AHMAD Zaim Azizool Arif’s personal motto is “be the best that you can be”. With a gold Pingat Tunku Award from the Tunku Abdul Rahman Foundation (YTAR) under his belt, he’s certainly shown that he can talk the talk and walk the talk.

Receiving the award for the year 2012, the 24-year-old who studied Economics at the International Islamic University Malaysia (UIAM), graduated with a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.96 and was on the dean’s list for every semester of his studies.

“You have to optimise your time so that maximum output can be achieved,” he said on his successful study ethic.

But the humble gold medallist, who now works at Petronas, said his success wasn’t due just to his own efforts.

“I must thank my parents for their constant prayers and blessings.”

Ahmad Zaim, along with five other recipients, received his award from Second Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh at a ceremony in Putrajaya recently.

Dr Azmad Kareem Anwardeen, the 2013 gold medallist who graduated from UIAM’s medical programme with a perfect 4.0 CGPA, said it was important to excel both in academics and co-curricular activities while at university.

“A lot of students have the mentality that a degree is a ticket to employment. But in today’s competitive environment, you need more.”

He suggested that students use their time at university to develop skills like communication, teamwork, critical thinking and entrepreneurship.

“I took part in debating and was the secretary for the Medical Sciences Students Society. I also took part in some charity work in Indonesia.”

The Hospital Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia house officer added that he would like to specialise in internal medicine.

The two gold medallists received a 3.2g gold medal and RM5,000 each. Receiving a 3.2g silver medal and RM3,000 each were 2012 and 2013 silver medallists Shahzada Khan Nawab Khan, who studied mechanical engineering at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, and Maisarah Ahmad Kamil, who studied Teaching English as a Second Language at Universiti Teknologi Mara.

The 2012 and 2013 bronze medallists were Kanchana Munisamy, who studied project management at Universiti Malaysia Pahang, and Umahwathy Sundararaju, who pursued microelectronic engineering at Universiti Malaysia Perlis. They each received a 3.2g bronze medal and RM1,000.

At the ceremony, Idris said that the Pingat Tunku Award recipients displayed more than just academic and co-curricular excellence.

“Recipients also have strong leadership qualities and mirror the admirable attributes of the late Tunku Abdul Rahman such as loyalty and kindness.”

YTAR is a non-governmental organisation that provides higher education aid to all Malaysians irrespective of race or religion, including the Tunku Abdul Rahman Scholarship, the Tunku Abdul Rahman Study Endowment and the Tunku Abdul Rahman Education Grant.
Winners all: (from left) Kanchana, Shahzada Khan, Ahmad Zaim, Dr Azmad Kareem, Maisarah and Umahwathy.

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