

1. You should list 3 impressive points that you have noticed in any assembly that was held in this term (e.g. content of the sharing / arrangement / announcement etc.)

Professor Yam shared his experience in his university studies of how he went from almost not being able to choose his desired specialty to opening a charity organisation targeting the disadvantaged to provide poor children with free eye check-up and treatments. He was not very academically inclined during his studies and he only by chance came across a chance that allowed him to get into his specialty. He not only did not hoard this opportunity all by himself, but he also actively shared this opportunity with his peers as an act of goodwill. He mentioned that he had to convince a lot of parties to even establish the charity organisation since a lot of other people believe that it was not a worthwhile endeavour since the resources to benefit ratio was simply not very feasibly. I found his work very impressive and very inspiring, especially considering that he himself came from a disadvantaged family and was poor growing up, but he still managed to work his way up the ladder and become a successful eye doctor and even open a charity organisation to give back to society. What I found most impressive was that his very apparent passion and determination for this endeavour, often sacrificing his holidays to go to the charity clinic to consult with patients. He mentioned that his specialty is in very small demand in Hong Kong and does not really provide a lot of financial compensation as a result. His dedication to keep on carrying out his work despite the difficulties and the lack of support from the government and other parties is very admirable. The work that he did helped countless children avoid permanent eyesight degradation by providing the care that they needed at the critical time. He mentioned that this is equivalent to giving them a second chance at life since he believes that being born in a disadvantaged family should not mean that they should be neglected care and suffer lifelong impairments as a result.

Aside from his achievements, the most memorable part of his sharing was the gut-retching feeling about how wrong it is whenever he had to do enucleation and evisceration surgeries on children. Despite his initial intention of helping children regain their vision or slow down their vision degradation, he also had to face the unfortunate reality that some diseases completely disallows any chance of treatment and that the only way to save them from further pain is to induce the loss of their vision sooner than they would have had had they not received treatment. He discussed the dilemma between leaving the children with a lifelong disability and letting them live out the rest of their lives with their vision intact before they succumb from the disease.

2. You should identify, integrate and reinforce the insights gained from the assembly that you have mentioned in point 1.

As someone who is not affected by vision problems in a major way, I never was able to fully comprehend the impact of vision problems on people's lives, especially the non-apparent ones. It was especially saddening to learn that there are blindness-causing diseases that can easily be treated with as simple as regular medicinal eye drops if only they receive adequate treatment and care during their childhoods. I could not imagine how many people across the world have lost their vision despite it being completely preventable simply because of their lack of access to proper medical care due to their economic background. Most of them are not even

aware that they have vision problems until it is too late since their symptoms can easily be masked by less severe diseases. While I am glad that there are people like Professor Yam who are willing to dedicate their lives to helping these people in Hong Kong, I am also aware that similar problems are also present in other aspects and for other common preventable and treatable diseases such as sclerosis.

At the same time, considering that it is my first time ever hearing of this check-up program, and that there are no televised or physical advertisements regarding this program, I feel that the government should also do more to promote this program to the public. I believe that there are a lot of people who are not aware of this program and that they are missing out on the opportunity to receive free eye check-ups and treatments, and this problem is not limited to this program either. Although I might not be able to contribute yet with regard to this aspect, I will be sure to jump at any chance to spread the awareness about medicine in general to the public if I have the opportunity to do so in the future.

As a biomedical engineering student, I feel lucky that I am also in a similar position as Professor Yam was once in, where I am able to feasibly contribute to the betterment of healthcare for the disadvantaged in the future with my work. His work led me to contemplate that despite the advancements in medicine, it all means nothing if the people who need it the most are not able to access it. It shifted my perspective that the accessibility of healthcare is just as important as the technology itself. Instead of always chasing to build the latest and newest medical technology, I should also consider how to refine existing technologies, streamline them to make them cheaper to make them more accessible, which I find is often overlooked in modern medical sciences.