

BOOSTING NUMBER OF COMMUNITY LAWYERS

3rd law school part of multi-pronged approach

WE THANK Mr Teh Joo Lin ("Focus on community law may backfire"; Wednesday) and Mr Alwyn Kok Jia An ("Raise profile of community law"; Forum Online, Wednesday) for their feedback on the proposal for a third law school focusing on community law.

Like Mr Kok, we believe the setting up of the third law school is a targeted approach to address the current shortage of community lawyers.

We recognise that community law is not for everyone, and the intention is to focus on training individuals with a passion for community law to pursue this career path, especially those who have gained useful experience in related fields

such as social work.

The admission process for the third law school will also be geared towards selecting students with the appropriate disposition and aptitude.

We assure Mr Teh that the school is only one part of a multi-pronged approach to address this issue.

We recognise that there are many existing lawyers who are graduates of the National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Management University (SMU) and overseas universities and have found fulfilment in practising family law, criminal law and other areas of law that touch the lives of everyday Singaporeans.

In addition, NUS and SMU have started introducing work

attachments with the Legal Aid Bureau and legal practitioners to expose and encourage more of their students to take up community law.

Mr Teh also mentioned that there is a growing effort among law firms and by the legal profession to promote pro bono work. These are all important initiatives to instil in our lawyers and students the importance of community law.

We welcome Mr Teh and Mr Kok to contact us so we can continue to benefit from their ideas and insights as we shape the development of the third law school.

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