Everyone belongs to many different communities and/or groups defined by (among other things) shared geography, religion, ethnicity, income, cuisine, interest, race, ideology, or intellectual heritage. Choose one of the communities to which you belong, and describe that community and your place within it. (max 1500 characters)

“No! That means gold. It’s Ah gím with a rising tone,” said Ah Gong (grandpa) as he got frustrated by my intonation error.

Ah Gong always makes sure his kids and grandkids address the other family members with the proper name. He also makes sure that we don’t lose this cultural heritage. He inspired me to be someone who advocates one’s culture in another country and creates a more diverse, richer cultural immersion.

As an incoming freshman, I looked forward to be like Ah Gong and advocate my Indonesian culture at CUHK. This was how I met PPIT, an Indonesian Students’ Association in China. Its close-knit community helped me feel comfortable despite the challenges presented during the pandemic. Our vastly diverse community members would share bits and pieces of our cultures through video calls every night. For instance, we’d share the bizarre foods and unusual local festivals that each region has. Despite the differences in accents and habits, a feeling of unity is always felt whenever we e-gather daily, making them just like my family.

One of PPIT’s missions is to introduce the rich Indonesian culture on campus. With my marketing and communications experience, I volunteered to be the PIC for our cultural events. My first task is to understand the CUHK community and how we can penetrate into their minds, which led me to the toxic 996 work culture in China: working from 9 am to 9 pm 6 days a week. Realizing this could be a penetration point, I leveraged Indonesia’s harmonious, chill, and socially-invested work culture. It worked well! Our first media campaign for our first 2022 cultural event was a success, garnering many positive feedbacks.

My Ah Gong’s upbringing may have been what initiated me to advocating culture. However, the deeper understanding of Indonesian culture through my second family, PPIT, is what confirmed my aspiration in cultural advocacy, and I want to keep being this advocate wherever I go.