

Award for aspiring changemakers

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Virtual ceremony: Noraini, together with Dr Mazlan, Mazlina, Dzameer, Prof Othman, Prof Muhd Zuazhan, Prof Yuserrie and award recipients.

A TOTAL of 11 graduates from the B40 community were bestowed the Pingat Tunku Award by the Tunku Abdul Rahman Foundation recently.

The group, who graduated from public universities in 2017 and 2019, received their awards from Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Noraini Ahmad in a virtual ceremony on Dec 10.

Aswinkumar Gunasekaran, who received the 2019 Gold Pingat Tunku Award, is from a single-parent family. He graduated from the National Defence University of Malaysia (UPNM) as the Best Medicine student of his batch and was the Chancellor's Award recipient.

“I am a big believer in giving back to the community as my success would not have been possible without the support of many people in my life,” he said.

Aswinkumar shares the Gold award with Fatin Nursa’adah Azman from the International Islamic University Malaysia.

During the ceremony, Noraini, who is also the foundation’s board of trustees chairperson, said the Pingat Tunku Award recipients are outstanding young leaders who not only achieved excellence in university, but also possess a strong desire to serve the country.

“It is my hope that with the award and its recognition, they will honour the aspirations of the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj to uplift Malaysia, especially during this crisis period when Malaysians are deeply affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.”

Datin Seri Sharifah Menyalara Hussein, Tunku Abdul Rahman’s granddaughter, said the ideal Tunku Award recipient is one who is thoughtful and articulate, and wants to bring about positive changes in Malaysia.

“As custodians of my grandfather’s noble aspirations for the nation, we look out for graduates who are prepared to live up to his values as a lifelong commitment.

“It has been an absolute privilege to get to know the inspiring stories and motivations of our Pingat Tunku Awardees.

“I have no doubt that they will continue to embody Tunku’s spirit in whichever vocation they choose to pursue,” Sharifah Menyalara, who sits on the foundation’s board of trustees and was a key assessor in the award selection process, said.

Also present were Higher Education Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Dr Mazlan Yusoff, the foundation’s board of trustees members Mazlina Mokhtar, Dzameer Dzulkifli, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia deputy vice-chancellor (student affairs) Prof Datuk Dr Othman A. Karim, UPM deputy vice-chancellor (student affairs) Lt Kol Prof Dr Muhd Zuazhan Yahya and Universiti Malaysia Pahang deputy vice-chancellor (student affairs) Prof Datuk Dr Yuserrie Zainuddin.

TAGS / KEYWORDS: [Pingat Tunku Award](#) , [Tunku Abdul Rahman Foundation](#) , [Virtual Ceremony](#)