"We stand on the cusp of a new beginning...

The choice is ours – today is when it begins."
Congratulations, Class of 2013!

President and NUS Chancellor Prof Tan Ken Yem, in his Commencement speech, said: “As you embark on your new journey, I hope you will value your friends, develop a strong sense of purpose and what you choose to pursue and continue. Instead of the ‘we’ to our community,” he said. NUS President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan at the event.

Looking back on his NUS days, valedictorian Ow Yeong Wai Kit from the USP, who had received his Bachelor of Arts with First-Class Honours in English Literature at NUS, was chosen by eminent scholars and public service leaders from the University and the broader community to our community.”

The new degrees were conferred at the 69th NUS Commencement ceremonies.

Design-Centric Programme

Three engineering students – Eric Chan Chun Chiang, Tan Lee Chaw and Alfred Chua Yao Wei – were among the 44 DCP students graduating this year. Their QkRehab solution for stroke patients was one of the 10 projects completed by this inaugural cohort.

QkRehab is a portable, upper limb rehabilitation device for stroke patients to repair strength and mobility through exercises such as twisting and gripping. The device can also help keep doctors and therapists informed of the patient’s progress in the course of treatment.

QkRehab clinched the Award of Excellence (Design) at the National Assistive & Rehabilitation Technology Students Challenge 2013, entitling the trio to take part in the i-CREATe Student Design Challenge to be held in Korea at the end of August. It also garnered the top prize of $15,000 at the Startup@Singapore competition in March 2013.

Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health

Gastrointestinal surgeon Associate Professor Jimmy So and infectious disease expert Associate Professor Loo Yee Sin are already specialists in their own fields. Yet their quest for greater expertise and knowledge in epidemiology and public health led them back to school again. They both pursued a Master of Public Health offered by the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health (SSSHPH) and emerged among its first batch of graduates.

By furthering his studies after 18 years of treating esophageal and gastric cancer patients, Assoc Prof So had hoped to build on his experiences and broaden his knowledge in public health. With a strong interest in gastrointestinal cancer and obesity, he has published more than 80 peer-reviewed scientific papers. Presently, he is actively involved in management of patients with gastric and esophageal cancer, morbid obesity and other upper gastrointestinal disorders.

Assoc Prof Leo decided to pursue her Masters at SSSHPH after having headed the Department of Infectious Diseases at Tan Tock Seng Hospital for eight years. She felt that it was time to deepen her knowledge as infectious disease goes hand in hand with epidemiology and public health. Studying along with students who are much younger than she was a fresh experience. Assoc Prof Leo hopes that her example would encourage her younger colleagues to never stop learning. She is currently still leading the STOP-Dengue research programme and spearheading the fight against many dengue outbreaks in Singapore.

Well wishes ...

Marking the close of Commencement 2013, members of the NUS community came together for a celebratory dinner on 18 July 2013, graced by Singapore President and NUS Chancellor Prof Tan Ken Yem and Mrs Mary Tan.

Speaking at the Commencement Dinner, NUS President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan highlighted three attributes of the NUS community that he values greatly.

He noted, first of all, that members of the University community are passionate about their work and pursuits, and are constantly looking for ways to do things differently and better. Secondly, he was heartened by the many acts and gestures of kindness and compassion on campus, which touch the wider community. Finally, he found that the NUS community exudes a “can-do” spirit, which looks to the future with optimism and hope.

Prof Tan expressed his hope that the Class of 2013 would carry with them these same qualities prized by the NUS community.

In giving the customary toast to the Class of 2013, Prof Tan conveyed his heartfelt congratulations to them and his very best wishes for their future.
In the face of relentless global competition and rapid changes in Singapore's socio-economic landscape, what does the future hold for our nation? Has it hit its peak, or is it on the downward spiral? Mr Shanmugam, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Law, addressed these questions from the perspective of Singapore's future and engaged the NUS community in dialogue over these prospects at the U@live forum held on 12 July 2013.

Mr Shanmugam began by posing the question: “Is the Singapore Miracle over?” He highlighted internal problems and a declining workforce, as well as external challenges such as global competition, and traced the implications of these for what Singapore and its people have to do in order to succeed and not increase the burden to be borne by the next generation. But given that Singaporeans today are already feeling the heat of the competition and the stress and strain of an escalating work place, the question of how to strike a good balance between the need to build up the local economy and the need to slow down to achieve a higher quality of life, is one that most people in the audience could identify with.

It was one of the first questions posed by Moderator Mr Viswa Sadasivan, Chairman of the U@live Organising Committee, to the Minister during the session. In response, Mr Shanmugam asked the young people in the audience: “What do you think you can do which cannot be done faster, better and cheaper somewhere else?” But Singapore can yet be the New York of ASIAN, breaking out of the confines of our economic size, if we get our systems right. ASEAN allows our services to be transferable, said the Minister. He added: “The key is thinking about the challenges, getting good people in, thinking 15, 20 years ahead, working out the solutions, and educating our people to the best of their abilities.”

He conceded that the people of Singapore can slow down, provided others do too. If the local community chooses to slow down while others are not letting up pace, then they will have to deal with the trade-offs. Believing it is up to the people to decide after having considered the challenges, opportunities and trade-offs, Mr Shanmugam felt the onus is, however, on the government to provide the basic framework where its people can have the opportunity to go as far as they want and do what they like. This framework, he explained, is based on elements such as access to high quality education, economic opportunities, safety, security and medical support.

During the two-hour-long session, the Minister also fielded many burning questions from the audience covering a wide range of issues. These questions included whether the paths that Singapore is taking are too politically expedient, how productivity can be increased, would legislating the maximum number of working hours in Singapore help raise the quality of life, and does a one-party political system yield more advantages than a multi-party one?

First-hand lessons from Singapore’s ambassador

Creativity, initiative, the ability to look at things with a different eye, as well as a flair for identifying opportunities and making things happen — these are some key attributes of an ambassador. And who better to provide such first-hand tips than Professor Chan Heng Chee, Singapore’s Ambassador-at-Large who had spent 16 years rubbing shoulders with political bigwigs in Washington DC? Prof Chan was sharing her insights as the former Singapore Ambassador to the US at the U@live forum on 29 May.

The political science alumna from the then University of Singapore, who is currently a member of NUS’ Board of Trustees, drew from her personal experience in developing qualities such as attempting different things when young and taking risk, exercising creativity and taking active leadership.

Prof Chan noted that even though training was provided to a diplomat, the best way to learn was by observing and gaining the necessary exposure on the job. She saw her diverse interests and background as having provided her with the best preparation for her job as ambassador. For instance, working in the newsroom during her young days made her media-savvy. She was active in literary, theatre and drama groups. Her broad involvement and passion for the arts trained her in communicating with people from diverse backgrounds on multiple topics and building good working relationships.

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First-hand lessons from Singapore’s ambassador

In an increasingly competitive and interconnected world, countries can leapfrog with knowledge easily available on the Internet. What will distinguish Singapore from the rest of the countries? Prof Chan observed that Singapore students perform well academically, but she expressed concern over their reticence. She regarded speaking out or “selling” — be it an idea or project — as critical in the art of persuasion and to achieve buy-in.

An NUS undergraduate attending the talk wondered at the kind of careers a political science student could pursue. Prof Chan highlighted that a political science student is equipped with a broad knowledge base, which comes in handy during job interviews. “Nobody is going to ask you about King Lear,” she quipped, evoking laughter from the audience.

She continued on a more serious note: “Political science is extremely versatile because it prepares you to deal with the world as it is, in issues that are there internationally, domestically and regionally.” This means a graduate in the subject can opt to be a banker, journalist, risk analyst, trader, diplomat, teacher — essentially any job, she pointed out. She encouraged more young people to take up PHDs in the discipline as she noticed a dearth of such skills locally.

Other questions from the audience included what she had observed in the US during her posting and if curiosity should be cultivated in students from the primary level. In an increasingly competitive and interconnected world, countries can leapfrog with knowledge easily available on the Internet. What will distinguish Singapore from the rest of the countries? Prof Chan observed that Singapore students perform well academically, but she expressed concern over their reticence. She regarded speaking out or “selling” — be it an idea or project — as critical in the art of persuasion and to achieve buy-in.

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Joint doctoral programme in biomedical science

NUS and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJ), Israel’s second-oldest university, are set to further the study of biomedical science with the roll-out of a joint Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree programme in August this year.

NUS Deputy President (Academic and Research) and Provost Professor Tan Eng Chye and HUJ President Professor Menahem Ben-Sasson inked the agreement on 3 July 2013. Witnessing the signing ceremony was Israeli Ambassador to Singapore Her Excellency Amira Arnon.

NUS President Professor Tan Chor Chuan said: “As the programme leverages on the complementary academic strengths of our two institutions, I am confident that it will offer a unique and world-class learning experience for our students and an excellent platform for our faculty to drive for even higher levels of excellence.”

Concurring, Prof Ben-Sasson noted that the course will equip students exposed to “their host country’s scientific advances and experiences – a major asset in today’s interconnected global scientific community.”

The joint PhD programme is a collaboration between the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore (NUS), and the HUJ Faculties of Medicine and Science. For a start, the two universities will each conduct their own selection, choosing two to three students for the programme in the next four years. The PhD candidates will spend at least nine months at each university.

At NUS, two students have already been chosen for the inaugural intake. They will be paying tuition fees set by NUS for the duration of the programme.

The two universities’ relationship can be traced back to 2010 when the NUS-HUJ Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms of Inflammation Research Programme was set up, as part of the Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise initiative by the Singapore National Research Foundation.

Professionals and students looking for a leg up in their future career will be able to acquire value-added business skills at the new NUS Centre for Business Analytics being set up by NUS and IBM, with the support of Singapore’s Economic Development Board.

The Centre will address increasing industry demand for making business sense out of massive quantities of data and incorporating the relevant intelligence in its report. About Asia Pacific IT spending, research firm Gartner predicted “big data” demand to hit 4-4.5 million jobs worldwide by 2015, and expected only one-third of those jobs to be filled.

The Centre for Business Analytics has introduced a new one-year Master of Science degree programme in Business Analytics (MSBA) from August this year. It is the first in Singapore to offer in-depth business strategy thinking and data analytics.

NUS Business School and the School of Computing have jointly developed the curriculum taught by leading experts and faculty. IBM provided a complementary industry support by appointing the Centre’s Industry Director, and by contributing its expertise to analytics technology and solutions.

The Centre will leverage on the University’s strengths across multiple disciplines, focusing on “big data” analytics and technologies, as well as consumer data, financial and risk analytics. Participants of the programme will take up eight modules over two semesters, together with a year-long professional consulting project in business analytics.

The course includes training participants in developing and fine-tuning solutions to complex business analytics problems using suitable techniques and tools, such that they can pursue careers like business intelligence analysts, research analysts, data scientists, quantitative data modellers, marketing analysts and finance analysts.

NUS is also introducing a Bachelor of Science (Business Analytics) course to undergraduates in this semester.

Harnessing big data and analytics for better healthcare

With the ever-increasing amount of healthcare data, how do practitioners approach data analytics in the areas of genomics, governance, nursing and clinical care? These were the questions addressed during the inaugural International Conference on Big Data and Analytics in Healthcare hosted by the Centre for Health Informatics (CHI) at the NUS School of Computing on 9 and 10 July 2013.

“Healthcare analytics is one important area to develop,” said Singapore Minister for Health Mr Gan Kim Yong in his opening address to the more than 300-strong audience. “We already have extensive clinical, health financing and patient-care administrative data from our IT systems. Combining these data with lifestyle, geospatial, behavioural and genotypic data will provide us with better insights into the health risks of our population and discover new co-relations between data sets.”

Minister Gan noted that the insights could be used by patients and care providers to further improve care delivery, guide policy development and enhance patient well-being. The ministry also sought to systematically align the whole spectrum of service providers through implementing the National Electronic Health Record system in all public hospitals, specialist centres, polyclinics as well as some community hospitals, nursing homes and clinics of general practitioners.

Professionals are needed to interpret the data generated and collected, noted Associate Professor Danny Poon, Director of the CHI. He shared how the Centre aims to train healthcare and IT professionals in the use of health informatics, conduct research as well as offer hands-on experience to students via internships. In fact, the first batch of interns has embarked on their training programme at institutions such as the National Cancer Centre Singapore and the Khoo Teck Puat Hospital.

The conference was made possible with the support of Singapore’s Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore and the Agency for Science, Technology and Research.
Fifteen dazzling exhibitions and performances were presented by the NUS Faculties and Halls of Residence on Rag Day this year, which was held for the first time at UTown and graced by Singapore Minister for Education Mr Heng Swee Keat.

A unique NUS tradition since 1958, Rag Day has been a meaningful way of thanking the public for their generous donations during Flag Day. It also affords many excellent opportunities for bonding among students from various faculty and Hall groups during the months of intensive preparations for the big event.

Some changes were, however, introduced at this year’s Rag Day to further promote its original ideals and objectives. For greater cost-effectiveness and logistic efficiency, no lories were employed to parade the displays this year. Instead, the props built with recycled materials were hand-assembled on stage. In addition, the NUSU Council also implemented a budget cap of S$5,000 per participating body for its respective presentation.

Amidst the Rag Day buzz, there were crowds cheering for their favourite displays and performances, and even a bridal couple who were there for their photo shoot. The event holds special significance for the couple as they first met at Rag Day in 2006.

The displays and performances were also judged competitively, contributing to the excitement. In keeping with the spirit of Rag and Flag and to prioritise the aspect of creativity over competitiveness, NUSU opted for a banding system of judging over the typical placement system this year.

A warm welcome to our freshmen

Town Green at NUS University Town (UTown) was a place transformed on 7 August 2013. Not only was it packed with students, faculty and staff who came to view the show for NUSU Rag Day 2013, the place was also filled with student performers decked in colourful costumes and decorated with massive displays, like a theme park well-adorned with larger-than-life toys, castles, sea creatures, giant candies, and other colourful and striking exhibits.

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Giving towards a good cause

The concerted fundraising efforts of some 6,000 NUS students resulted in more than $5,415,700 raised at this year’s NUSU Flag Day held on 6 August. As early as 5am on that day, the students were already up and about, preparing for the event. By 7am, they could be found in different parts of Singapore armed with tins and cans and approaching the public for donations.

An annual charity drive which involves students from all Faculties and Halls of Residence, NUSU Flag Day has always been a meaningful event with the proceedings reaching as far as the anthropological reach, offering the students an opportunity to engage with the community and contribute towards the welfare of the needy or less privileged.

This year’s proceeds will benefit 19 charity programmes under the Community Chest. Among them were family service centres, an autism school, Rainbow Centres catering to children with special needs, Lions Befrienders reaching out to senior citizens, as well as a MINDS training and development centre for the intellectually disabled.

Since 2000, NUS students have raised more than $36 million in donations for its beneficiaries through the annual Flag Day. NUSU Flag Day is part of NUSU Rag and Flag, a signature NUS charity event which has always drawn much enthusiasm from the University’s student community, who will spare no effort in doing their utmost for a good cause.

Awards

Rag Day 2013

- Gold Award
  - Kent Ridge Hall and Sheares Hall
  - NUS Business School
  - School of Design and Environment
  - Faculty of Science

- Silver Award
  - Eusoff Hall and Temasek Hall
  - King Edward VII Hall and Raffles Hall
  - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
  - Faculty of Engineering
  - Faculty of Law
  - Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine
  - University Scholars Programme

Bronze Award

- School of Computing
- Faculty of Dentistry
- Department of Pharmacy

Most Environmentally Friendly Award

- Faculty of Science

Flag Day 2013

NUS President’s Shield

- Kent Ridge Hall
- NUS Business School

Certificate of Achievement

Gold

- Kent Ridge Hall
- NUS Business School

Silver

- Eusoff Hall
- King Edward VII Hall
- Sheares Hall
- Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
- Faculty of Dentistry
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Science

Bronze

- Temasek Hall
- Faculty of Engineering
- Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine
- University Scholars Programme

Special Commendation

- NUS Business School
Tropical fruit wine made in NUS

While wine is typically known to be made from grapes, tropical fruit wines have also been used in the preparation of alcoholic drinks. NUS students, notably Mr Zhang Heng Wei, Mr Simon Cai, and Ms Lim Ya Han, with the guidance of Prof Xu, graduated Electrical Engineering student Lupeng and Research Fellow Dr Ren Qinyuan, developed a method to make wine from durian peels. Professor Xu pointed out that robot fish capable of 2-D movements are common, and these models are not able to dive into the water. “Our model is capable of 3-D movements as it can dive and float, using its fins like a real fish,” he said.

A robotic fish that swims on its own and mimics the motion of live fish may soon be making waves in the waters in Singapore.

A robotic fish that swims on its own and mimics the motion of live fish may soon be making waves in the waters in Singapore. Created by a group of engineers from NUS’ Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, the Robot Carp is the first of its kind in Asia with autonomous 3-D movement.

This robot, basically an autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV), could lead the way to designing more efficient and smaller versions of the machines. It can be programmed to perform specific tasks, such as exploring spaces in wreckage not easily accessed by divers or traditional AUVs. Other potential applications include military operations, seabed reconnaissance, pipeline leakage detection and the laying of communication cables.

The team behind the creation comprises Prof Xu Jianxin, graduating Electrical Engineering student Fan Lupeng and Research Fellow Dr Ren Qinyuan. As part of Lupeng’s final year project, the Robot Carp won him the High Achievement Award at the Faculty’s Innovation and Research Award. It has been featured at the IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems in Vilamoura last November.

Prof Xu pointed out that robot fish capable of 2-D movements are common, and these models are not able to dive into the water. “Our model is capable of 3-D movements as it can dive and float, using its fins like a real fish,” he said.

Robot Carp’s uniqueness lies in its ability to learn fish-like locomotion by observing fish swimming. It emulates biological motion patterns that require precise coordination spatially and temporally. Compared to traditional AUVs, it displays greater manoeuvrability, is quieter and consumes less energy.

Lupeng, who studied the motion of live carps to develop the robot, said the carp was chosen because most fish swim like them. “We used a camera to capture all the possible movements of a carp and then converted the data mathematically so that we could transfer the locomotion of real carp to our robot using different actuators,” he explained.

Describing the 85-degree maximum turning angle as a big challenge, since many actuators are required to enable the robot to move in the same manner. Most robotic fish have a turning radius of only 40 to 50 degrees, said Prof Xu.

The team overcame the issue of waterproofing the fish body, the motor and the control box by using 1mm fine acrylic board for the fins and tails. Plastic foams attached to both sides of the robotic body maintain buoyancy and balance. An internal ballast system controls the diving mechanism, allowing the fish to dive sharply and to a precise depth.

The researchers have built two fish prototypes. The larger prototype is about 1.5 m in length, weighs 10 kg and can dive to a depth of 1.8 m. The smaller version is about 60 cm long and weighs a mere 1.5 kg. As the latter is meant for investigation on 2-D motion control in a compact place, it can only swim at the water surface. Powered by batteries, the bigger fish can last for an hour in the water, while the smaller can swim for two hours.

The engineers plan to make the robotic fish smaller and more realistic. Other developments include adding more sensors like GPS and a video camera to improve the 3-D movement, as well as conducting more difficult tests such as object detection.
NUS Board welcomes new trustee

Mr Neo Kian Hong, Permanent Secretary (Education Development) at Singapore’s Ministry of Education, has joined the NUS Board of Trustees with effect from 1 August 2013. He takes over from Ms Yeo Chee Yan, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth.

Welcoming Mr Neo to the NUS Board, NUS Chairman Prof Ng Eng Hen said: “We look forward to his participation and contributions on strategic issues aimed at enhancing NUS’ position as a leading university.”

Mr Neo had served in the Singapore military for some 30 years and held many key roles, including that of Chief of Defence Force of the Singapore Armed Forces from March 2010 to March 2013. Mr Wong also thanked Ms Yeo for having been “an invaluable trustee”. He said: “The University has benefited greatly from her insights and experience as well as her unwavering and dedicated support, and passion for education and students.”

The NUS Board of Trustees consists of 24 members appointed by the Minister for Education. They comprise eminent business leaders, academics, entrepreneurs and professionals from the public service and private sector. The Board is chaired by Mr Wong, who is concurrently the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Venture Corporation Limited.

Ong Soh Khim receives another Singapore Youth Award

After being presented with the Singapore Youth Award (SYA) in 2004, Associate Professor Ong Soh Khim from the NUS Department of Mechanical Engineering has done it again by receiving the SYA Medal of Commendation (MOC). She is the first female individual MOC recipient since the award’s inception in 2004.

This honour is only accorded to SYA recipients, aged 45 and below, who have managed to attain significantly higher levels of achievements and contributions to the field for at least five years after winning their first award.

The National Youth Council commended Assoc Prof Ong for her many achievements, including being one of the four women in the world in the past decade to have been elected as a Fellow in the 62-year history of the International Academy for Production Engineering, and the recipient of numerous local and international awards. She has researched on assistive technology devices to improve the lives of the elderly and disabled. She also dedicates her time to promoting science among youths.

The Council recognised that Assoc Prof Ong has exceeded expectations in the field to be a leader and inspiration not only for young people but also for women.

Referring to her role as a model woman engineer, the citation reads: “Soh Khim is a model for women everywhere entering the science and engineering fields. As an active advocate of opening doors for women, Soh Khim realises the value of education and motivation, and encourages young girls to become excited by the prospect of an education and future in these fields. Soh Khim proactively mentors in schools, driving students to discover the wonders of science, and engineer their own constructs for lifelong success.”

The SYA recipients received their awards from Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean at the Istana on 7 July.

David Rosenblum appointed NUS Computing Dean

Professor David S Rosenblum has been appointed as the new Dean of NUS’ School of Computing from 1 July 2013.

Currently a professor in the Department of Computer Science and Director of the School’s Felicitas Computing Institute, Prof Rosenblum took over the baton from Professor Ooi Beng Chin as the School’s sixth Dean.

Prof Ooi, who is also the Director of the Interactive Digital Media Institute at NUS, will continue to serve as a professor in the Department of Computer Science, as well as contribute in the areas of research and innovation.

Professor Tan Eng Chye, NUS Deputy President (Academic Affairs) and Provost, thanked Prof Ooi for being instrumental in placing the School in a very strong position during his tenure as Dean, particularly in the areas of education, research and entrepreneurship.

Prof Tan expressed confidence that with Prof Rosenblum’s wealth of industry experience, connections and deep research strengths, NUS Computing will be brought to even greater heights.

A well-known expert in software systems engineering, Prof Rosenblum joined NUS as a Computer Science professor in 2011. Besides an illustrious career in academia, he has also worked with companies such as AT&T Bell Laboratories and Precache Inc. His research covers a wide range of software problems, including software engineering, Internet scale software technologies and ubiquitous computing.

Prof Rosenblum has been named an Institute for Electrical and Electronic Engineers Fellow and is Chair-Elect of the IEEE Technical Committee on Software Engineering. He is also Chair of the IEEE Technical Committee on Ubiquitous Computing, and has been part of the organizing committee of numerous conferences and workshops in software systems and ubiquitous computing.

Prof Rosenblum joined NUS in 2011, and serves as a strategic consultant to the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health. As a member of the NUS Board of Trustees, he served as a member of the NUS Board’s Committee on Education and Technology. Prof Rosenblum is the Chair of the NUS Board’s Committee on Governance and Finance.

Top honours for public service

Mr Nathan, Prof Wang and Mr Chew

Three prominent Singapore leaders in the respective fields, who are closely associated with NUS, received the year’s highest National Day Awards. Topping the list of 7,977 National Day Awards 2013 recipients, Mr S R Nathan, former President of Singapore and NUS Chancellor (1999-2011), was conferred The Order of British Empire (1st Class), Professor Wong Wai Tong, Chairman of NUS’ Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKY School) Governing Board and former Dean of the Singapore Management University’s School of Computing, and Mr Tony Chew, founding Chairman of Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School Singapore Governing Board (2002-2012), received the Meritorious Service Medal.

Mr Nathan’s wife, Dr Hooi Hui, who is concurrently the Permanent Secretary (Education) at Singapore’s Ministry of Education, has also been conferred The Meritorious Service Medal. The Council recognised that Mr Nathan has exceeded expectations in the field to be a leader and inspiration not only for young people but also for women.

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Philip Yeo Initiative to benefit NUS students

Over more than 40 years of public service, Spring Singapore Chairman Mr Philip Yeo (’74), an illustrious NUS alumnus, has transformed Singapore’s economy and created thousands of jobs. Now, his “Make a Difference” attitude, which has helped write the country’s economic history and develop a generation of leaders, is being celebrated and perpetuated by the establishment of the Philip Yeo Initiative at his alma mater.

Established with gifts by those who have worked with Mr Yeo and who have witnessed the inspiring impact of his dynamic personality and leadership, the Philip Yeo Initiative aims to identify and develop the next generation of Singapore’s leaders. The gifts will support the Philip Yeo Entrepreneurial Awards and the Philip Yeo Innovation Fellows at NUS, both of which will be awarded this year.

Former Ascendas President and CEO Ms Chong Siak Ching (’81), who championed the establishment of these initiatives, said: “His brand of leadership is unique. He dares to push boundaries and do what’s right, not for himself, but for the nation.”

Ms Chong, who is now CEO of the National Art Gallery, is a member of the NUS Board of Trustees. The Award will enable dynamic entrepreneurial students to participate for up to one year in the NUS Overseas College (NOC) programme, where they will undertake an internship at a start-up company located in a leading entrepreneurial hub, while at the same time studying entrepreneurship related courses at highly prestigious partner universities. Current locations for the NOC programme include Silicon Valley (USA), Philadelphia (USA), Shanghai and Beijing (China), Stockholm (Sweden), Bangalore (India) and Tel Aviv (Israel).

The one-year Fellowship Programme aims to develop a global network of budding entrepreneurs in diverse sectors, including social, economic and engineering sectors. The Fellows will visit major entrepreneurial hubs overseas and meet relevant leaders to further their innovative ideas and initiatives.

Both the Award recipients and Fellows will have the opportunity to meet Mr Yeo and be mentored by his local and international network of associates.

Speaking at the launch of the Initiative, NUS President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan said that Mr Yeo “has a very genuine interest in helping young people and he continues to be your mentor; it’s a long term relationship, which explains why there’s such a network of goodwill for him”.

About $2 million has been raised for the Initiative so far, with government matching grant, will mean a $5 million fund. About $2 million has been raised so far for the Initiative.

The Lim Meng Kin Memorial Bursary Fund, an alumni-for-students initiative that provides financial support to needy students. The sum raised exceeds the initial target of $150,000.

"I have personally discovered the truth of this adage: the more one gives, the more one receives. Whether it is our time, money, knowledge, kindness or love, it is always more blessed to give than to receive.

Assoc Prof Lim (1950-2013)"

Following a proposal by its Office of Alumni Relations (OAR), NUS is launching a fundraising initiative to establish the Lim Meng Kin Memorial Bursary Fund. This endowed bursary fund will perpetuate the late Associate Professor Lim’s giving spirit and commemorate his 30 years of service to education at NUS.

Alumnus Mr Yeo Keng Joon (’85) has stepped forward to champion this fundraising effort, which seeks to raise a minimum of $150,000. The University aims to award this Bursary from the upcoming Academic Year 2013/2014 to deserving students facing financial difficulty.

Mr Yeo said: “The Bursary will be a fitting tribute to a man who, as a teacher, gave so much to his students.”

Assoc Prof Lim, who received financial support as a student, had an illustrious career in the military and in academia. He pioneered aviation medicine in the Republic of Singapore Air Force, led the Medical Corps of the Singapore Armed Forces and was Director of Defense Medical Research Institute at the Ministry of Defence and Chief Executive Officer of the Health Corporation of Singapore before joining the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine at NUS full-time in 1999. He had been teaching at the School part-time since 1983. Assoc Prof Lim became OAR Director in 2010.

Associate Professor Victor Savage, the current OAR Director said: “Meng Kin epitomised the alumni spirit – selfless devotion, quiet determination, an affable disposition and an engaging personality.”

The Lim Meng Kin Memorial Bursary Fund is the first of many initiatives of the NUS Alumni Bursary Fund. An Initiative led by NUS alumni, it provides support to NUS students who require financial assistance to begin and continue their education in NUS.

Honouring Lim Meng Kin with memorial bursary

Alumni kick-start bursary fund with golf tournament

Through an annual golf tournament organised by the NUS Society (NUSS), the University’s alumni have raised over $3180,000 for the NUS Alumni Bursary Fund, an alumni-for-students initiative that provides financial support to needy students. The sum raised exceeds the initial target of $150,000 and is the first gift to the newly-formed Fund.

"For them, a bursary is a welcome gift. A bursary opens many doors and brings many opportunities. Its impact can also be felt far beyond the walls of the University."

If you would like to make a gift to the NUS Alumni Bursary Fund or encourage fellow NUS alumni to support this Fund through a class reunion or other alumni activities, call us at (65) 6516-0800/1-800 DEVELOP (1-800-338-3567) or email askbul@nus.edu.sg.
Insights into Singapore street names

Research into the origins of street names is a journey filled with discoveries. The stories behind the names tell much about key connections, contributions, places and people through the times. *Singapore Street Names: A Study of Toponymics* is one such fascinating publication that contains nuggets of fresh information and insights into Singapore’s landscape and history.

As explained by the two authors in the book’s preface, “The old street names of Singapore carried with them political, economic, social, religious and cultural representations of personalities, peoples, communities, activities and nation builders. … The representation of place, landscape bonding, national identity and cultural heritage are morphed into the street and place names of the city-state. It is hoped that while personalities have dominated public discussion of new street names, the street naming authorities will remain open to creative ways of naming street and place names in future to reflect geographical, environmental, economic, cultural, historical and social significance of the changing landscape.”

Launched on 9 July 2013, this 430-page book was authored by Professor Brenda Yeoh and Associate Professor Victor Savage, both from the Department of Geography at the NUS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS). Prof Yeoh is concurrently Dean of FASS, while Assoc Prof Savage is Director of the Office of Alumni Relations.

Aimed at engaging Singaporeans and the general public, the book was first published in 2003, with a second edition in 2004. On this latest edition, Assoc Prof Savage said that they interviewed many more Singaporeans who are descendants of the people after whom the roads and places were named, and who had much intriguing information to share.

Prof Yeoh said: “It is my hope that this book on street names will be a useful aid in helping us discern more clearly our own memory streams and develop our memory pool. These pools of memory, like living waters, will collect to form our nation’s memory reservoirs, which will in turn sustain our affection for the nation, especially against the uncertain odds churned out when the globalisation dice is thrown.”

Interestingly, some of the street names highlighted in this book were found within the NUS campus. For example, Kent Ridge Crescent was named after the late Duchess of Kent when she visited the Marina Hill with her son; Hon Sui Sen Drive was named after Singapore’s former Minister of Finance (1970 to 1983); and Heng Mui Keng Terrace was named after a Teochew businessman, Heng Mui Keng, who owned property in the area.

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