



Hon congratulating some of the recipients of the Star Education Fund 2002 scholarships.

Joyful reunion for duo

Last Tuesday's Star Education Fund awards presentation ceremony was cause for celebration in more ways than one for recipients Yeng Jen-May and Lee Jade.

Not only did the two 19-year-olds receive full tuition waivers to pursue the degrees of their choice, the presentation turned out to be a reunion for the duo who are long lost best pals.

"We used to be really good friends in primary school. We used to line up together and did almost everything together. However, once we both went to different secondary schools, we lost touch. We've bumped into each other once or twice but it's actually been six years since we caught up with each other.

"It was such a lovely surprise to see Jade again at the Fund presentation," said Jen-May who will pursue a Bachelor of Engineering programme at Inti College Malaysia.

Jade, on the other hand, will be reading Law at the University of East London (UEL) despite scoring three As in the Sciences for her A-levels.

"I am glad I got the scholarship to read Law. Although I studied Science all my life, I hate it. Honestly, like many other Malaysian students, I was brainwashed into believing that if you are a good student, you must study Science and that Arts courses were only for those weak academically.

"I don't know why I let myself be influenced to do Science even though I hated it. I want to read Law as I am interested in the subject and I want to know my rights in society!" said Jade who left for London on Thursday night.

Like Jade and Jen-May, numerous students have benefited from the Star Education Fund.

For Poon Yi Mun, getting the scholarship to pursue a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Accounting at Inti College was "good fortune".



Postgraduate students Mei Sze (third from left) and Yoke Cheng (fourth from left) and their families meeting up for dinner to get better acquainted.

"Both my parents are rubber-tappers and if I did not get the scholarship, I would have enrolled in Form Six and then tried to get into one of the local universities," said the 18-year-old from Pahang.

For single parent Mrs Woon, the news that her son Marcus Woon Soon Chung was successful in getting a scholarship was a relief.

"My husband passed away while he was overseas earlier this year so this scholarship will really help me a lot financially. I am really thankful to *The Star* and Prime College for helping me in my hour of grief," she said.

A scholarship recipient that is still "in shock" is Suthakaran Pannirselvam.

"This is not just unbelievable, it is extremely unbelievable! Although I did okay in the SPM examination last year, I did not get exceptional results and so was unsure if I would get the scholarship. However, I was active in co-curricular activities and am thankful that my application was consid-

ered. This is just what I need."

Suthakaran, whose father works as a hospital attendant and whose mother is a production worker, will pursue a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Computing and Information Systems at Sunway College.

Said Monfort Boys Town director Bro Mark Tee: "The scholarship scheme is really a great help as it gives these young boys the opportunity to learn a trade and stand on their own feet."

Monfort Boys Town has for many years participated in the Fund by accepting students sponsored by Star Publications (M) Bhd, to do their Certificate in Printing.

Like in previous years, the Fund was bombarded by applications - over 6,000 in total.

As a result, competition was keen and most applicants were a bundle of nerves as they waited to hear news of their application.

Said Leow Kah Man: "I was really

nervous before the interview. I was told by candidates who had gone through the interview session that it was tough. They told me that I had to be calm so that I could answer all the questions thrown at me but I was very nervous.

"After the interview, I thought I merely had a 50-50 chance at the scholarship. I am really happy I got it!" said Leow, who will be doing the same course as Suthakaran.

For twins Crystal Ooi Yuan Yuan and Constance Ooi Ying Ying, the scholarships are just another thing they would share.

"We often find ourselves thinking along the same lines and liking the same thing. Now we both got scholarships to do what we like," said Constance, the older of the two.

Constance will pursue a Diploma in Visual and Digital Arts at the Limkokwing Institute of Creative Technology while her twin will do a Diploma in Digital Animation at The One Academy.

Postgraduate scholarships were also up for grabs this year, offered by institutions like the Malaysia University of Science and Technology, Napier University, UEL and the University of Bradford.

Among the successful postgraduate scholars were Ghan Yoke Cheng and Ng Mei Sze who will pursue an MSc in International Marketing Management and Masters in Business Administration respectively at UEL.

"I am very, very excited. I was at work when I got the call informing me that I was successful and I could not contain my excitement ... I started jumping up and down. My colleagues were wondering what was going on!" said Mei Sze.

Both Mei Sze and Yoke Cheng and their families met for dinner and the girls have requested for joint accommodation so they can "look after each other".