

# Tough times call for selfless heroes



By **ASHLEY TANG**

**NATION**

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**Star**  
**GOLDEN HEARTS AWARD**  
Supported by: **Yayasan GAMUDA**

**LITTLE BIG CHANGES**

Nominate a person or group whose acts of kindness have brought about positive change.

Ten winners will be selected and among them, one will be awarded the coveted Gamuda Inspiration Award.

Who should win this year?  
Tell us at [bit.ly/sgha2021](https://bit.ly/sgha2021)

Nomination closes on **July 31, 2021.**

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia is not short of unsung heroes, many of whom willingly and selflessly step forward to help the needy and less fortunate without expecting anything in return, says Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye.

The chief judge of the Star Golden Hearts Award (SGHA), now in its seventh year, said this was why these individuals and groups were being singled out and duly recognised for their selfless acts of kindness and dedicated work.

“An unsung hero is someone who is dedicated to the needs of deserving groups and the poor. They do it not for monetary benefits nor honours but with the duty to help the poor, the downtrodden and the less fortunate.

“They do this as a sense of duty because they have a golden heart. These are the people we want to identify and recognise,” he said in an interview.

Lee said the impact of SGHA continues to grow every year with the award receiving a record 515 nominees last year, consisting of individuals, groups and organisations.

Lee said he believes the challenges brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic have not discouraged these unsung heroes from carrying out their selfless acts or prevent nominations from coming in this year.

“I believe there are still plenty of them out there ready to serve,” he added.

SGHA celebrates everyday people who make a positive impact on society and promote unity

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It was launched in 2015 with Yayasan Gamuda becoming a committed partner in the following year.

The theme this year is “Little Big Changes”.

SGHA is supported by Star Foundation, the charitable arm of Star Media Group Bhd, aimed at delivering meaningful initiatives with lasting outcomes to a diverse group of beneficiaries.

Yayasan Gamuda head Ts Sharifah Alauyah Wan Othman said the Covid-19 pandemic was one of the many challenges over the past year.

“We know that the effects of the pandemic will remain for some time and will need to be addressed,” she added.

Sharifah Alauyah also said the partnership with The Star has dramatically increased its impact in improving the lives of communities as a whole.

With the unprecedented events of the past year, she said they saw change makers exploring ways to quickly adapt their strategies to address rapidly mounting issues.

Star Media Group chief content officer Esther Ng said they could not have asked for a better partner in doing good and were looking forward to bringing SGHA to greater heights together.

She added that this year, they were honoured to have a new judge on board, Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre (MaGIC) people vice-president Farah Othman.

Ng said Farah would bring new perspectives and insights from the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Malaysia, since over the years there has been an increase in nominations and winners from the social entrepreneurship circle.

“SGHA has honoured many incredible individuals and organisations over the years. By amplifying their stories of doing good, our past winners have gone on to make a bigger difference in their respective social causes, ultimately transforming people’s lives for the better.

“This is one of Star Media Group’s ways of fulfilling our responsibility as a media organisation – to help shape the nation and promote unity among Malaysians,” she added.

A total of 10 SGHA winners will be selected and one will be awarded the coveted Gamuda Inspiration Award.

Nominees undergo a stringent selection process which includes internal screening, shortlisting and final judging by the panel of esteemed judges.

Lee, Sharifah Alauyah, Ng and Farah are among the eight esteemed judges for this year’s SGHA.

The others are former Yayasan Kebajikan Negara chief executive officer and environmental advocate Datin Paduka Che Asmah Ibrahim, Professor of Medicine, Universiti Malaya and International AIDS Society president Prof Datuk Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman, prominent social

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Nominations are open to any Malaysian individual, group or organisation which carries out selfless acts or long-term initiatives to help others irrespective of race, religion or background.

The public can nominate candidates for the award at [bit.ly/sgha2021](https://bit.ly/sgha2021) from now until July 31.

## How the nominees will be judged



“ This year, I will go with the originality of ideas. How they apply this idea for the good of society. ”

**Esther Ng**



“ This year, I hope to see individuals or groups that are truly compassionate, who help others irrespective of race or creed and promote interracial understanding and unity. I am also looking forward to seeing those who care seriously for the environment as well as volunteer squads that reach out to people to remind them to comply with the Covid-19 SOP. ”

**Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye**



“ Last year, we had an overwhelming number of submissions, so I'm expecting the same this year. Hopefully, we can find those that integrate technology in giving assistance. Those that look at things beyond just identifying and giving one-off aid. This means that decisions are made based on data with good assessments. We should start looking at more sustainable giving. ”

**Datin Paduka Che Asmah Ibrahim**



“ I would be looking for originality. As Covid-19 has been around since last year, I have seen new heroes with new causes emerging. I also want to see how being kind can be developed into something more that inspires the community or the vulnerable group. I expect the nominees to share how they persevere to stay on track to achieve their goals. These are the qualities that I think people can relate to. ”

**Syed Azmi Alhabshi**



“ Even before the Covid-19 pandemic started wreaking havoc in our lives and society, we know there are many individuals and organisations who go out of their way to help others. We see this in the list of nominees which continue to impress and inspire each year. ”

**Prof Datuk Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman**



“ SGHA is a well-deserved award that recognises the selfless acts of individuals and groups in helping others despite the risks that they face every day. By acknowledging these social champions and heroic organisations, we amplify their efforts in improving the lives of many. ”

**Farah Othman**



“ Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there will be a lot of retrospection taking place across our communities. Hence, we are progressively looking for potential innovators and entrepreneurs coming up with sustainable solutions to ensure continuous improvement and progress in communities. Knowing where resources and innovation need to be deployed, what has worked, and what has been successful will help nominees develop a long-term strategy and collaborate to map a way forward. ”

**Ts Sharifah Alauyah Wan Othman**



“ I am looking for fresh ideas and innovative initiatives. I hope to see inspiring work by groups or individuals that benefit marginalised communities, and more unsung heroes who spend time and money for the development and growth of others who really need it. I also hope to see more diverse initiatives that protect the environment, create awareness for schoolchildren and the well-being of indigenous communities. ”

**Vijayakumari Pillai**

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