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DESPITE politics not being his usual area of interest, Chong Ee Jack took on the challenge of creating a reel about a politician who inspired him the most.

His entry recently won him first place in *The Star's* Reels of Achievers Recognised (StarROAR) 2025 Junior Reporter Contest.

The contest, held from July 21 to Aug 31, was organised under *The Star's* Newspaper-in-Education (Star-NiE) programme in partnership with Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology (TAR UMT).

Participants were required to create a reel – between 30 seconds and three minutes long – in which they played the role of a news reporter and shared the story of an inspirational figure featured on *The Star's* print or digital platforms.

The reels were then posted on Instagram with the hashtag #StarROARJuniorReporterContest and by tagging @starbrats.

Winners were judged on content accuracy, creativity, integration of *The Star*, and reel popularity.

Prizes included Touch 'n Go eWallet credits worth RM1,000, RM700 and RM400, along with 10 consolation prizes valued at RM100 each. All winners also received certificates of achievement.

Inspired by Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong, Chong said it was important for him to feature the MCA president in his reel to highlight his contribution to TAR UMT's affordable tuition fees, which have helped ease students'

TAR UMT students ROAR on reels

Star ROAR

Reels of Achievers Recognised

financial burden.

"In this competition, I thought to myself that many people would choose athletes or celebrities, so I decided to step out of my comfort zone and focus on something I rarely engage with in real life – politicians," the 23-year-old told *StarEdu*.

Meanwhile, second-place winners Chen Li Juan and Nurifah Sallehuddin, both 20, also ventured into unfamiliar territory, as they had no prior experience in reel creation.

Their winning entry featured fashion icon Datuk Jimmy Choo.

"Everyone knows the brand, but not many people know that the founder is from Penang, so we wanted to create this video to inform viewers," Chen said.

Although speaking in front of the camera was challenging, the duo found the contest enjoyable, noting that they were more accustomed to writing-based assignments in class.

Third-place winner Laetricia Janiel Caballero Jesuthason selected activist Heidy Quah Gaik Li as her inspirational figure, moved by her unwavering efforts to advocate for greater freedom of online speech in Malaysia.

"Even though I don't have a large social media following, I was able to share my video



We made it!
Chong (second from right) with (from left) Chen, Nurifah and Laetricia. – LEONG WAI YEE/ The Star

"In this digital age, it is important not only to live our lives offline but also to build an online presence. Create content and let people see your authentic self – as long as you are genuine, the number of viewers does not matter. Giving your best in everything you do may not always lead to the exact outcome you hope for, but it will always reflect the effort you put in."

Chong

through friends, and they shared it with their friends.

"It was really nice because people actually watched it – some even messaged me saying they enjoyed learning from it. So, even though it was a challenge, it all worked out in the end," the 21-year-old shared.

In his opening speech at the award ceremony held at TAR UMT in Setapak, Kuala Lumpur,

"We would encourage our juniors to take part because the experience goes beyond winning. Participants gain valuable exposure and a certificate that can be included in their résumé – especially for those interested in journalism. Since the competition is organised by *The Star*, being recognised as a winner also adds credibility and may open doors when applying for related opportunities."

Chen and Nurifah

on Dec 10, Star Media Group circulation sales senior manager Andrew Lim said the expansion of the StarROAR contest to include university students had brought new energy to the programme.

"Last year, we saw incredible passion from secondary school students. This year, with university students joining in, your

"Don't leave it until the last day. Take time to plan your submission, as preparation really matters. It can also be a fun experience to work on a project with friends. More importantly, choose an inspirational figure you genuinely admire for your reel – that passion will show in your work."

Laetricia

fresh perspectives showed us how powerful and innovative storytelling can be.

"Keep asking questions, keep creating and keep believing in the power of your voice, because your story might just change someone's life."

Also present at the event were TAR UMT Faculty of Communication and Creative Industries dean Dearnna Kee June Chen and Department of Communication and Media Studies associate dean Loh Me Ping.