

To the Class of 1972,

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and safe New Year! I just wanted to touch base with you all and let you know how everything is going. Having finished my exams at the end of November, I've spent the last few months on my summer break. It's really been the first opportunity I've had to reflect on 2018 as a whole. Despite it being very challenging in lots of different ways, I really feel like it was a time of tremendous growth, in which I learnt a lot about myself and life over the course of the year.

I also reflected on the fact that I had the opportunity to form new connections with a myriad of people in 2018. I am still very thankful to have had the honour of meeting some of you last year, and I hope to really get to know you all better as time goes on. The University also informed me that the scholarship will continue for the duration of my degree, which was such amazing news to receive at the end of what was an unforgettable year. Without a doubt it will go an extremely long way in alleviating a large part of the financial burden we are going through, and my family and I can't thank you all enough. Knowing that such esteemed and well-respected people are willing to support and put their faith in someone like me who is going through a difficult time really is a testament to your kindness and generosity.

From an academic standpoint, I was really pleased with my results at the end of the year. As difficult as it was to really devote myself fully to my studies at certain points, I was always motivated and driven by wanting to make the most of this opportunity, as many people have sacrificed for me to be studying medicine and pursue my dream of one day becoming a doctor. For the next 3 years I will spend all of my time learning at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, which I am super excited about! I can't wait to finally be in a clinical setting and really understand what it means to be a doctor. I'm very much looking forward to spending time with patients and learning a whole host of communication and practical skills which I think will form the foundation of my practice in the future.

I have spent much of this month with friends and family doing things which I really love – such as being outdoors, playing sports and reading. Seeing my Mother and siblings smiling and enjoying life has also helped to put my mind at ease. I feel re-energised and ready to tackle 2019 with a clear head and will try my best to make you all proud and validate the good fortune you all have blessed me with.

I hope you all have a wonderful year and I look forward to seeing you all soon!

Yours truly,

Omar