An experience like no other

KARISHMA Kaur Gill started her journey as a Bachelors of Dental Surgery student at the International Medical University (IMU) five years ago. She shares her university experience:

"For me, IMU served as a halfway house between leaving home and getting a job. It was refreshing to take a step away from childhood towards maturity and self-discovery.

"Training started at the simulation lab before we progressed to treating patients. The pre-clinical phase helped us adapt to a university routine like none other.

"For the first two and a half years, we had to attend at least 80% of all medical lectures alongside our dental lectures and by the end of one and a half years, our pre-clinical lab sessions were added with clinical dental sessions. My schedule was 9am-5pm daily for 10 semesters.

"It's baffling how a simple girl in her twenties could juggle this schedule and involvement with various extracurricular activities, such as dance and volunteering, without failing.

"Most of the pre-clinical exposure was concentrated on the practical vocation of mastering hand dexterity for dental treatments. It was also a platform to bond with our lecturers and nurture our confidence to treat patients better. Though strict in pointing out the flaws in our skills, these lecturers knew what was best for us.

"I am so grateful for the close student-dentist relationship that exists with IMU's teaching. Each lecturer from the fields of oral surgery, oral medicine, community oral health, restorative, endodontics, periodontics and pedodontics throughout my clinical years provided knowledge that has made me the equipped dentist I am today. Each student was assigned a lecturer as a mentor and I was blessed with a caring lecturer.

Karishma started her journey as a Bachelor of Dental Surgery student at IMU five years ago.

Karishma created a charity toothbrush project titled Care2Brush.

"I found myself enjoying community work through the community oral health subject and excelling relatively easily in oral medicine and pathology. Our dean, Prof Allan Pau, was a heavy influence on my community work, encouraging and creating platforms as a community oral health lecturer.

"With that, I was able to create a charity toothbrush project titled Care2Brush and helped provide free dental check-up and care for an urban poor community through an assignment.

"Furthermore, for oral medicine and pathology, I was trained to represent the university in two competitions – one in Malaysia and one in Bangkok. Despite winning only the former, I still felt well equipped for both competitions. Though I was a dental student, I felt I had the knowledge of an experienced clinician. These lecturers were role models that aspire me to one day become a lecturer too.

"Ending this five-year journey was simply bittersweet and I cherish every memory with my best friends and lecturers. No words can express my gratitude to these lecturers, dental technicians and nurses for their steady guidance and care throughout the years."

At IMU, dentistry students can opt to complete the entire degree in IMU or study the first two and a half years of the degree in IMU and then transfer to one of its five partner universities in Australia, New Zealand, UK or Canada to complete the dentistry programme.

The intake for this programme is in February each year. If you are interested, apply online today.

If you have just completed your SPM and do not have pre-university qualification, consider enrolling in the one-year IMU Foundation in Science, the direct route for entry into IMU's degree programmes.

■ For details, visit *www.imu.edu.my* or email start@imu.edu.my or call IMU at 03-2731 7272.