

ORIENTATION DAY

"No man lives an island." As being emphasized by the Dean of UMS School of Medicine on the significance of group dynamics, it is important for medical students to acquire great teamwork in order to heighten medical services in future. An orientation day for the 8th batch of medical students, organized by the UMS Medical Students' Association (MEDSTAS) was carried out on 17th July 2010. The main objective of this event was to introduce all the newly-entered first year medical students to the UMS School of Medicine. It also aimed to build a good rapport between the first and second year medical students.

We had the bright day start off with an opening ceremony speech given by AP Dr. Zainal Arifin, Deputy Dean of UMS School of Medicine. According to him, medical students are not supposed to be excellent merely in academics, but they should be good in outdoor activity as well. Dr. Zainal also stressed the importance for a medical student to have secure responsiveness and flexibility, thus doing well both mentally and physically in order to resolve difficulties. It was then followed by speeches given by Ngu Min Huang, vice president of MEDSTAS and Cheo Seng Wee, president of UMS Asian Medical Students' Association (AMSA). They grabbed this golden opportunity to introduce both MEDSTAS and AMSA to the juniors. On the other hand, we were grateful to have our MEDSTAS Advisor, AP Dr. Shamsul Bahari Shamsudin and his family to join us in this peachy morning.

Wasting no time, all the first year students were divided into 10 groups. Each group was required to create a cheer to boost their confidence level for completing all the exciting activities of the day. To assure that all the events go smooth, there were 2 facilitators placed in each group for assistance.

There were 10 different challenging and captivating stations situated all around the compound of SPU in SST. The participants (all the first year students) were required to complete all the stations, provided with only limited amount of time at each station. The first station might have been a great disappointment for many participants as they had to get themselves in dirt to roll across a muddy pool located behind the building of SST. They were required to form something in the middle of the pool based on the clue they got. They could proceed to the next station once their group leader managed to guess the thing correctly. At the second station, the ability of the juniors to act was tested. The juniors were asked to perform a short drama. 3 minutes were given to them for discussion and planning, and another 7 minutes for them to act. In this station, various were talents revealed, which showed the flexibility of medical students in performing different tasks.

At the third station, juniors were required to transfer water using their mouths from 3 pails to fill in a bottle until full. The 3 pails of solutions with sour and salty tastes contained different mixture of materials such as chili, coffee and bitter gourd. Each team was given a short period of time to have their bottle filled. Teams who failed were given penalties. Next, they proceeded to the 4th station. Here they were asked to line up horizontally and had their legs tied together with ropes. They had to devour a selection of foods consisting of raw bitter gourd, chili, onion and garlic. Then they walked up the stairs while singing the UMS anthem. Up to the second floor, eggs, syrup and baked beans were "served".

In station 5, members of each group were asked to "decorate" their facilitator by using newspaper. Then they were required to fit in a confined area where balloons containing liquid were thrown at them. Their responsibilities were to protect and prevent the balloons from hitting their facilitator. After that, the names of seniors were asked as a means to cultivate good affinity between seniors and juniors. Juniors proceeded to station six and seven and once again they had their clothes dirty by flour, eggs, syrup etc. The juniors were called for the chicken dance performance too. After that, in station eight, each group had to choose another representative whereby the person was blind-folded and crawled over a distance full of obstacles and grabbed a specific item in a bucket using only his or her mouth.

The juniors then entered station 9. They were divided into guys and girls and asked to fit themselves in 2 separate small circular areas. Questions related to the organisation of MEDSTAS and AMSA were asked. Mixtures of syrups, onions, garlic and eggs from second floor were poured downwards and towards them once they answered incorrectly. The final station was where each junior was given a balloon and their mission was to prevent the balloons from bursting while trying to walk like a duck. Last but not least, they performed commando crawl as well.

The orientation ended at 2pm. Before leaving, all the seniors and juniors were given their lunches. Both the juniors' mental and physical abilities were put to test and it was proven that medical students are able to perform well both academically and physically. Even though the activities were tiring, it was worth remembering and a joyful day for everyone who turned up and made this orientation day a success. We do hope that all the objectives of this event were attained and will be looking forward for another great year of success.

By: Khoo Shea Khean

