

THE ROBERT LOH PROFESSORSHIP IN CLINICAL INNOVATION IN OPHTHALMOLOGY



A \$10 Million Professorship in Ophthalmology, in tribute of the late Dr Robert Loh, who had inspired several generations of Ophthalmologists.

Dr Loh's contributions to the field of Ophthalmology in Singapore have been immense. From a small department consisting of a handful of Ophthalmology trainees, he built up and trained numerous expert eye surgeons within a decade and further instituted in them his ideals and values in the treatment of patients, regardless of their social status.



Seated L-R:
Mr Leow Hock Min (optician), Drs Ang Beng Chong, David S L Tan, Tong Heng Nam, Chua Sui Kim, **Robert C.K. Loh (Head)**, Lim Kuang Hui, Voon Gone Lin, Raymond Phua, Chng Hong Chee

Among his many contributions, he led the establishment of the first Eye Bank, the introduction of micro and laser surgery, lens implants, retinal detachment surgery, corneal grafting and other innovative procedures that we take for granted today.

Early in the 1960s, Dr Loh set up the Singapore Society of Ophthalmology (SSO) with only 13 members, and was elected as its founding President for more than a decade (1963-1976). Today, SSO has a membership of more than 200 ophthalmologists. The Society served as a precursor to the formation of the Chapter of Ophthalmologists, which subsequently, evolved to become the College of Ophthalmologists of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore (AMS). In 1964, Dr Loh was elected as President, Singapore Medical Association (SMA), being one of only 2 Ophthalmologists, who has served as the President of this Association.

During the 1960s, Dr Loh also served on the AMS Council, advancing much of Singapore's postgraduate specialty training programmes and higher examinations. In 1975, he was elected as Master of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore where he served until 1978.



Dr Robert Loh (seated in front row, 5th from the right) at the AMS' Annual Induction Comitia Dinner held on 16 April 1970.

Charity was also a lifetime commitment to Dr Loh He led the YMCA from 1970, where he served wholeheartedly and with distinction for over 20 years. He was conferred President Emeritus in 1993. For his dedicated commitment in service to the community, he was appointed by the Singapore Government to lead the newly restructured National Council of Social Service in 1992 as its first President. It was only in 2002 that he retired.



Receiving social service award from President Nathan

While many may not personally know him nor had the privilege to meet or interact with Dr Loh, nevertheless, the Ophthalmology fraternity in Singapore have been one of the significant beneficiaries of Dr Loh's vision, legacy and foundation-building work in the early formative years of Singapore Ophthalmology in the 1950s and 1960s.

Today, Singapore Ophthalmology has a global, leading reputation as a center of excellence and this is thanks to giants such as Dr Loh. We must and will continue to uphold his vision, dedication and legacy, and the Robert Loh Professorship in Ophthalmology provides such an opportunity.



Dr Robert Loh and Mrs Mary Loh

How we intend to raise the funds?

The family of the late Dr Loh will jump-start the fund raising process **via a donation of S\$250,000**, in support of the establishment of this endowed Professorship in Ophthalmology.

We hope to raise another S\$2.25 million, leveraging on the late Dr Loh's strong ties and connections to the Medical, specifically the Ophthalmology fraternity, as well as the community, and community leaders.

The Singapore National Eye Centre (SNEC) will on its part match these efforts to raise the first S\$2.5 Million, via a matching donation of **S\$2.5 Million**

The cumulative donations of \$5 Million will be channeled to Duke-NUS towards the establishment of the endowed Robert Loh Professorship in Clinical Innovation in Ophthalmology. We hope that this then further attract a matching grant of **\$5 Million** from the Ministry of Education (MOE).

The cumulative interest yield from this endowed fund will be used to support our efforts to augment Ophthalmology eye-care delivery, through these activities:

- i. Clinical Innovation, Research and Development activities at SNEC/ SERI
This will allow the selected candidate to pursue ground breaking research and innovation, in line with our goal to provide the best-in-class eye care to our patients. The funds will be used to support the salary of the holder of the named Professorship; and/ or to support clinical innovation, research and development projects and programs, or to fund research support resources, including manpower, equipment, as well as any operating cost to facilitate these activities
- ii. Education and Training activities at SNEC/ SERI
The funds may also be used to support educational scholarships/ awards, and the development of ophthalmology modules, curriculum and teaching tools. This reflects our commitment to education and training to ensure the next generation of eye care professionals.
- iii. Academy of Medicine's Robert Loh Lectureship series
Funds may additionally be utilized to partially support the Academy of Medicine's Robert Loh Lectureship series, subject to applicable approvals.
- iv. Community Services, and/ or related Humanitarian mission
The funds may further be utilized to collaborate with YMCA to bring medical teams overseas, as part of the Duke-NUS Student Community Services, and/ or related Humanitarian mission, subject to applicable approvals.