Some give their time – and that’s money too

BY EPHRAIM LOY

UNIVERSITY education is heavily subsidised for Singaporeans, with the Government bearing up to 70 per cent of the cost.

But some families still find it difficult to cope – and this is where bursaries and scholarships come in.

A recent project undertaken by my classmates found that there are some 90 such schemes available from various schools and organisations.

The heartening thing is that some have been started by youths – such as 24-year-old Singapore Management University graduate Darren Lim, who started a scholarship scheme for his alma mater.

But such acts are few and far between: One need only look at the recent report that just 1 per cent of its alumni donated money to the National University of Singapore last year.

However, the other 99 per cent should not be viliified: After all, many recent graduates may be working hard to repay education loans.

Everyone has bills to pay, and the older alumni have families to take care of.

It may be difficult for them to spare some cash, and we should understand and respect that.

But it is not always about money.

After graduating from my polytechnic in 2002, I spent several weekends during national service contributing articles to my alma mater’s newspaper.

And I know of some outstanding former students who dedicate their time to organising charity events, golf tournaments, career talks and other alumni activities.

Some join alumni committees to play a more active role.

While it is true that they do not contribute huge sums of money, they do sacrifice a considerable amount of their time.

And, as the saying goes, time is money.

So, just because some former students are not donating money, it does not mean that they do not care.

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