

## A Doctor's Only Mission is Saving People's Lives

During the Covid-19 pandemic and way into the future, a doctor's mission never changes, it is to save people's lives. That was repeated by Do The Bon, a GP student at DTU. In November 2000, Bon won first prize in a medical scholarship contest organized by the Ministries of Health and of Education & Training in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), at the Thai Nguyen University of Medicine & Pharmacy. The contest was forum where medical students from all over the country could present their opinions on the values, priorities and characteristics required to be a good doctor.

Bon's essay on the, "role and mission of medical students in public health issues during the Covid-19 pandemic" was well-received by the jury. Bon explained that this year's contest was more meaningful than ever, because the actual virus attack was the main topic.



*Medical student Do The Bon (left) at the 4th Medical Education Conference. Photo: AN*

Bon remarked that: *"Medical Students Respond to Medical Challenges of the 21st Century"* was my topic, which clearly stated my opinion on the mission of a doctors and their moral qualities."

His essay begins with a story about the relentless efforts of a team of Vietnamese doctors working to save the life of a British airline pilot, patient 91, who contracted Covid-19 in HCMC.

It was a real fight by the “angels in white coats” to save him from the Grim Reaper and the nurses and doctors did not only work to be acclaimed heroes. *“In my essay I stress that their mission never changes, it’s saving people,” Bon said. “These days, it is also vitally important for doctors to stay informed and adapt to all the latest medical techniques.”*

Bon interned for two months at the Hue Central Hospital, during the most intense wave of the outbreak, and gained a deep understanding and awareness of medical ethics and a medical practitioner’s responsibilities. During his first meeting with the interns, the hospital’s deputy-director spoke about the cytokine storm. Impressed with his knowledge and understanding of the issue, Bon proactively arranged to meet the doctor privately.

*“He completely surprised me his knowledge of the cytokine storm, which he learned while he was only an intern,”* added Bon in his essay. *“What made me respect him most was his modesty and I retell the story to remind myself that, no matter one’s age, modesty and a thirst for lifelong learning are the two main virtues needed to become a really good doctor.”*

Continuing his story about the tense days fighting the epidemic, Bon mentioned the teams at the Cho Ray Hospital and the Bach Mai Hospital who worked day and night at the epicenter of the outbreak. He said: *“The moment the ‘white-coat warriors’ walked into the Danang hospitals, the media portrayed them as superheroes!*

*“But one thing is certain, that they do not have superpowers or bear the responsibility to save the world, they just have hearts and minds to share with the community.”* Bon believes there are two things that need to be shared, knowledge and goodness. *“In this life, we must have an open heart, then let the wind blow it away, blow it away”, from De Gio Cuon Di, by Trinh Cong Son. “Future doctors must learn that giving is receiving,”* wrote Bon. *“We should never stop gaining knowledge and upholding our values, in order to fulfill the highest ambition of doctors, to save people’s lives.”*

### **How do medical students learn?**

Tet is approaching, but Bon is still busy interning and applying his academic knowledge practically to learn more about treating his patients.



*Bon's essay wins first prize. Photo: AN*

Considered to be the university major with the heaviest study and internship load, what are a medical student's study methods?

*"I think self-study is the 'instinct' you need at university, and not only in medicine," Bon explains. "Lecturers only provide you with a 'fishing rod', it's up to you to seek understanding and hone your knowledge and skills accordingly. The most valuable thing you'll get from teachers are experience, lessons in life and career stories, things that no class can teach. Everyone has their own individual study methods, which must continually provide with the inspiration to persevere."*

Bon also mentioned the study method he uses, known as STAR: See, Think, Act, Reflect. In clarification, he added: *"'See' means reading and research, experience and observation. 'Think' includes synthesis, analysis and criticism. 'Act' is the application, including planning, experimenting and gathering data. Finally, 'Reflect': is deliberation, concluding and adjusting. Sometimes, you don't need to be a brilliant student, you just need a good method."*

In the classroom, Bon continues to dedicate himself to accumulating the world's latest medical information and his inspiring essay reveals the opinions, ethics and responsibilities of a future doctor.

*(Media Center)*