

Also honoured: 18-year-old silat world champion bags Malay daily Berita Harian's Young Achiever Award

Yeo Sam Jo

When she joined the Singapore Police Force (SPF) 30 years ago, Madam Zuraidah Abdullah did not think that she would one day become the first woman to hold the rank of Senior Assistant Commissioner.

But she did just that in 2013, adding to an already impressive list of accomplishments.

She became the first woman council member of the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (Muis) in 2007. During a secondment from 2007 to 2009, she served as chief executive for self-help group Yayasan Mendaki, helping children in troubled families stay in schools through initiatives such as mathematics workshops for weaker students. She is married with three stepchildren.

Yesterday, Madam Zuraidah, 54, received the Berita Harian (BH) Achiever of the Year Award, or Anugerah Jauhari, from Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.

Presented by the Singapore Press Holdings' Malay daily, the award honours Malay/Muslim community individuals for their achievements in their fields.

BH editor Saat Abdul Rahman described Madam Zuraidah as an inspiration during the award ceremony at the Furama RiverFront Hotel yesterday. "(She) is a model of success not only to the Malay/Muslim community, but also to the nation, having devoted her time to community work, contributing in various areas, including education, youth development and heritage."

Madam Zuraidah, who has also been chairman of the Malay Heritage Foundation's board of directors since 2010, said she wanted to share the award with her fellow men and women in blue, adding that she is thankful to the SPF for giving her opportunities to excel.

She said: "I hope my achievements will continue to inspire my community. If you work hard and put your mind to it, you will succeed. Dream that it is possible."

Also honoured last night was silat world champion Sheik Farhan Sheik Alau'ddin, who was conferred the Young Achiever Award, or the Anugerah Jauhari Harapan.

The 18-year-old won gold medals at both the world championships and the South-east Asian championships last year, as well as the Asian championships in June this year.

He was also a bronze medalist at last year's South-east Asian Games.

Mr Sheik Farhan, who is a third-year digital and precision engineering student at Nanyang Polytechnic, said he was surprised to have been picked for the award. "I didn't think I could win because my achievement has been in sports," said Mr Sheik Farhan, who started learning silat when he was three.

"I want to tell other young people: Pursue whatever you want to do; just make sure you strive for the best," he added. His father is former silat world champion Sheik Alau'ddin.

Yesterday's winners were picked by four judges: Mr Saat Abdul Rahman, former speaker of Parliament Abdullah Tarmugi, and former winners Abdul Razakjr Omat and Suhaimi Rafdi. Other previous winners include MP Halimah Yacob, fashion designer Ashley Isham and master potter Iskandar Jalil.

THE STRAITS TIMES | WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2016

Two bag Berita Harian Achiever awards



Madam Zuraidah Abdullah became the first woman to hold the rank of Senior Assistant Commissioner in the Singapore Police Force. It was just one of her many achievements, while Mr Sheik Farhan Sheik Alau'ddin showed his mettle in sport by becoming silat world and Asian champion. Yesterday, they received the Berita Harian Achiever of the Year and Young Achiever awards respectively from Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at Furama RiverFront Hotel. The annual accolades, presented by Malay daily Berita Harian, honour Malay/Muslim individuals for achievements in their fields. ST PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI SEE TOP OF THE NEWS A9