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## Reshaping the future of medicine

The Star, Malaysia



# Reshaping the future of medicine



Nicholas Wong and UCSI University medical student Kelly Wong were supervised by Prof Williams at Harvard in 2018.

YOU study medicine to do impactful things such as saving lives, boosting medical outcomes and taking medical science further at Harvard.

Nicholas Wong Jian Yao can certainly relate as he has ticked all the boxes above in ways large and small.

Aspiring to be a doctor ever since he was knee-high, Wong pursued the Doctor of Medicine programme at UCSI University.

While there were many pull factors, Wong was motivated by the fact that UCSI's top medical students are selected annually by Harvard for a year of high-impact research.

And his big break came when he was chosen in 2018.

"My year at Harvard Medical School was a great experience and an eye-opening journey," says Wong, who is currently a houseman at Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan in Kuantan.

"You go to work every day knowing that someone is doing impactful things from reducing cardiovascular risk to finding a cure for cancer.

"Being able to work – and learn from – some of the world's best minds was inspiring. It really changes your perspective and brings out the best in you."

At Harvard, Wong was supervised by eminent endocrinologist Prof Dr Gordon Williams and attached to a research unit in the Hormonal Mechanisms of Cardiometabolic Injury Laboratory.

Focusing on genetics and environmental factors, Wong's research unit was looking to uncover the underlying causes of hypertension, more commonly known as high blood pressure – a major risk factor for heart diseases.

"Our findings suggested that the underlying mechanisms of high blood pressure are gender-specific," explains Wong.

"The male homozygote for the relevant risk alleles may derive more clinical benefit than females in therapy based on the inhibition of the Angiotensin II blockade or Angiotensin II receptor or the inhibition of the Angiotensin-converting enzyme."

For his efforts, Wong got his findings published in top-ranked medical journals. He returned to complete his clinical years at UCSI and graduated as valedictorian in 2022.

While he has done much, Wong is

convinced that more lies ahead.

"This is only the beginning of my journey," he opines. "I will continue to investigate the intriguing interactions between hormones, kidneys, and the heart."

At UCSI, precocious medical students like Wong benefit from a dynamic learning environment.

Lessons take place within the compound of UCSI Hospital – a state-of-the-art healthcare institution that features the latest medical equipment and the capacity to expand to up to 1,000 beds.

Prof Dr Cheah Shiau Chuen opines that this unique arrangement brings out the best in students.

"Students get unparalleled exposure to the hospital setting and they get to see and understand how the latest medical equipment is used," says Prof Cheah who serves as the dean of UCSI's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

"They will gain a first-hand account of what it takes to be a successful doctor. And they will develop a crucial understanding of the entire healthcare system.

"Smarter healthcare begins with smarter education and UCSI is committed to realise the potential of its medical students."

She adds that 12 UCSI medical students have benefited from a year of medical research at Harvard. And three of them are currently in Boston.

Following the success of the high-impact arrangement, more international research opportunities with renowned universities are in the pipeline.

Medical students may also apply for scholarships that are disbursed by the UCSI University Trust.

With these factors, and more, in play, UCSI stands out as a university that prepares aspiring doctors for the future of global healthcare.

UCSI stands out as one of Asia's top private universities in the QS World University Rankings 2024. It is classified in the world's top 1%, by virtue of its rank of 300.

The varsity presently operates four campuses in Kuala Lumpur, Kuching, Port Dickson and Bangladesh.

■ For more information, log on to [ucsiuniversity.edu.my](http://ucsiuniversity.edu.my) or contact 03-9101 8882/ 011-3591 5021.



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### SUMMARIES

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