

# WEO EMERGING STARS – A JOURNEY OF LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Emerging Stars programme, organised by the World Endoscopy Organization (WEO), aims to cultivate the next generation of leaders in gastrointestinal endoscopy, with a particular focus on enhancing communication and essential “soft skills”. Over the course of three years, more than 60 endoscopists have participated in this intensive training programme which is divided into three modules, each conducted over the span of one week per year. In October this year, 15 endoscopists, all under the age of 45 and hailing from diverse regions including Europe, the USA, Latin America and Asia, successfully completed their three-year journey in Cairo, Egypt.

Candidates for the Emerging Stars programme are selected based on several criteria related to leadership and professional development, including research publications, leadership roles, technical proficiency in endoscopy, age, fluency in English, and geographic diversity. The programme’s primary objectives are to foster the development of critical soft skills such as leadership, personal branding, psychological safety, team communication, stress management, work-life balance, presentation skills, and effective use of social media for influence.

Let us explore the perspectives of both the organisers and participants as they reflect on their experiences in this programme.

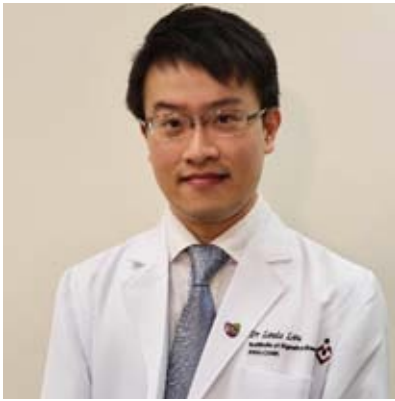


**Dr Michel Neijmann, Executive Director of WEO, after being together with the whole group for one week in Cairo this October, shared some thoughts about the programme:**

*The WEO Emerging Stars programme offers doctors a preparational course in leadership, communication, management, and cooperative problem-solving. The day-to-day working life of doctors is a high-pressure hands-on environment, in which there is very little time to focus on the professional aspects of their positions as leaders. The education curriculum in medical schools generally does not include such courses and, therefore, the WEO Emerging Stars programme is an excellent opportunity for the selected candidates to be trained in different aspects of leadership. In line*

*with the mission of WEO, each group consists of candidates from around the world, thus securing diversity in interaction and networking. The learning environment embraces many different cultures and, as such, a wide range of perspectives. Each group meets three times for a week to deep-dive into a carefully designed programme with a variety of topics and trainers. Relationships forged during this programme are strong and supportive, and we see participants exchanging knowledge, joining research groups, and arranging for their staff and fellows to join each other’s teams for a while. The programme results in a network of leaders in the field in GI Endoscopy, who support the mission of WEO in bringing the best and most relevant education to areas and communities where it is most needed around the world. Thanks to Dr Ibrahim Mostafa, the Course Director, three groups have already enjoyed the benefits of the WEO Emerging Stars programme, which is supported by an educational grant from Pentax Medical.*





Dr Louis Lau, Department of Medicine and Therapeutics, Faculty of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, when being asked if this is a good chance for APAGE young doctors to join WEO Emerging Stars, has shared some opinions:

Yes, it is. The traditional training of endoscopy in Asia Pacific mainly focused on technical aspects. Joining the WEO Emerging Stars will help to broaden the horizons of young doctors to learn more about soft skills and expand connections around the globe.



Dr Nikhil Sonthalia, Institute of Gastrosciences and Liver Transplantation, Apollo Multi-speciality Hospitals, Kolkata, India, shared his impressions about the programme:



Participants from the third batch of WEO Emerging Star programme

I think it's a unique and very well curated educational course spread across three modules with development of soft skills as its prime focus. Introducing the concepts of processed communication model, art of feedback, tips and tricks of powerful presentation, tips for facing the media, art and science of leadership skills, how to handle stress, how to build a team, how to prevent burn out, power of design thinking, etc, has been some of the highlights of the course.

In addition, meeting and networking with amazingly motivated and intelligent gastroenterologists from different geographic and cultural backgrounds sparked a great bond of friendship and inspiration in each candidate attending the course. This course helped the attendees acquire knowledge which will be useful throughout their career. It will help endoscopists to apply key principles of communication and leadership skills to build their own teams and successfully lead the team in their region, as well

as globally. Another highlight of the course was hosting the three modules in three different countries, thereby providing exposure to different cultures and lifestyles. All in all, a very thoughtful course which covers various aspects of human interactions which will definitely help the attendees in transforming themselves from a skillful endoscopist to a world class leader in Gastroenterology.

