, Soh Wee Lyn, is now pursuing her dream thanks to the Star Education Fund. This IT-savvy mother says she was reading the online edition of *The Star* when she came across an article describing the scholarships available under the Fund.

Both mother and daughter were thrilled when Soh was called for an interview.

"Winning the scholarship means so much to my parents and me as it is a chance for me to pursue my dream of opening my own boutique some day," says the Batu Pahat lass who is the youngest of four daughters.

Soh is currently pursuing a Diploma in Business with Information Technology at the Asia Pacific Institute of Information Technology (Apiit).

"I miss having my daughter around but the most important thing is knowing she is happy doing what she wants," says Lim.

Another parent, Mrs Chiew, concurs. Her daughter Jessica is pursuing a degree in accounting and finance at the University of East London (UEL).

"We miss having her at home but we are happy she is studying what interests her," she says. Mrs Chiew explains that as her daughter is already studying in London, she accepted the scholarship award on her behalf.

Explaining that her father could not be present to watch her receive the scholarship award due to work, Usha S. Gangaram says she is thankful that she is able to start working towards her



(Hons) in Business and Management at Rima College last week," says the excited lass.

Noorsyazlina Termizi and Abdul Rahim Harun say IT is a challenging subject which they feel can be mastered through perseverance and diligence. The duo are pursuing Diplomas in Information Technology at the SAL Group of Colleges.

Lim Chin Boon, Glenn Kempfert and Kevin Jason who are from Montfort Boys Town, said they would like to work at *The Star* upon completion of their certificates in printing.

Present to witness their daughter Phoebe receiving a scholarship award for an Advanced Diploma in Computer Science from Informatics, Mr and Mrs Liew say the education fund is a good form of community service.

"We are grateful to the Star Education Fund as although we are unable to provide for Phoebe's education, we still want her to be able to follow her dreams," says Mr Liew.

The Star Education Fund was launched in 1994 to provide higher education opportunities for deserving Malaysian students. The steady growth of the fund — from 17 awards in 1994 to 217 this year — is heartwarming as it shows a strong commitment from the private education sector to help deserving students obtain equal access to education.

The fund is made up of two tiers. Tier One comprises scholarships offered by Star Publications (M) Bhd while Tier Two scholarships are those offered by various higher educational institutions, both local and foreign.

This year, 26 institutions came forward to offer more than RM5.1mil worth of scholarships in various disciplines and at different levels.

There was stiff competition for the scholarships with the Star Education Fund receiving 4,000 applications, mostly through its online link.

Star Education Fund sec-

factors.

"Besides strong academic achievement, we were also looking for those who are actively involved in the co-curricular activities," he said.

"Other important considerations include the applicant's financial background and the number of siblings in his family."

Applicants stood a better chance too if they showed that they had done their research on the programmes they were interested in pursuing at the particular institution.

Star Publications (M) Bhd group chief editor Datuk Ng Poh Tip, who presented the

eight Tier One awards (sponsored by *The Star*), thanked the participating colleges for their generosity and for making it possible for the students to further their education.

She also urged students to do their best as they owed it to themselves, their parents and their sponsors.

The new faces contributing this year are Malaysia Institute of Integrative Media (formerly Akademi TV3), Cenfad, Alif Creative Academy and Binary College.

The other contributors to the Star Education Fund are Sedaya College, Asia Pacific Institute of Information

Technology (Apiit), SAL Group of Colleges, Informatics, Pusat Teknologi dan Pengurusan Lanjutan

(PTPL), Olympia College, Institut Perkim-Goon, University of East London, Kolej Damansara Utama, Taylor's College, Inti College Malaysia, Inti International College Penang, Sunway College, Saito Academy of Art, Cybernetics College of Technology, FTMS-ICL, Stamford College, Institute Advertising Communication and Training (IACT), Rima College, Goon Institution, Prime College and Lim-KokWing Institute of Creative Technology.