

MY LIFE

Once a Josephian, always a Josephian

In getting university alumni to donate to alma maters, YouthInk writers say there is a need to create an emotional bond between school and student

SCHOOLS should keep in mind that even after graduation, the alumnus is still very much a part of the school. My alma mater, St Joseph's Institution (SJI), does this very well.

I have left SJI for more than five years, but am still very much in the loop about what is going on. I receive the SJI newsletter every quarter and frequently get e-mail inviting me back for school events. Just a few days ago, my old scout troop invited

my whole batch to dinner.

Last year, when there was a debate in SJI over alleged elitism in the school, every old boy was invited to attend the meeting. After the meeting, the minutes were mailed to everyone.

I wasn't even that active in school, but by virtue of being an old boy, I was given a voice. It wasn't even just any voice. The SJI Old Boys Association plays a significant part in SJI's policy-making and my voice was a

voice that mattered.

Earlier this year, I was applying to Canadian universities and needed to send copies of my transcripts over. I showed up without an appointment, but the assistant principal personally photocopied more than 50 pages for me and stamped and signed every page. Within the hour, I was sent on my way.

I didn't even have to sign in at the school and exchange my identity card for a pass. The SJI security guard just waved me on with a smile. The canteen uncle also recognised me. Everyone treated me warmly and I felt as though I had never left.

I have friends who have long left SJI and gone on to other schools, but when asked about their education, the first thing they always say is: "I was from St Joseph's."

This is why, till this day, I still proudly call myself a Josephian.

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