

Dear Shatin Tsung-Tsiners,

The theme of this year's English Week is heroes. Did you take a look at the posters around the school campus? I am sure you should be able to recognize some of the heroes around the world, like Mother Teresa, the missionary who helped the sick and poor in Calcutta; Gandhi, the political and spiritual leader of India; Sun Yat-sen, the revolutionary and political leader in China; Tse Yuen Man, the doctor who sacrificially volunteered to care for SARS patients. All of the heroes mentioned shared similar qualities. Because of their love and care for others, they were willing to sacrifice themselves for the betterment of people and they brought out the best parts of human nature.

There are three people in my mind in these past two months who I believe definitely deserve our admiration and support. Do you still remember the two bold firefighters who sacrificed their lives in one of the city's worst fires this year? They took off their oxygen masks in order to help other residents suffering in the fire. Finally they died from lack of oxygen. Their selflessness drew widespread praise from the public. They were originally ordinary people, no different from any other. However, their bravery and courage made them stand out from the crowd.

Another person who deserves our attention is Chen Jun (陳君), a twenty-three-year-old athlete in the Chinese wheelchair rugby team in the Beijing Paralympics held this September. The Chinese wheelchair rugby team did not get any medals in the Paralympics. It was not the terrific rugby playing techniques which drew my attention to him. Instead, wheelchair rugby is known as one of the fiercest sports in the Paralympics, although its players are athletes with some of the most severe physical disabilities among all Paralympians. All the players in the court are quadriplegics. They have various injuries in their necks and limited function in each of their four limbs. How did Chen Jun become a quadriplegic? Was it an inborn deformity? Was it an accident? I heard this sad story when I listened to an interview on a radio show. Chen Jun became quadriplegic when he was seventeen. He saw a group of delinquents bullying his schoolmates. While helping others, he was stabbed and finally became quadriplegic. However, he was amazingly optimistic in the face of such tragedy. He didn't complain about his misfortune. Instead, he trained hard to learn to play wheelchair rugby and finally became one of the most important members of his team. Do you complain about small things in your daily life? Think of the wonderful opportunities you have that are denied to Chen Jun.

How about you Tsung-Tsiners? Who is your hero / heroine? Why do you admire him / her as a hero? The ideas of heroism are simple: Bravery and courage; endurance and perseverance; integrity and honesty; willingness to sacrifice; righteousness; love and care for others, etc. Do pay attention to the people around you and you may find other heroes!

Your English teacher,

Miss Wong May Sum