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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Grover Cheung

P6 Class of 1998

From Personal Loss to Healthcare Innovation

For SISHK alumnus, Grover Cheung (P6 Class of 1998), healthcare innovation is more than a career — it is a personal mission shaped by memory, conviction, and a deep desire to turn science into something that can genuinely improve lives.

Today, Grover is the Founder and CEO of Qi Diagnostics, a biotechnology company developing non-invasive, breath-based diagnostic technologies to improve the early detection of cancer and other diseases. However, his journey into healthcare began much earlier and was shaped by a deeply personal experience.

When he was 15 years old, Grover's older brother was diagnosed with blood cancer and later passed away. Witnessing the impact of the disease on both his brother and his family inspired him to pursue studies in biochemistry and biomedical science and dedicate his career to healthcare innovation.

"For me, this has never been only about technology," says Grover. "It is turning innovation into something real, something that can help people earlier, reduce suffering, and prevent other families from experiencing the same kind of loss."

Looking back, Grover credits several SISHK teachers and experiences for helping shape the person he would become. One teacher he remembers fondly is Mrs Zhang, his Primary 2 class teacher. As a self-described "mischievous boy" who often failed to complete his homework, Grover frequently found himself spending recess in the staff room finishing assignments under her patient guidance.

Rather than giving up on him, Mrs Zhang continued to encourage and support him. Those early lessons in discipline, perseverance, and personal responsibility would stay with him long after he left SISHK.

His interest in science was also nurtured in simple but meaningful ways. Another memorable influence came from Science Teacher Mr Tan, who invited Grover to help care for the school's Science Garden. During recess and lunch breaks, he helped look after plants and feed the turtles and fish. Looking back, Grover believes these experiences quietly planted the seeds of his interest in biology and life sciences.

After completing his studies in the United Kingdom, he did not rush into entrepreneurship but gained industry experience in genomic testing. That experience later supported him in founding Qi Diagnostics. While the company develops innovative breath-analysis technologies for a range of health applications, its core mission is closely tied to a cause that remains deeply personal to him: improving the early detection of cancer.

"Cancer still causes more than 10 million deaths every year," he says. "The key unmet need is early detection through a test that is convenient, low-cost, and scalable, so it can be used for large-scale population screening and help identify cancer earlier, when treatment outcomes can be much better."

The science behind breath diagnostics is rooted in the understanding that changes within the body can be reflected in the gases we exhale. Interestingly, this concept is not entirely new. In traditional Chinese medicine, one of the four key diagnostic methods is '望闻问切' (observation, listening and smelling, questioning, and pulse-taking). The character '闻' refers to listening and smelling, including paying attention to a patient's breath as a potential diagnostic clue. Similarly, in Western medicine, physicians have long recognised that certain characteristics of a patient's breath can provide important clues about underlying health conditions.

Building on these principles, Qi Diagnostics designed advanced nanosensor technology to detect disease-related markers through a simple, non-invasive breath test. Combined with cancer-specific breath markers developed by the company, the goal is to make early cancer detection more accurate and improve health outcomes.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, rather than waiting passively for circumstances to improve, Grover and his team leveraged their expertise in breath-analysis technology to develop KetoAir™, a non-invasive device that helps users monitor their ketogenic state through a simple breath test, providing an alternative to traditional finger-prick blood testing. Since its launch, KetoAir™ has achieved FDA certification in the United States and is now mainly exported to the US and UK markets.

For students and young alumni interested in healthcare, innovation or entrepreneurship, Grover's advice is simple: stay curious, be brave, be patient with yourself, and remain humble. He emphasises the importance of curiosity, perseverance, courage, and empathy, noting that meaningful innovation often begins with asking thoughtful questions and maintaining a willingness to learn.

This summer of 2026, Grover will welcome eight (8) university interns to Qi Diagnostics. His advice to them is the same advice he would give to any student: stay curious, ask constructive questions, and never be afraid to challenge assumptions.

"Good ideas only become real through consistent effort, learning, and execution," he says.

As the SISHK Alumni Association and alumni community continue to grow, Grover hopes it will become more than a social network.

"My expectation for the Alumni Association is that it can serve as a real bridge between people — a platform for connection, support, and shared growth," he says.

He believes a strong alumni community can create opportunities for mentorship, friendship, career development, and mutual support across generations of alumni.

For Grover, staying connected is ultimately about gratitude and giving back to the community that helped shape who he is today. He said that the school gave him more than knowledge — it gave him values, memories, and a foundation that stayed with him through both good times and difficult ones.

We thank Grover for sharing his inspiring journey and look forward to following the continued impact of his work in healthcare innovation.

A special moment during his visit back to SISHK: Grover rediscovers himself in the 1998 yearbook, bringing back memories of his school days.