AG Chao urges law firms to support training of new breed of lawyers

SINGAPORE: Attorney-General Chao Hick Tin has urged the legal profession "to dispel the myth" that its sole interest is to make money.

And one way to do this is to follow the footsteps of some law firms such as KhattarWong, Wong Partnership and Rodyk & Davidson LLP and individuals like Mr Joseph Grimberg and Mr Harry Elias in giving generously.

AG Chao said this is the way to nurture a new generation of young lawyers who are articulate and have a strong sense of commitment to society and the less fortunate.

AG Chao was speaking at the Singapore Management University where he witnessed a memorandum of understanding between SMU and KhattarWong.

The law firm is spending nearly S$325,000 to sponsor several programmes to train SMU law undergraduates, for a period of five years.

KhattarWong is also offering scholarships with no strings attached.

Part of the scholarships is a regional training programme which involves a three-month internship for five outstanding students each year.

The internship comes with a S$10,000 allowance for each student and covers airfare and accommodation when they receive training in KhattarWong's overseas offices.

AG Chao said that as a new law school, SMU Law School will need the strong support of the legal profession as it embarks on the challenges of training future lawyers.

He added: "I am glad and encouraged to learn that SMU Law School is receiving the support of the legal profession as well as the community at large. It marks a promising beginning for a new law school as it sets out to groom a new breed of legal professionals.

"I sincerely hope that more local law firms, as well as individual lawyers, will respond wholeheartedly to the call to uphold the philanthropic spirit. The move by the Law Society to provide more pro bono legal services in the HDB heartlands is a commendable step in the right direction." - CNA/ch