Witnessing a veterinarian at the animal clinic I volunteered at bringing a lifeless kitten back to life and seeing the tears of joy of its owner ignited my passion to want to make a difference in people's lives and, most importantly, animals' lives.

I once attended a talk given by a veterinarian from a local veterinary practice in 2017. I was enthralled by her descriptions of her experiences in veterinary school when she worked with cows and her eye-opening experiences like having to put her whole arm into a cow's anus to test her palpation skills. This made me realise that being a veterinarian was more than just being around cute animals - it was really about doing anything in their power to help any animal feel better.

Volunteering at a local animal clinic last year has taught me invaluable insights to the daily running of an animal clinic and life of veterinarians. I observed dental and emergency surgeries which further intrigued and inspired me to maybe one day carry out these surgeries. I saw some interesting cases, such as a cat waking up in the middle of its surgery and the veterinarians working fast to put it back on anesthesia, which I learnt to remain calm throughout. I learnt how to handle animals when they have to swallow tablets, do basic preparation before surgery such as inserting an IV catheter. I have seen distraught owners coming in with their sick pets and empathised with them. Through these experiences, I realise the importance of people skills of veterinarians in working with owners, veterinary technicians and other veterinarians. From learning A level Chemistry, I realise how veterinarians can apply chemistry in their practice as they have to make decisions such as the type and amount of medicine to administer. Understanding A level Biology such as immunity and infectious disease allowed me to make the link to how a disease can affect an animal. I also understood the limits of veterinary medicine and when euthanasia is the best option for an animal. Veterinary medicine is ever-changing and progressive, and it is important for veterinarians to adapt.

I also had the opportunity to listen to professors of veterinary medicine. For instance, a talk which I attended this year highlighted the intrinsic link between curing animal disease and helping humanity. As the entire ecosystem is interconnected, animal disease could make its way to humans. Inspired by the talk, I went on to research on the issue, and realised that there have been instances where wide-spread animal diseases resulted in significant economic losses and human catastrophe such as the 2011 Rinderpest episode where diseased cattle in Africa resulted in famine and disease in the region. Animals are also used for therapy to help people recover from or cope with mental disorder. This human-animal bond is a mutually beneficial and dynamic relationship between people and animals. I believe that the veterinarian's role in the human-animal bond is to maximise its potential.

I enjoy playing sports, especially basketball during my free time. It has been my passion since I joined and represented my school team in primary school, even having the privilege to be the captain of my schools' team to representing Singapore in the ASEAN Schools Games in 2018. This sport has taught me the importance of teamwork, humility and perseverance. It has encouraged me to challenge myself and have self-confidence in the face of challenges. I also love helping people and volunteered weekly at a school for the intellectually disabled where I planned and carried out activities for them. These experiences have helped build my interpersonal skills such as communication, tactfulness and patience- qualities that I believe are important for a career in veterinary medicine.

If given the opportunity to study veterinary medicine, I would be able to achieve so much in the future such as conserving animal welfare and ensuring the safety of public health.