NUS Social Research & Development

THE GLOBAL IMPACT OF NUS ALUMNI'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLICY-MAKING
DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

As our new alumni who have just graduated from the University, a warm welcome to the Alumni Family. While you spent four to five years as a student, you will be our alumnus for some 40 to 60 years, so we look forward to your involvement, participation and contributions to the many alumni functions organised by your respective faculties, halls of residence and schools as well as our office, the NUS Office of Alumni Relations (OAR). You can begin your initial alumni experience this year by joining us on 15 August 2015 at our Kent Ridge Alumni Family Day.

Among the many attractions that have been put together for Family Day is an exciting fashion show by local designers put together by our own alumnus and Singapore’s fashion choreographer, Mr Daniel Boey (Arts and Social Sciences ’89).

Together with all alumni, OAR is proud of our University rankings in Asia. NUS has done well in two London-based University ranking systems in 2015: the education and career consultancy Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) put NUS as Asia’s top university and the Times Higher Education Magazine ranked NUS in the second spot in educational rankings in Asia. These accolades in teaching, research and service are indicative of NUS’ excellence in education and national service.

In the University, as well as in the private and public sectors, NUS alumni are actively involved in research institutes and innovative research and development (R&D) think tanks. This issue of The AlumNUS focuses on social and behavioural R&D and its policy implications, and the active roles NUS alumni are playing in this important sector. As societies are faced with more political and economic uncertainties, social challenges, and cultural changes from globalisation, urbanisation and the IT revolution, social and behavioural R&D is a growing research area not only in universities but in government and private institutions.

To end, I wish all our Muslim alumni, a Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri – may this festive season be a happy, blessed and peaceful occasion for your family and friends.

ASSOC PROF VICTOR R SAVAGE
DIRECTOR, NUS OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS
Arts and Social Sciences ’72
**NUS UNIVERSITY AWARDS 2015**

Celebrating Individual Excellence in Tandem with the Collective NUS Spirit

Eight illustrious educators, researchers and leading professionals were lauded at the NUS University Awards 2015 on 24 April at the University Cultural Centre. The annual ceremony recognises individuals who have contributed to the University’s mission through their exceptional achievements in education, research and service to Singapore and the global community.

Said NUS President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan (Medicine ’83), “The passion, creativity and spirit of service of these outstanding individuals have opened exciting new vistas, and will inspire the NUS community to aim higher and go further. In so doing, they uphold the NUS’ tradition of creating impact and improving the community, exciting new vistas, and will inspire the NUS community to aim higher and go further. In so doing, they uphold the NUS’ tradition of creating impact and improving the community, and give further impetus to our continuing drive to be a leading global university, centred in Asia.”

### OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD

“I want my students to be a different person at the end of the semester from the person they were when our journey began, and to see that difference for themselves.”

**Prof Brian Farrell**  
Department of History

### OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD

“There are two things that I believe really matter in education: mindset and values. With the right mindset, our students will likely find success in life, but without the right values… the success may come at the expense of society at large.”

**Assoc Prof Ben Leong Wing Lup**  
Department of Computer Science

### OUTSTANDING RESEARCHER AWARD

“A researcher needs aspiration, determination, patience and God’s blessing to achieve the ultimate goals.”

**Prof Neal Ching Tai-Shung**  
Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

### OUTSTANDING RESEARCHER AWARD

“Research is about wrestling with the intricate language of nature. It is also a process through which we appreciate and celebrate the wonders of nature.”

**Dr Goki Eda**  
Department of Chemistry and Physics

### OUTSTANDING RESEARCHER AWARD

“Fascinated by the beauty and power of both physical and mathematical laws, I am humbly seeking a perfect blend of them in solving engineering problems elegantly and rigorously.”

**Dr Zhang Rui**  
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

### YOUNG RESEARCHER AWARD

“I am driven by simple passion, curiosity and the sincere belief that mathematics is easier than most real-life problems and governed by few underlying principles.”

**Prof Gan Nee Teck**  
Department of Mathematics

### OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

“The University gave me an education, not in terms of a string of degrees but in terms of being able to cope with life without compromising on human values.”

**Mr Gopinath Pillai**  
Chairman, NUS Institute of South Asian Studies; Ambassador at Large and Special Envoy to Afghanistan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore; Gateway International Limited and Goldman Logistics Limited; Two Public Listed Companies in India; Vice Chairman, Mr N R Krishna Hospital; Advisor, Singapore Malayalee Association and Singapore Malayalee Hindu Samajam

### OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

“NUS gave me the break to build a rewarding and challenging career in real estate, for which I am grateful. I hope to continue to contribute to real estate education and research at NUS by sharing my global experience and knowledge, and strengthening the linkages between academia and industry.”

**Dr Seek Ngee Huat**  
Chairman, NUS Institute of Real Estate Studies; Adjunct Professor, NUS School of Design and Environment; Chairman, Board of Directors, Global Logistic Properties Limited

### OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

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NUS RANKED NO. 1 IN ASIA
THE UNIVERSITY IS ASIA’S BEST FOR EMPLOYER REPUTATION, SECOND FOR ACADEMIC REPUTATION, AND THIRD FOR CITATIONS PER PAPER, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST QS RANKINGS

"WE ARE DELIGHTED THAT NUS HAS MAINTAINED OUR POSITION AS THE REGION’S TOP UNIVERSITY AT A TIME WHEN ASIAN COUNTRIES ARE INVESTING HEAVILY IN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH."

PROFESSOR TAN CHOR CHUAN NUS PRESIDENT

NUS has emerged once again as the top university in Asia, retaining its peak position in the latest results of the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) University Rankings: Asia 2015. This marks the second consecutive time that NUS has topped the rankings since it was first published in 2009.

This year, NUS continued its stellar performance, ranking highly overall. It garnered strong scores in most of the indicators, maintaining its position as the first in Asia for employer reputation and second in Asia for academic reputation. The University was also placed third in the number of citations per paper, providing a strong endorsement of the deep impact of NUS’ research.

NUS received the maximum score in academic reputation, based on 42,561 responses from academics in the region, and the rest of the world, according to QS. The University is ranked Asia’s best in Social Sciences & Management as well as Life Sciences & Medicine. It is placed second in the areas of Arts & Humanities, Engineering & Technology and Natural Sciences.

The full top 300 list of QS University Rankings: Asia can be found at www.topuniversities.com/asian-rankings.

NUS President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan said, “We are delighted that NUS has maintained our position as the region’s top university at a time when Asian countries are investing heavily in education and research. We are also very encouraged that the University is highly regarded and valued by employers and academics in Asia and the world. This is a reflection of NUS’ distinctive education and broad-based research excellence, which are results of the strong contributions made by dedicated NUS faculty, staff and students.”

He added, “As a global university that seeks to influence the future, NUS will strengthen our efforts to nurture graduates who are future-ready, pursue innovative advances in research and education, as well as deepen our collaborations with leading universities and institutions worldwide.”

The QS University Rankings: Asia is published annually and ranks Asia’s top 300 universities based on relevant criteria including academic reputation, employer reputation, student/faculty ratio, papers per faculty, citations per paper, internationalisation, student exchange inbound and student exchange outbound.

The long history of close ties between NUS and the University of Malaya (UM) was reflected in the UM-NUS Inter-University Tunku Chancellor Golf Tournament 2015, held over three days from 28 to 30 April.

Since its inception in 1969 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the two universities have taken turns to host the UM-NUS tournament for their faculty members and alumni annually.

Now into its 45th edition, the tournament kicked off with a welcome dinner at the NUS Society (NUSS) Kent Ridge Guild House on 28 April. About 140 participating golfers from NUS and UM teed-off at the Sentosa Golf Club on 29 April. The final round took place at the Orchid Country Club on 30 April, with the NUS team emerging as winner.

UM Chancellor His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah is the Sultan of Perak and UM Chancellor, for the first time. The real outcome of this tournament is not about the performance on the golf course but how well we continue to deepen and strengthen our friendships. The camaraderie built up over the last four decades is what distinguishes the UM-NUS Inter-University Tunku Chancellor Golf Tournament from being just an annual and ordinary gathering of golfing enthusiasts,” said Prof Tan.

Vice Chancellor Professor Dato’ Dr Mohd Amin Jalaludin, who was part of the UM delegation, also mentioned in his speech that other than being a celebration of the friendship between the two universities, the annual golfing tournament serves as a good networking platform.
In this day and age where global geopolitical issues are dominating the headlines, it is imperative that young professionals in Singapore look outwards and broaden their frame of reference. This was the impetus behind the NUS Office of Alumni Relations’ collaboration with Standard Chartered Bank on a series of lunch talks called Global Conversations, launched in November 2014. On 22 April 2015, the second NUS Alumni-Standard Chartered Global Conversations was held at the bank’s Marina Bay Financial Centre premises.

The session featured not one but two eminent speakers – The Honourable Kirk Waqar, US Ambassador to Singapore, and Professor Kishore Mahbubani, Dean of the NUS Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. With Mr Neeraj Swaroop, CEO of Standard Chartered Bank Singapore, serving as moderator, young alumni were treated to a stimulating dialogue as the two speakers discussed the state of US-China relations and implications for Asia.

All of NUS Alumni! A GLOBAL CONVERSATION

To celebrate Singapore’s unique Eurasian heritage, the newly-launched NUS Eurasian Alumni Group, the Eurasian Association and the NUS Office of Alumni Relations (OAR) came together to hold the inaugural NUS Eurasian Alumni Festival on 11 April 2015. More than 200 participants attended the festival at the Shaw Foundation Alumni House. Participants enjoyed a sumptuous lunch buffet of Eurasian cuisine, performances by Eurasian talents, a Eurasian heritage exhibition, a talk on discovering ancestry and a children’s photo booth. The highlight of the event was the launch of the NUS Eurasian Alumni Group – NUS’ 65th alumni group facilitated by OAR.

Stay connected through our numerous communication platforms!

Read The AlumNUS magazine. Our alumni’s definitive source to staying connected to the latest on NUS and our alumni community. To ensure you receive your copy of the quarterly-published magazine, update your mailing address with us at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/updatemyparticulars or read us at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/alumnusmag.

Like us on Facebook! www.facebook.com/nusoar

Use your NUS Lifelong Email Account. Enjoy the reliability and convenience of your student email (userid@u.nus.edu) for life! You will continue to enjoy the 50GB mailbox space and the sending of attachments up to 25MB.

Easy Ways to be an active ALUMNUS!

As an NUS alumnus, there are many ways to stay connected to your alma mater. Here are 7 ways to get you started!

1. Attend an Office of Alumni Relations (OAR) event.
   OAR organises over 60 events per year. Chill out over drinks at the coolest bars, join us at enriching lifestyle workshops, catch monthly blockbusters or attend O@lue sessions.

2. Use your AlumNUS Card.
   The AlumNUS Card identifies you as part of the prestigious NUS alumni family and entitles you to exclusive deals at participating merchants. You also gain complimentary access to our NUS libraries and facilities at the Shaw Foundation Alumni House. Check out these exclusive offers and benefits at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/alumnuscard.

3. Make your way to the Shaw Foundation Alumni House!
   Your Home on Campus – the Shaw Foundation Alumni House! An alumni centre equipped with state-of-the-art facilities including a 298-seat auditorium, seminar rooms, restaurants and an Alumni Service Centre to serve your needs. An ideal meeting place for alumni events, seminars, reunions and gatherings.

4. Uprise the giving spirit in you.
   Stay tuned to NUS by updating your contact information with us at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/updateyourdetails. As an alumnus of NUS, you will get to enjoy many social benefits and professional services offered by OAR. Get updates on all OAR events, many of which are complimentary for NUS alumni!

5. Update your contact details with us!
   Stay connected to NUS by updating your contact information with us at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/updateyourdetails. As an alumnus of NUS, you will get to enjoy many social benefits and professional services offered by OAR. Get updates on all OAR events, many of which are complimentary for NUS alumni!

6. Step up to the role of a class ambassador, build class connections or come home to volunteer as an alumni mentor to the undergraduates. There are many ways that you can give back to your alma mater as an alumnus of NUS. Find out how at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet.

7. Take or join an alumni group.
   NUS has 65 Alumni Groups (representing faculties, schools, halls of residences, colleges and interest groups) and 18 Overseas Chapters. Join a group and discover ways to stay in touch, network and build closer ties with fellow alumni and the University.

EAST MEETS WEST

CELEBRATING EURASIAN HERITAGE

To celebrate Singapore’s unique Eurasian heritage, the newly-launched NUS Eurasian Alumni Group, the Eurasian Association and the NUS Office of Alumni Relations (OAR) came together to hold the inaugural NUS Eurasian Alumni Festival on 11 April 2015. More than 200 participants attended the festival at the Shaw Foundation Alumni House. Participants enjoyed a sumptuous lunch buffet of Eurasian cuisine, performances by Eurasian talents, a Eurasian heritage exhibition, a talk on discovering ancestry and a children’s photo booth. The highlight of the event was the launch of the NUS Eurasian Alumni Group – NUS’ 65th alumni group facilitated by OAR.
IN THE NEWS

SOCIAL NIGHT

Social Night was held on 14 May 2015 at the National University of Singapore Society (NUSS) Suntec City Guild House. Sponsored by NUSS, the event aims to encourage interaction between key alumni leaders.

It was the first networking session for some 130 participants comprising Alumni Advisory Board members, Class Ambassadors, Associate Directors, Alumni Group members and student leaders.

Alumni Advisory Board members who were present included: Mr Edward D’Silva (Architecture ’75), Mr Johnny Tan (Science ’82), Mr Navtej Singh (Arts and Social Sciences ’83), Mr Peter Tay (Business ’75) and Mr Jeremy Ee (Engineering ’05). NUSS Director Mr Bernard Toh (Architecture ’84) also graced the event.

AFTERNOON DELIGHTS

On 30 May 2015, the NUS Office of Alumni Relations held the inaugural concert in a three-part series: Afternoon Delights Edutainment Concerts. The aim of the series is to engage NUS alumni with families, especially those with young children, and to promote the appreciation of classical music.

220 NUS alumni, students, staff and their families turned up at the Shaw Foundation Alumni House to attend the musical performance featuring conductor and curator Dr Robert Casteels, narrator Mr Michael Cheng (Arts and Social Sciences ’02), soloist Mr Loh Jun Hong (Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music ’09), and NUS Alumni musicians.

To illustrate the people and animals living in harmony through the interplay of tempo, tune and technique, the ensemble performed two enthralling pieces that captured the imagination of both the young and old: Peter & The Wolf by S Prokofiev and Carnival of Animals by C Saint-Saëns.

Inorep Marketing Pte Ltd sponsored Dylon Fabric Dyes and Fabric Paints as lucky draw prizes for the children.

Register at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/event/NCU15
For enquiries, please contact Ms Gabriella Nyam at 65165771 or email her at gabriella@nus.edu.sg

THE PROGRAMME THIS AFTERNOON WAS GOOD FOR THE KIDS AND OTHERS WHO WANT TO GET TO KNOW MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

NS LIM HSU MEI (ARTS ’62)

NATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

With

Mr Lawrence Wong
Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Second Minister for Communications and Information

Our Aspirations, Our Home

Date: 28 July 2015, Tuesday
Time: 6.30pm to 9.00pm
Venue: NUSS Suntec City Guild House
Moderator: Mr Soh Yi Da
President, NUS Students’ Union Alumni
Programme:
6.30pm Dinner Reception
7.45pm Sharing by Minister Lawrence Wong
8.00pm Q&A Session
9.00pm End of Programme

Organised by: Supported by: In celebration of:
NUS Office of Alumni Relations Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth NUS110
NYC BECAUSE WE CARE
THINKING WITH THE TIMES

THINK TANKS AND RESEARCH INSTITUTES IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES ARE GROWING IN IMPORTANCE AS THE WORLD (AND SINGAPORE) CHANGES — AND NUS ALUMNI ARE LEADING THE CHARGE. BY THERESA TAN

In 2013, The Straits Times revealed there were about 3,000 students taking Literature at ‘O’ levels that year, compared to 16,970 students two decades ago. This prompted then Nominated Member of Parliament Ms Janice Koh (Arts and Social Sciences ’96) to register her concern in Parliament, and ask about the cause of this decline.

Senior Minister of State for Education and Law Ms Indranee Rajah (Law ’86) replied that traditionally, Singaporean students fare better at sciences and Mathematics, but that the main factor for the decline was the Ministry of Education’s introduction of Combined Humanities in 2011 at the upper secondary levels — where students take Social Studies as a compulsory component and an elective which can be either Geography, History or Literature.

A contributing factor was that students perceive that it is harder to score well for Literature than for a science subject.

But Singaporeans are not alone in their less-than-favourable perception of the arts and social sciences, which are usually grouped together in institutes of higher learning. At the National University of Singapore (NUS), for example, these are offered in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS). In the United States (US), liberal arts – which covers humanities, social sciences, formal sciences and natural sciences – has a poor image issue as well. In the last four years, the governors of Texas, Florida and North Carolina have been lobbying for a cut in funding for liberal arts in favour of ‘STEM’ subjects: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

“How many philosophers do we need to subsidise?” one ‘skeptical’ governor had asked.

Journalist and author Fareed Zakaria mounted an elegant defence for a liberal arts education in his commencement speech at private liberal arts college Sarah Lawrence College in May 2014, when he said (in part), “You’re graduating at an interesting moment in history — when the liberal arts are, honestly, not very cool. You all know what you’re supposed to be doing these days — study Computer Science, code at night, start a company, and take it public... What you’re not supposed to do is get a liberal arts education.”

The author of The Post-American World and host of CNN programme Fareed Zakaria GPS however went on to emphasise to his audience that a liberal education “does not ignore the sciences”. India-born Mr Zakaria admitted he was good at regurgitating facts and scoring at tests, but said his liberal arts education taught him to write and to think. He added that this in many ways is the central teaching of a liberal education. The other great advantage, he said, is learning to speak one’s mind clearly and concisely, an important skill in business and government, among other spheres.

The marriage between technology and the liberal arts is now obvious. Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, famously said of what has made the brand so successful: “It’s technology married with liberal arts, married to the humanities that yields us the result that makes our heart sing.” Mr Jobs, in his short time at Reed College, took Physics, Poetry and Literature. He credited the Mac’s elegant fonts to a single calligraphy class he took at Reed.

In Singapore, FASS has been educating an average of 1,500 students in the last two decades. The faculty is 86 years old this year and began with just four subjects: English, History, Geography and Economics.

In an email interview with The AlumNUS, NUS Professor Wang Gungwu, (Arts ’52) who is Chairman of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) at NUS, spoke of his days as an undergraduate at the University of Malaya’s Faculty of Arts in 1949: “There were no ‘social sciences’ as such for us to study. The courses
in the Faculty of Arts for the 60 freshmen – 80 per cent were men – were English Language and Literature, History, Geography, Economics and Mathematics. We were to choose three of them to study for three years for a general Bachelor of Arts degree. I did English, History and Economics. The combination actually placed me halfway between what was called Humanities and Social Sciences. In my experience, History was both form and presentation, it was close to literature and philosophy, but the content included politics, socio-economic issues, anthropology, even psychology. And, our Economics courses also included politics, philosophy and sociology, and grounded us in statistics.

Ambassador Professor Chan Heng Chee (Arts ’64), who served as Singapore’s ambassador to the US from 1996 to 2012, spoke of the relevance of Political Science – and the social sciences – in her speech at the 50th anniversary of the NUS Department of Political Science in March 2012.

Prof Chan was in the department’s first intake of 40 Political Science students in 1961. She went on to pursue her Masters. “On 9 August 1965, the fateful day when Singapore was separated from Malaysia, I was at the airport taking a flight to Cornell University in the US, but that familiarity with the United Nations and when I went to Washington, of the political system of the US. But that familiarity with the issues was only buying the ticket to gain entry.”

“The analytical ability one takes for granted comes in very handy in our work where you have to write political reports and explain what is happening on the ground. This ability is informed by theory. But I discovered some of the analyses and ideas I read had to be discarded or modified. They seemed ivory towerish once I hit the ground. Sometimes the writings were simply wrong. And it had to be done often in the analysis and speculation about what happened in certain events or why nations acted the way they did in a particular episode,” she added.

Today, FASS offers more than 30 subjects that fall into the humanities, social sciences, Asian studies and multidisciplinary majors and minors. The liberal arts curriculum – which is offered by Yale-NUS – covers humanities, social sciences, formal sciences (like Mathematics and Statistics) and natural sciences. Disciplines like Law and Architecture are also considered social sciences as they are academic disciplines that study human aspects of the world.

R&D IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Singapore’s hard sciences have been, particularly in the last 50 years, well-funded and well-developed. The Singapore National Academy of Science boasts a plethora of research bodies including the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), institutes of higher learning (HLLs), hospitals and academic medical centres and corporate research and development (R&D) laboratories. However, research into areas such as Geography, Economics and Politics – social or “softer” sciences that may not be immediately thought of as scientific in nature – has been growing as Singapore develops as a nation.

Prof Wang points out that social science is very new, even in the West. It developed out of philosophy and the natural sciences during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and disciplines like Economics, Geography, Ethnology and History only achieved their current status in a few Western European universities at the beginning of the 20th century.

“Since then, American scholars have taken the lead and made particularly strong showings in newer fields like Anthropology, Sociology and Political Science,” he says. Prof Wang notes that Asian universities have been slow to follow this development in the West. With very few exceptions, he says, most universities in Asia kept their respect for the European classics – humanities until the last decades of the 20th century.

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong (Law ’79), Ambassador-at-Large and Executive Deputy Chairman of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) says that for a long time, “Singapore understandably emphasised the hard and technical sciences as these disciplines were needed to empower industrial development and economic growth.”

But since the 1990s, with a more open and less settled economic model and increasingly educated public, it has become apparent that hard sciences education at the tertiary level needs complementing by advanced study in humanities and social sciences.

“Pressing need for institutions of learning now is to foster critical thinking – what a humanities and social sciences education offers. “Today, we need more than ever (given an increasingly complex and uncertain regional and international environment) to create an overall educational experience that extends in our graduates critical thinking and the ability to think creatively and to go beyond textbook solutions,” Mr Ong explains.

With political, economic, religious and social issues – all in the sphere of humanities and social science – affecting the world in myriad ways, the last two decades have seen a proliferation of think tanks being created around the world, some needed in universities, others within government institutions and yet others that are independent.

SINGAPORE’S THINK TANKS

The Oxford Dictionary’s definition of a think tank is “a body of experts providing advice and ideas on specific political or economic problems.” The Think Tank And Civil Society Program (TTCSF) at the Lauder Institute of the University of Pennsylvania in the US conducts research on the role policy institutes play in governments and in civil societies around the world. The TTCSF, dubbed the ‘think tank think tank’, releases an annual Global Go To Think Tank Index (GTTTI).

WE NEED MORE THAN EVER [GIVEN AN INCREASINGLY COMPLEX AND UNCERTAIN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT] TO CREATE AN OVERALL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE THAT FOSTERS IN OUR GRADUATES CRITICAL THINKING AND THE ABILITY TO THINK CREATIVELY AND TO GO BEYOND TEXTBOOK SOLUTIONS.

AMBASSADOR ONG KENG YONG (LAW ’79)
Singapore may have far fewer think tanks than countries like the US (which has more than 1,800, with individual states having their own think tanks) and China (over 400), but these Singaporean institutes are strategic in their approach, in fulfilling a role in making the country a relevant and global player by studying developments and issues that affect Singapore internally, regionally, and internationally.

Singapore's earliest think tanks include the SIA, which is the oldest independent think tank in the country, founded in 1961. It is dedicated to the research, analysis and discussion of regional and international issues. It is a founding member of the ASEAN Institutes for Strategic and International Studies (AIESAS), established in 1968 by an Act of Parliament, is dedicated to studying the socio-political, security and economic trends of the region and to search for viable solutions to regional problems. The Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) at LKYSP in NUS was established in 1988 to foster good governance in Singapore through strategic policy research and discussion. It adopts a big-picture approach to issues of national interest and takes a long-term view.

Since the 1990s, a number of think tanks have been established in Singapore to research changing socio-economic and political environments. Some of these institutes are based on geographical regions and Singapore’s role and relationship with them. Others, particularly the newer institutes, target particular areas linked to specific social issues, including Economics, Architecture and Design, and Law. Many of these take root in NUS and NTU.

There is the East Asian Institute (EA), set up in 1997 to succeed the Institute of East Asian Political Economy (IEAPE) that the late former Deputy Prime Minister Dr Koh Keng Swee (‘KPG’), established in 1983, while the Singapore International Foundation (SIF), founded in 1993, is a non-profit organisation that aims to build enduring relationships between Singaporeans and world communities.

The Middle East Institute was founded in 1986 to serve as a research hub for Middle East studies in Singapore and the region. The Centre for International Law was established in 2004 at NUS in response to greater demand for international law expertise and capacity building in the region. The Centre for Liveable Cities was formed in 2008, based on a strategic blueprint developed by Singapore’s Inter-Ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development. Its mission is to extract, create and share knowledge on liveable and sustainable cities.

Dr Gillian Koh (Arts and Social Sciences ’88), a Senior Research Fellow at IPS, points out that R&D in social areas is important – hard sciences and social sciences are inextricably linked, and the social sciences need to develop in order for hard science to progress and bear meaningful fruit. “How will you have the foresight, the funds, even the interest in supporting R&D in the hard sciences and bringing to pass the applications of that work, if you do not have good governance in Singapore?” she asks. “What would you use the R&D in hard sciences for? What are the areas in which to target your investments? Who would benefit from the activities of that investment and the fruits of that work?”

For Dr Koh, these are “all questions that require deep thinking in the social sciences communities so as to arrive at the answers to the ‘why’ questions before attempting any meaningful policy interventions. The social sciences need to develop in order for hard science to progress and bear meaningful fruit.”

While she was at IPS, Dr Koh was the lead researcher on the IPS Prism Surveys (in 2006 and 2013) and participated in the arts programme – 4,000 members of the public who listened, responded to, and acted on a picture of sentiment and concerns in ways that are ‘countable’.

“My basic mandate at IPS is to understand and recommend how the process of governing Singapore must be adjusted to this trend; how it affects policy-making and implementation, and ultimately, electoral politics.”

The work of the Politics and Governance Research Cluster is to facilitate research and engagement to improve how the government listens, responds to, and acts on voices from other sectors in Singapore.

“Do we that primarily our political conceptualisation of governance is primarily because our key audience, the policymakers, like to get a broad picture of sentiment and concerns but in ways that are ‘countable’,” she says. However, this does not diminish the cluster’s project, such as the 2013 IPS Prism project where the researchers engaged 430 of Singaporeans – 140 selected participants from different sectors of Singapore’s – 140 selected participants from different sectors of Singaporeans, and the IPS Conferences on Civil Society held in November 2013.

Dr Koh heads IPS’ Politics and Governance research cluster which focuses on analysis relating to party and electoral politics, the development of civil society, strengthening civil society, and citizen engagement in Singapore. Among her notable achievements are leading the research teams that conducted the two Post-Election Surveys (in 2006 and 2013) and being the lead researcher on the IPS Prism project that generated scenarios of governance in Singapore in the year 2022.

When she returned to Singapore after obtaining her Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom, Dr Koh discovered that “civil society and the political process were beginning to make their voices heard and their views felt.” She explains, “I started out as a Research Fellow, fresh from my doctoral studies,” says Dr Koh. “My interest was how a government works in a late developer like Singapore, as at that time (1995 when she first joined IPS), the world was trying to understand the rise of the Four Tigers: Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea. The focus of my doctoral thesis was on the Administrative Services which makes it tick as the apex of the civil service.”

The 2013 Singapore elections showed signs of a turning of the tide in the citizens’ engagement and view of governance. Dr Koh says that the closing of the gap between the ruling party and the opposition was “partly because the business sector was beginning to make their voices heard and their views felt”.

“My basic mandate at IPS is to understand and recommend how the process of governing Singapore must be adjusted to this trend; how it affects policy-making and implementation, and ultimately, electoral politics.”
That, she says, was partly a result of the strategy of the leading opposition party which put all its eggs in one basket and made it an irresistible ‘A Team’ in the Aljunied GRC. “Could we afford to see Sylvia Lim and Low Thia Khiang out in the cold, was the question they (the Workers’ Party) were pushing voters to consider.”

Finally, Dr Koh says, it was also a case where Singaporeans felt that the incumbent governing party needed to provide better answers to the usual issue of cost of living that some voters felt has been exacerbated by the inflow of foreign workers. “I think that others also felt that overall, the incumbents needed to give better answers to taming income inequalities at the broader level, and just something to saliva a rising sense of insecurity given the ups and downs of the global economy in this past decade, life in a post-industrial country, and ageing in a high cost global city.”

The Politics and Governance Cluster is just one of a number of clusters at IPS, all of which are trying to understand how Singapore can survive and thrive in the years to come by evolving policy and practices.

“We are driven by a set of values which, in a nutshell, is to look at how democratic governance can be improved in Singapore,” describes Dr Koh. “We believe that it is important to foster an informed citizenry and to keep in mind and absorb the ideas and concerns that are raised right across the sectors of Singapore – be it on whether Singapore should license casinos or how we can improve retirement adequacy, just to name two topics we have addressed before.”

“We believe that a better Singapore requires a deeper and meaningful engagement and deliberation that involves government, stakeholders of the different sectors of the country. Going to the polls at a General Election should ideally be a culmination of such a process and an assessment of how the governing party is doing and what citizens think is the best plan on offer for the future of the country from the incumbent and opposition parties,” she adds.

Dr Koh, who marks her 20th year at IPS this year, says, “I do enjoy trying to understand the amazing ‘active citizens’ we have, all wanting to make life in Singapore more inclusive, more sustainable, more colourful.” She explains that at IPS, the team continually works to engage all the stakeholders – government and civil society – to hear and respond to each other’s concerns. This way, Singaporeans will discover their shared destiny, and build up their capacity to adapt and their resilience as a people.

THE AREAS MY COLLEAGUES AND I ARE VERY PROUD OF ARE THOSE WHERE WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THE VALUE OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES TO THOSE SECTIONS OF THE SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC MOST CONCERNED [ABOUT ENHANCING] CLOSE RELATIONS WITH CHINA.

PROF WANG GUNGWI (ARTS ’52)

That diplomatic relations had been established, that it would be important for Singapore to understand China. As China’s economic and political power began to rise, the institute changed its focus and was renamed the Institute of East Asian Political Economy. “Early in 1997, one year after I joined the EAI, it faced uncertainty about its future as a private independent research institute,” Prof Wang recalls. “I proposed to NUS that it be placed in NUS. Dr Goh, Mr George Yeo (then Minister, Ministry of Information and The Arts, or MITA), Professor Lim Pin, the NUS Vice-Chancellor, as well as colleagues in FASS, gave it warm support. The endowed funds that IEAPE had were then transferred to NUS to establish the East Asian Institute.”

The EAI was reconstituted as an autonomous research institute under the auspices of NUS.

That was a turning point for NUS, says Prof Wang, in that “EAI was the first non-laboratory based research institute in the NUS. The EAI model was seen as practical and useful, and the Asia Research Institute, Institute of South Asian Studies and the Middle East Institute were also established in NUS.”

The main mission of EAI is to promote both academic and policy-oriented research on East Asian development, particularly the political, economic and social development of contemporary China – including Taiwan and Hong Kong – and China’s growing economic relations with the region and the world at large.

Its long-term vision is to develop into the region’s foremost research institution on East Asian development.

“The EAI’s best work, says Prof Wang, has been in political economy, a broad field that brings Political Science and Economics together to bear on the major problems that China has faced during the past 20 years. “This includes developments in science, technology and higher education. The EAI has also done excellent work on the social changes between town and country and social work issues that have become increasingly prominent as China develops a middle class.”

“The areas my colleagues and I are very proud of are those where we have been able to demonstrate the value of the social sciences to those sections of the Singapore government and public most concerned [about enhancing] close relations with China. This was what the EAI was initially set up to do and we are determined to keep that as our priority task,” he says.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS & SECURITY

Ambassador Ong, apart from his role as Executive Director of RSIS, is currently Ambassador-at-Large at the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs, non-resident High Commissioner to Pakistan and non-resident Ambassador to Iran. He also serves as Chairman of the SIF.

He joined the Singapore Foreign Affairs upon graduation. “The education in the Faculty of Law at NUS gave me an appreciation of the legal and systematic in addressing issues which cropped up in my diplomatic work. The PG programme enabled me to examine issues clinically and to do public speaking with confidence,” he says.

Besides a long and distinguished diplomatic career, Mr Ong was also Press Secretary to the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr Goh Chok Tong (Arts ’64) from 1998 to 2002. From 2003 to 2008, he was Secretary General of ASEAN, based in Jakarta, Indonesia. From also served as Director of IPS.

Continued on page 19
PROF HENRY YEUNG
(ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES '91)
Professor of Economic Geography, Guangzhou
South China Normal University, was an early mover and leading researcher on a relatively new area of study known as Global Production Networks (GPN). He co-authored a seminal book on GPNs, establishing in January through a $54.95 million university-level research grant, by a team of top researchers including Geoffrey Jones, Economics, Business and Political Science.

It focuses on global production and economic development, particularly in China and other countries in East Asia. Prof Yeung recently published Global Production Networks: Theorising Economic Development in an Interconnected World (Oxford University Press) with his collaborator Prof Neil Coe.

continued from page 17

RSIS was established in July 2004 as an autonomous research institute by the President S R Nathan (Arts '54), in recognition of the Singaporean scholarship. While I was trained in Manchester and British Geography, I am an intellectual home, I do think of myself as an economic geographer originating from, and working and living in Asia. I'd like to see this focus on East Asia as a way for me to 'buck' the back to the 'West' by developing new knowledge in Asia.

GPN@NUS IS THE FIRST AND/OR LEADING CENTRE OF RESEARCH AND STUDY IN ASIA?
Yes, we are the first academic research centre on GPNs in Asia. There are a few private think tanks and research groups in regional organisations (e.g. Asia Development Bank and the ASEAN Secretariat), but no full- fledged academic centre on GPNs like ours exists in other universities in Asia.

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING GPNs? HOW DO YOU SEE ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY DEVELOPING IN THE NEXT 20-30 YEARS THAT WILL INFLUENCE THE STUDY OF GPN ESSENTIAL NOW?
The importance of studying GPNs is fairly straightforward. Song Koman’s book covers all the products most of the time, but how many of us really know the complicated production processes behind each of these products? In fact, these processes span many different countries in many different global locations.

So the ‘Made in China’ label is really wrong; it’s ‘Made in The World’. To arrive at this understanding and to learn how we in Singapore can position ourselves better, we need to study the global production networks of different products and services. As for the field of Economic Geography, I am very happy to report that our earlier work on GPNs (circa 2000-2010) in relation to the ‘Manchester school’ has already made substantial impact and become widely recognised as one of the four leading centres of Economic Geography research.

So Neil and I expect this second wave (we call it GPNs 2.0) in our recently published book (Globalisation, Mapping Economic Development in an Interconnected World) on the future of GPNs to focus on the future of network, global society through research, policy and international affairs.

In a nutshell, we do academic research to understand and explain how the complex production processes behind each of these products? In fact, these processes span many different countries in many different global locations. We also appear frequently in the research on the domestic and security interests of China, India, the US, Indonesia and Malaysia. The faculty members, says Mr Ong, are published not just in traditional journals and reputable academic presses but also make a point to write shorter newspaper op-ed and commentary pieces to stimulate policy thinking in government, business and civil society.

“They also appear frequently in the broadcast media, as educating the public in Singapore and the regional audience on the burning security issues of the day makes for more resilient and informed society,” he says. We are not confused by being an ivory tower institution. We must have relevance by generating country studies and international affairs. We require a broad and diverse literature and creative and critical thinking. We must be broad-based by exposing our young and newer citizens. We should not be isolated; we cannot afford to be just an ivory tower institution. We must have relevance by generating new insights and ideas; and the need to ensure that our research is widely and glean the key insights from, and working and living in Asia. I’d like to see this focus on East Asia as a way for me to ‘buck’ the back to the ‘West’ by developing new knowledge in Asia.

It also has country studies programmes to undertake research on the domestic and security interests of China, India, the US, Indonesia and Malaysia. The faculty members, says Mr Ong, are published not just in traditional journals and reputable academic presses but also make a point to write shorter newspaper op-ed and commentary pieces to stimulate policy thinking in government, business and civil society.

Alumni were also highly engaged in the institute’s mission to contribute to the global society through research, policy and international affairs.

The final session was held on September 24, 2014 at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (IISIA) to discuss the future of GPNs, with special emphasis on the role of Southeast Asia in the global economy.

THE HELM
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISAS)
FOUNDED: 2004
EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN: ASSOC PROF SIMON TAY (ARTS '88)

The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISAS) is an independent research institute with a mission to contribute to the global society through research, policy and international affairs. Its mission is to promote understanding of the South Asian region, and to communicate knowledge to policymakers, academics and the business community.

The ISAS was established in July 2004 as an autonomous research institute at NUS, a sign of the increasing economic and political importance of Asia – including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh. Its mission is to promote understanding of the South Asian region, and to communicate knowledge to policymakers, academics and the business community.

continued from page 17

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FROM GOOD TO GREAT

THE QUEST OF THE LEE KUAN YEW SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY’S FOUNDING DEAN

PROFESSOR KISHORE MAHBUBANI (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’71) IS TO ENSURE

THAT EVEN AS RESEARCH INTO SOCIAL SCIENCES BECOMES MORE “SCIENTIFIC”, IT REMAINS SOCIALLY RELEVANT AND ACCESSIBLE TO POLICYMAKERS.

BY ARTI MULCHAND

I AM NOT REALLY SURE HOW I GOT CHOSEN to be founding Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP). I was serving as Singapore’s Ambassador to the United Nations when in 2001, Dr Tony Tan, then Deputy Prime Minister (who was overseeing higher education), visited New York. He told me that the Cabinet had decided to recognise former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew by naming a school after him, and asked if I would take the position as founding Dean of the school.

I was ready for a change, having spent 13 years in the Foreign Ministry. [Being founding Dean] also appealed to me because I had

continued writing and publishing in globally recognised journals, and had developed a good network with several leading global universities. I had also spent a one-year sabbatical at Harvard in 1999, and had gotten to know the former Dean of its John F Kennedy School of Government, Joseph Nye, quite well. He was happy to guide me in what I needed to do as founding Dean.

A MODEST START

What LKYSPP started off with was very modest. I had inherited a small public policy programme with two Masters degrees set up in 1992 with the assistance of the Harvard Kennedy School, and an annual budget of approximately S$6 million. We had a faculty of 10, which is something I have written a lot about.

To explain the world, I sometimes use a simple expression: “If you do a Google search, you’ll find that many social scientists write essays that are very scientific and mathematical, but have little impact on real social challenges. We need to be able to attract the best students from all over the region. Our school is also trying to make a contribution by doing research on the future challenges that Singapore and the region will face.”

In the past 10 years, we have come a long way. But we are still at the base of our potential. Our mission now is to go from good to great.

I have been asked to extend my service for five more years and will step down in 2019. The most important thing, I tell my colleagues, is that my departure should have zero impact on the School. If that happens, then I would have done my job.

Professor Kishore Mahbubani was with the Singapore Foreign Service from 1971 until 2004 with postings that included Washington DC and New York. He was President of the UN Security Council in January 2001 and May 2002, and has been conferred The Public Administration Medal (Gold) by the Singapore Government. In March 2015, he was awarded the Distinguished Arts and Social Sciences Alumni Award by the National University of Singapore.

Asia and Globalisation, Huang Jing. We put our research out there, and tell people about the events and world-class speakers who come to our School, like former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Thomas Friedman.

Our high profile in the media enables us to reach out to and connect with future students, since 80 per cent of our potential students come from outside Singapore. If we truly want to improve governance in Asia, then we need to be able to attract the best students from all over the region. For instance, Associate Professor Eduardo Araral’s research on collective action in rural villages in the Philippines was used to support a USD$1 billion national poverty alleviation project in the country, which will benefit 24 million individuals, and is one of the largest of its kind in the world.

MAKING AN IMPACT

We also understand the need for our research to reach decision makers. One of the big problems today is that many social scientists write essays that are very scientific and have zero impact on the real world. We insist on very high academic standards and do very careful research. We carry out applied research on several aspects of governance and try to suggest concrete solutions to concrete problems – and some of our research find very practical application.

For instance, Associate Professor Eduardo Araral’s research on collective action in rural villages in the Philippines was used to support a USD$1 billion national poverty alleviation project in the country, which will benefit 24 million individuals, and is one of the largest of its kind in the world.

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My goal was straightforward: to create a great school of public policy. The initial stage was a struggle. We had a faculty of 10, which is something I have written a lot about.

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A LIFE OF DRAMA

PROLIFIC THEATRE ACTRESS MS KAREN TAN (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’90) CREDITS HER BREAK INTO THE ARTS TO THE HOST OF NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES SHE TOOK PART IN DURING CAMPUS DAYS. BY THESA TAN

THERE WAS A LOT OF TIME TO PERFORM. I HAD A LEGITIMATE EXCUSE TO REHEARSE A LOT BECAUSE [THE PERFORMANCES WERE] IN SCHOOL. I WAS IN REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES A LOT MORE THAN I WAS IN ACTUAL CLASSES.

MS KAREN TAN TELLS IT.

A lecture theatre was for performing in, and not for attending lectures. “One of my favourite memories of university must be of L13 (Lecture Theatre 13), because I always performed there. One time, I went there for a lecture and I was so shocked that it was an actual lecture theatre!”

Dr Koh Tai Ann was the lecturer that day, and she actually said, “How rare of you to join us!” says Ms Tan, chuckling at the memory.

A well-known face in Singapore theatre, Ms Tan, 48, has performed in many productions over the years – from the country’s first R(A) play, TheatreWorks’ ‘The Lady Of Soil And The Ultimate S’ Machine to Private Parts, in which she had a memorable role as Edward, a transsexual.

Ms Tan entered the NUS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in 1987 where she read Literature, English Language and History in her first year, and double English thereafter with English Applied Discourse (EAD) as a minor. “That’s the one I had a ‘re’ for,” she chuckles. A ‘re’ is undergrad lingo for ‘re-exam.”

The Literature Department was where she spent the most time. “The Lit lecturers were always up for discussion, and classes were always very lively. I don’t remember ever being coerced to answer if I didn’t want to. While [the lecturers] were very engaged, at the same time, they left us to be independent,” she says.

In truth, Ms Tan says she only had seven hours of lectures and tutorials a week. “I never skipped lectures. I’d have one lecture at 9am, another at 11am, and the next one would be 4pm so I’d take Bus 216 and go home (to her parents’ former flat at Holland Village), eat lunch, change and come back. So, there was a lot of time to perform. The irony was that I had a legitimate excuse to rehearse a lot because [the performances were] in school. I was in rehearsals and performances a lot more than I was in actual classes. There were always the Lunchtime Performances at L13 that I ended up either hosting or performing in.”

There were also performances for various hops and balls, “NUSSU Ball, Arts Ball,” she recalls. Ms Tan credits NUS for being the ripe ground to which her theatre career took root. In her first year, she played the lead role in Potaches & Whipped Cream which was performed at the former Shell Theatrette.

Ivan said, “I’m holding auditions this afternoon at the Drama Centre for this new play by Michael Chiang called Mixed Signals. Will you come?” And I said, ‘Of course!’ So I went for the audition at TheatreWorks, and I got it! So if you work backwards, if I wasn’t in NUS, I wouldn’t have picked to do the fashion parade, and so on and so forth. That was a good year!”

Ms Tan, who is married to gynaecologist Dr Quick Swee Ching, refers to herself as a mother first, and actress second. Her older child Rachel will be following in her mother’s footsteps and enrolling in the NUS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences this year in August.

Her advice to Rachel, 15, has been to take her time to select her subjects. “There is every chance her daughter may pick Literature as she did, or Theatre Studies, which Ms Tan feels is too technical. “Funny thing about Rachel going to the English Department is that a lot of people I know like (Literature lecturer) Robin Loom and (Theatre Studies lecturer) Faith Ng are teaching there, and they’ve known Rachel since she was a baby.”

She says, “People are always asking her if she is going to be an actress like her mother. Nobody ever asks her if she is going to be a doctor like her father. Which is why I avoid talking about them (Ms Tan has another daughter Olivia, 10) going into theatre. I won’t stop them if they want to, but they know it’s a very difficult life, and they know the hours kept. They’ve had to sacrifice a lot because of my work.”

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THAN I WAS IN ACTUAL CLASSES.

[THE PERFORMANCES WERE] IN SCHOOL. I WAS IN

REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES A LOT

MORE THAN I WAS IN ACTUAL CLASSES.


Ms Tan’s debut clay performance as Them in Potaches & Whipped Cream, performed at the former Shell Theatrette, 1987.
I DON’T REMEMBER HAVING ANY PROBLEM BECAUSE OF MY GENDER, THERE WAS NO DISCRIMINATION OF ANY SORT. MEN AND WOMEN COMPETED ON EQUAL TERMS.

Today Consultant Haematologist at Gribbles Pathology (a Malaysian web-based pathology lab) – who took the trouble to guide and nurture me and explain things to me in my formative years. I developed my love for clinical medicine from that year in Medicine.

Dato’ Kew names the late Emeritus Professor Wong Hock Roon (Medicine ’52) as the Medical School teacher who inspired her most deeply. “He was one of the best teachers, so humble, and he worked very hard. We used to call him the ‘walking paediatric encyclopaedia’,” she says.

Dato’ Kew topped her cohort of 1969, achieving Distinctions both in Medicine and Surgery. She won the University Silver Medal, which is awarded to the overall best student, the Brunel Hawes Gold Medal for Medicine awarded to the best student in Clinical Medicine, and the Yeoh Khuann 100 Gold Medal for Surgery. She says, “I treasure these awards the most; these were attained through my own effort and sweat. I keep them in my safe deposit box!”

Public Service Despite her achievements, Dato’ Kew’s favourite memory of her undergraduate years was meeting her classmate and future husband Dr Kew Siang Tong (Medicine ’69), today a general practitioner in Malaysia. “When we started courting, gossip went around that I had contracted Q fever – a play on ‘Kew’,” she laughs. The couple married in Malaysia after graduation, and Dato’ Kew did her houseman years in general medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology at the Ipoh General Hospital (now called Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun). She worked in Perak, then Perlis as a medical officer – her first son was born in Perlis in 1973 – before being transferred, together with her husband, to Hospital Kuala Lumpur (HKL). She was appointed Registrar in 1974. After a range of positions at HKL, Dato’ Kew rose to the position of Head of Medicine of the Ministry of Health (Malaysia) in 1998, a post she held till her retirement from public service.

Along the way, she also served as President of the Malaysian Society of Gastroenterology and Hepatology (MSGH) from 1992 to 1993, President of the College of Physicians Malaysia (1992-2000), and Master of the Academy of Medicine Malaysia (the umbrella body of medical specialties) from 2002 to 2006. Today, Dato’ Kew is the Dean of International Medical University (IMU), a private institution in Kuala Lumpur.

Of her many accomplishments, Dato’ Kew finds her work in gastroenterology the most rewarding. “It was able to contribute to the specialty by shaping the training of gastroenterologists as a subspecialty in the Ministry of Health in Malaysia,” she explains. “I laid down the groundwork for training, the structure, specifics, logbook, rotation, etc. I was also instrumental in conducting training for a handful of trainers in HKL. I also helped set up the endoscopy service there.”

Her role as President of MSGH allowed her to promote the specialty, educate healthcare professionals, and the public. “The MSGH was instrumental in producing several Clinical Practice Guidelines in Gastroenterology,” she adds.

PEER TEACHING

Today, as Dean of IMU, Dato’ Kew draws from her experience as a medical undergrad to lead her students. “In my fourth year as a medical student, I learned medicine by seeing patients and doing clinical work. We often work in pairs or small groups in groups of two; we do our best to implement peer teaching in IMU. “Students often find it easier to learn from peers. A buddy system is very useful and provides great support, and buddies often become lifelong friends.”

Her early personal experience with a good mentor inspired Dato’ Kew to implement peer teaching in IMU. “I’m just very grateful to be given the opportunity to serve as a doctor and in medical education.”

* IMU offers students two tracks: one to go overseas to one of its 28 Partner Medical Schools after completing five semesters in IMU, and the other the full MBBS programme of 5½ semesters, all in IMU.

** Equal terms.

** Peers often become lifelong friends.
PEOPLE BEFORE PROFITS

PLAYMOOLAH CO-FOUNDERS AUDREY TAN (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ‘10) AND LEE MIN XUAN (BUSINESS ’10), BOTH 27, ON IMPROVING FINANCIAL LITERACY WHILE REDEFINING THE PLACE OF MONEY IN OUR LIVES. BY MANDA TAN

WHAT IS ONE THING WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOU?

AUDREY: I have a deep love for children and serve in a young adults vocational discernment community in my parish/Church. I am also quite a geek when it comes to technology.

MIN: I am passionate about re-inventing education and enjoy meeting others who are experimenting with truth, business and social change.

DID YOU BOTH DEVELOP AN ENTREPRENEURIAL STREAK FROM A YOUNG AGE?

AUDREY: Yes! Min ran a design company in junior college, while I had an online retail shop during my first couple of years in university.

MIN: To us, running our own businesses was more about creating value in the communities we were a part of. We learned that earning money is not a goal we should have in and of itself, but rather a reward for delivering value where it is needed most. This is a key principle in our lives and also in the curriculum of our products.

AUDREY, YOU HAVE A BACHELOR OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (HONOURS) IN COMMUNICATIONS AND NEW MEDIA. MIN, YOU HAVE A BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION. YOU TWO MET IN 2008 AS ROOMMATES AT THE NUS OVERSEAS COLLEGE (NOC) IN SILICON VALLEY. WHY DO YOU THINK THE NOC PROGRAMME WAS SO VALUABLE TO YOU?

MIN: NOC gave us the opportunity and exposure to work alongside the world's masters in technology and business in Silicon Valley. They have been our biggest inspirations in learning how to run a startup, from hiring the best people for your team, to recruiting advisors and investors who are strategically aligned with you for the long term, to building a sustainable business while providing immense value to the world.

AUDREY: Yes! NOC was a springboard for founding PlayMoolah. How so?

AUDREY: We were in a Technology Entrepreneurship class at Stanford just as the US economy was collapsing. The class was on identifying and analysing opportunities, and this was a clear one that presented itself. With Min's interest in education and mine in working with children, it became clear to us that teaching children about good financial habits (through persuasive technology and games) could have an immediate impact in the market.

MIN: But you set up PlayMoolah in 2010 in Singapore, which was not as hard hit by the financial crisis as the US. Were you afraid your products would not be embraced here?

MIN: We were actually pleasantly surprised to find that the opposite was true. In Singapore, our customers – at that time, banks – were hungry for new ways to engage their young customers. Singapore is a small and competitive market, banks urgently needed to differentiate themselves from one another and we were well-positioned to help them achieve that goal. Also, the principles and fears when it comes to money are universal and we have always built our products with a global audience in mind.

PLAYMOOLAH’S FIRST PRODUCT WAS THE ONLINE MONEY-MANAGEMENT GAME MoolahVerse for children. How much has the company grown since then?

AUDREY: Today we have a staff strength of six and have done work in Singapore, Indonesia and the US. As we’ve grown up, so has our audience and product suite. [For example,] WhyMoolah is a real life simulation app targeted at young adults; it is available for free download at the App Store and Google Play.

MIN: We have also branched out into offline offerings by bringing the power of play to educational programmes that introduce good financial habits to students. In late 2014 we launched Moolah Talks, a game-show-style assembly talk, and Moolah Run, a strategy ‘amazing race’ to secondary schools in Singapore. This year also marks our official US expansion, as I moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in March to set up our presence there.

HOW IMPORTANT IS YOUR CHANGEMAKER ALUMNI NETWORK?

MIN: As aspiring social entrepreneurs, we are making impact in terms of emotional and mental wellness, as money issues have a very high correlation to stress, depression and anxiety. It’s still early days, though, and there is a long road ahead of us to truly achieve the positive changes we would like to see.

AUDREY: Key lesson we learned is to keep talking to your customers and listening to the market. It’s these people who we are serving, so we should pay attention to their needs.

WOULD YOU SAY YOU HAVE MADE A TANGIBLE IMPACT ON THE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP LANDSCAPE, BOTH IN SINGAPORE AND OVERSEAS?

AUDREY: It depends on how you define ‘social entrepreneurship’ and ‘impact’. The social impact we are making is in terms of emotional and mental wellness, as money issues have a very high correlation to stress, depression and anxiety. It’s still early days, though, and there is a long road ahead of us to truly achieve the positive changes we would like to see.

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE OR TIPS FOR ASPIRING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS?

MIN: Running a social enterprise is challenging, and it’s easy to get lost in your personal struggles and lose sight of why you began your business. To help you through the tough times, keep your purpose clear in your mind and find a community whose values align with yours so that you can always learn and get feedback from them.
TECH START-UP KAI SQUARE, VIDEO SURVEILLANCE AND PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE HAVE MADE A NAME FOR ALUMNUS (COMPUTING ’04) AND ANALYTICS INDUSTRY. THEMSELVES IN THE DR NEO SHI YONG (COMPUTING ’04), VICTOR GOH BY WANDA TAN

they have,” says Mr Goh. Indeed, they make use of data by adding artificial intelligence to more people the way they perceive and make use of data. “We wanted to change the way people perceive and make use of data by adding artificial intelligence on top of the knowledge they have,” says Mr Goh. Indeed, they have steadily built up the company’s remote video surveillance and video analytics services, entering overseas markets and winning multiple awards along the way.

THE EARLY DAYS

The pair first met in 2003 as Computer Science freshmen, and became colleagues and close friends one year later. Dr Neo recalls, “Victor and I got to know each other better when we were hired by one of our professors, Prof Chua Tat Seng (now KITHCT Chair Professor of the NUS School of Computing), as part-time programmers for a company he had started.” The company stopped operations in 2004, but the two-year experience Dr Neo and Mr Goh garnered was enough to entice them to join the start-up world.

They co-founded KAI Square in the midst of their graduate studies in Computer Science. “During the first few years, we took on ad hoc projects and outsourced the work to NUS student programmers,” says Dr Neo. Jobs ranged from performing data mining to installing a receipt system for small businesses. Gradually, they began to take on larger and more complex projects. Mr Goh started working full-time at KAI Square after obtaining his Master’s degree in 2007, and Dr Neo followed suit after completing his PhD in 2008.

In 2009, they approached by SMET and SRS Transit in 2009 to set up a video management system for their fleet of buses, the duo saw an opportunity to enter this niche market. “At that point, video management systems were on the rise but not many companies were offering this service yet,” says Mr Goh. “Moreover, there was no intelligence in the systems.” Most companies were still using analog CCTV cameras which meant users could only watch the video recordings on a television screen.

To create a competitive edge, KAI Square leveraged on telecommunications infrastructure to develop a video surveillance platform using Internet Protocol cameras. Live CCTV footage could thus be transmitted through 3G/4G wireless networks and viewed on any web-enabled device such as a laptop or mobile phone, while cloud-hosted software provided advanced video-processing capabilities.

KAI Square’s first proprietary products, Juzz4Security and Juzz4Logistics, were launched in 2010. In addition to web-based video surveillance, both offered unique features catered to the security and logistics/transportation sectors, respectively. Juzz4Security was enhanced with cloud computing to run video analytics, for example, instantly alerting users if intruders were detected, while Juzz4Logistics allowed fleet operators to track the movement and location of vehicles in real time.

It did not take the products long to generate buzz. Among other local honours, KAI Square won top prize at the Singapore infocomm Technology Federation (SITF) Awards in 2009 and the OCBC Bank/The Business Times Emerging Enterprise Awards in 2010. The start-up is also a past winner of the Red Herring Top 100 Global ranking, cementing its reputation as a fast-growing technology company.

EXPANSION OF OPERATIONS

Together with Singtel, KAI Square launched its latest cloud-based product, Video Analytics as-a-Service (VAaaS), in 2014. This comprises a range of Business Intelligence and Security Intelligence solutions to help business owners increase revenue and detect intruders or losses. For example, Mr Goh explains, “VAaaS can gather statistics on customer footfall at different times of the day, and on the percentage of male vs female customers. Store owners can then use this information to optimise staffing allocation and strategise their product offering.” Although still new, VAaaS’ adoption rate is growing among public- and private-sector organisations in various industries such as retail, transportation, security and healthcare. KAI Square has also partnered with leading telecommunications service providers in eight countries, mostly in Southeast Asia, to reach out to end users. “We project that VAaaS will be profitable by 2016, and that our market reach will double in the next 18 months,” says Dr Neo.

Concomitant with KAI Square’s widening customer base has been an expansion of operations. From their Singapore headquarters, Dr Neo and Mr Goh currently manage some 50 staff spread out across sales offices in Taiwan and Suzhou, China as well as a research centre in Beijing. In fact, the company’s Suzhou branch is located at the NUS (Suzhou) Research Institute’s incubator facility, which provides office space and entrepreneurship-related services like mentoring and networking to tech start-ups.

As Dr Neo gratefully acknowledges, he and Mr Goh have also been helped by their NUS connections in other ways. “In 2009, we won second prize at Start-Up@ Singapore (an annual business plan competition organised by the NUS Entrepreneurship Society) and used the prize money to commercialise our products.” The NUS Entrepreneurship Centre also invested in KAI Square during its initial round of venture capital financing in 2011, as did Prof Chua who served as an angel investor.

A COMMON AMBITION

In their respective roles as CEO and COO of KAI Square, Dr Neo and Mr Goh assume different responsibilities at work. “I manage the company’s internal, day-to-day operations, while Shi Yong deals with investors and customers,” says Mr Goh. They may disagree on certain issues from time to time, for instance when evaluating potential new hires. The key is to “compromise whenever disagreements occur.”

What unites them is their belief in a common vision to “bring intelligent data to more people”, as Dr Neo puts it. “Video analytics is still in its infancy, so we hope to roll out a wider variety and coverage of products in the future.”

BIG DATA DREAMS

In the midst of the current data mining boom, both Dr Neo and Mr Goh are determined to keep pace. “We live in an age where data comes at us from many sources, and what is available at our fingertips now can only grow. How can we make sense of this information overload instead of getting buried by it?”

For Dr Neo Shi Yong and Mr Victor Goh, both 35, the answer lies in Knowledge-based Artificial Intelligence (KAI), which they believe will establish their company KAI Square in 2006. “We wanted to change the way people perceive and make use of data by adding artificial intelligence on top of the knowledge they have,” says Mr Goh. Indeed, they have steadily built up the company’s video surveillance and video analytics services, entering overseas markets and winning multiple awards along the way.

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WE WANTED TO CHANGE THE WAY PEOPLE PERCEIVE PERCEPTION AND MAKE USE OF DATA BY ADDING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON TOP OF THE KNOWLEDGE THEY HAVE.

NR VICTOR GOH (COMPUTING ’04)
MADE IN SINGAPORE

Fashion authority Daniel Boey weaves a tale of passion and identity.

Daniel Boey (Arts and Social Sciences ’89)

ONE SPEAKER. 10 MINUTES. BOUNDLESS INSPIRATION.

U@live is our monthly guest speaker series that showcase NUS alumni who have a passion for making a difference. Hosted by Alumni Advisory Board member and veteran TV presenter Mr Viswa Sadasivan (Arts and Social Sciences ’83) at the Shaw Foundation Alumni House, the one-hour session is also streamed live on the U@live website.

To register for future U@live events, visit www.nus.edu.sg/ualive.

Daniel Boey went on to design and organise the NUSSU huge gala events. After he had designed and organised the NUSU Ball and hostel balls, he realised he had a skill which, in turn, helped him when he wanted to start a career in the fashion industry.

"Until this time, the word ‘fashion’ had not even featured in my life," he recalled. "So how did he end up in the industry? As Mr Boey revealed, “It was the first job offered to me in which I didn’t have to write a resume.” But his passion for the job grew when he discovered that staging a fashion show was the perfect channel for his other interests to converge. “Putting a fashion show together is no different from organising a play or a musical. Your fashion designer is your playwright, the clothes are the script, and you are the producer and director.”

"I take the clothes and I turn them into a production. So I tell a story. My passion actually isn’t in fashion. My passion is in telling a story. My passion is in curation. My passion is in pulling creative geniuses from all different disciplines, pulling them together and creating a story. So I’ve actually been nurturing my passion... because all the skills I learnt in writing, theatre and music... these were skills that I have honed and which I apply to my job today," he added.

And it is for this reason that Mr Boey advises the young generation, “If you have a passion, pursue it. If you’re not sure that’s what you want, pursue it anyway. What you learn from that is going to help you in your future life, whether you realise it or not.”

When U@live session moderator Mr Viswa Sadasivan (Arts and Social Sciences ’83) teased the fashion director about his apparent ‘ego’, Mr Boey acknowledged it. “You have to have an ego in order to break the rules and buck the system... If you use that ego to make a difference in the industry, that’s good ego.”

When Mr Boey made the move to London in 1996 to work, and experienced racism for the first time in his life, he realised the importance of standing up for his beliefs. “[The experience] made me a stronger person... and it also taught me how to push my opinions across. There’s no such thing as a wrong opinion, it’s how hard you fight for that opinion or idea, and that can only come through if you have an ego.”

One such issue that Mr Boey feels very strongly about is that fashion schools in Singapore do not teach business courses. “A lot of fashion designers fail because they have not been taught how to run a business,” he said. Mr Boey works closely with selected independent fashion schools to create such a curriculum for their students.

“That’s why I’m so big on mentorship. Because if you don’t nurture the next generation, just like how I was nurtured... what sort of continuity would there be?” That’s one of the reasons why he wrote [my book]. I realised that Singapore’s fashion history has not been documented. And if we don’t start the ball rolling... a wonderful era would just fade into oblivion,” he said.

To this, Mr Sadasivan asked Mr Boey: “Why is identity important to you?” The latter’s answer was, “If I don’t have an identity... then I won’t be doing it with an opinion. I won’t be doing it with a style. I’ll be just aping someone’s style. The reason why I’ve got such a strong Singapore identity is because this is where I honed my passion and my skills. Without that identity, without that passion, I would be just another show producer with a generic point of view.”

He let on that the Singaporean ‘kiasuism’ is a good trait to possess. “As told to me by my agent in London, what I take one day to do... some others take a week to do. So it’s great to be kiasu.”

‘Because We Care’

The Alumni Leaders Forum is an initiative of the NUS Alumni Advisory Board.

You have to have an ego in order to break the rules and buck the system. If you use that ego to better your career, that’s good ego.

University of Singapore (NUS) National University of Singapore Office of Alumni Relations Celebrating 50 years because we care

NUS Alumni Leaders Forum 2015
5 September 2015, Saturday
9am to 2pm
Shaw Foundation Alumni House

The NUS Alumni Leaders Forum is specially designed for alumni leaders, volunteers and student leaders to learn, share and discover new ideas and best practices in alumni and student matters.

By Chia Ee Khin
Mr Boey spoke on 13 April 2015.
GALVANISED INTO ACTION

For Singapore’s youngest Member of Parliament Ms Tin Pei Ling, what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.

It is the actions you take to bounce back from setbacks that will define you in life – especially if you are of the younger generation – then perhaps Ms Tin Pei Ling, the youngest elected Member of Parliament (MP) in Singapore thus far, exemplifies this.

Upbeat and candid throughout the U@live session, and confidently taking on sharp questions posed by moderator Mr Viswa Sadasivan (Arts and Social Sciences ’83) and even engaging in playful banter, Ms Tin was open about her personal values of cultural sensitivity. A few times during her session, applause from the 200-strong audience rang out.

When Ms Tin was fielded in the 2015 General Election as a candidate for the Marine Parade GRC, she was 27 years old. There was criticism about the choice, as well as personal attacks, and doubts were raised about whether she was capable enough.

“I was the lightning rod, as some would describe. No matter what I said, no matter what I did, even if there was nothing wrong, I would still attract attention and criticism,” Ms Tin recalled. “I’d never felt so down in my life.”

When the PAP won the Marine Parade GRC seat, there were comments that it was the leadership of then Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong that brought the team to victory.

So for the next four years, Ms Tin worked fervently to prove that age should not be a determining – or detracting – factor for anyone who truly wants to serve the country. “I don’t think there is a single definition of what an MP should do or how an MP should be,” said the mother-to-be who is due to deliver any day now.

Her belief is that action is imperative. “Words mean nothing if they cannot be translated into something that is tangible and has real positive impact on the ground,” she stressed. “There must be action accompanying words. Then it’s real change. That is why I devote much of my time and energy on the ground to help solve real issues and implement programmes that hopefully will help improve the lives of my residents.”

Every year, Ms Tin speaks up for mental health care. And if I give up I will never be able to do that.”

Instead, through her actions over the past four years, Ms Tin hopes to encourage the younger generation, especially her juniors in NUS. “As thick skinned as this may sound, I am able to continue to stand here facing everyone, I hope I am sending a positive message to people out there.”

As the audience nodded in approval, acknowledging how far Ms Tin has come in her journey as an MP, Mr Sadasivan summed up the session best with his closing remark, “I have absolute admiration for you. And I hope you get due credit for having the courage to be who you are, for better or for worse.”

BY CHIA EE KUIN
MS TIN SPOKE ON 27 MAY 2015.

26 AUGUST 2015
WEDNESDAY 7.30PM

U@live is a monthly speaker series that showcases outstanding members of the NUS community. Apart from having a live audience, U@live will also be webcasted live through a dedicated website where users can send in real time comments and questions directly to the speakers.

U@live Speaker Series are moderated by Mr Viswa Sadasivan, Chairman of the U@live Organising Committee and Member of the NUS Alumni Advisory Board.

Reserve Your Seats Now!
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Register at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet

Shaw Foundation Alumni House

ONE SPEAKER 10 MINUTES
BOUNDLESS INSPIRATION

Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed
Arts and Social Sciences ’71
Former Senior Minister of State (Foreign Affairs)

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FAMILY UNITES FOR LEGACY GIFT

The late Mr Khoo Teck Quee was a staunch believer in the importance of a good education and he strived to give his children the best education he could afford. He was a rice merchant and investor who led a frugal lifestyle. Both Mr Khoo and his late wife, Mdm Tan Phek Wan, contributed to charities and the family continues this tradition of giving.

“Our father started making donations to schools such as the Anglo-Chinese School and Methodist Girls’ School towards their building funds or providing bursaries/scholarships for their students. Our mother was particularly caring and was touched by those around her. She was always worrying for them, and helped in whatever way she could. Every year, she would donate to various charities, mainly in the healthcare sector. Some of the beneficiaries included the National Kidney Foundation, Singapore Buddhist Free Clinic and Thong Chai Medical Institution,” says Mdm Khoo Whee Luan.

In honour of their late parents, the Khoo family, Mr Khoo Hwee Tim, Mr Khoo Chwee Tim (Engineering ’70), Mdm Khoo Hoon Gim, Ms Khoo Whee Leng, Mdm Khoo Whee Luan and daughter-in-law Mdm Quik Lee Lee, have made a gift of S$1 million to establish the Khoo Teck Quee and Tan Phek Wan Bursary at the National University of Singapore (NUS).

On their collective decision to give to NUS, Mdm Khoo explains, “Our family believes in the importance of an education with equal opportunities for everyone. Through bursaries, financially needy students are able to further their tertiary education and NUS is a well-established institution to enable this.”

Mdm Khoo shares her family values which she and her siblings have largely lived by: “Our parents valued thriftiness and often told us ‘waste not, want not’. Wastage was frowned upon. There were few luxuries. Even though we did not lack in essentials, we led a rather austere but happy lifestyle,” she says.

The Khoo family hopes that the recipients of the Bursary will go on and help others when they are able. “Work hard to achieve your dreams. When you can, use your talents to give back to society at least once. It does not need to be a huge effort or involve lots of money. Every contribution is significant. You will find it so rewarding that you will continue to give.”

Our Family Believes in the Importance of an Education with Equal Opportunities for Everyone.

Mdm Khoo Whee Luan

FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE INSPIRE ALUMNI GIVING

The love story of Mr Ricky Ow (Arts and Social Sciences ’90) and Ms Jennifer Chew (Arts and Social Sciences ’90) blossomed from a regular ‘makan’ group when they both studied at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in the National University of Singapore (NUS).

The married couple has made a gift to NUS through the NUS Campus Couples Bursary Fund, an alumni-led initiative aimed at encouraging couples who met on campus to make a gift to bursaries in support of financially disadvantaged students. “Jennifer and I both felt that this was the best way to celebrate our wedding anniversary – giving young students a chance to achieve their dreams,” explains Mr Ow, who is the President of Turner International Asia Pacific Limited, a Time Warner company.

The couple resides in Hong Kong but has remained steadfast friends with another couple, Mr Ian Heng (Arts and Social Sciences ’90) and Ms Wong Pui Sum (Science ’90) whom they met while studying in NUS. Having already made a gift to the NUS Campus Couples Bursary Fund, Mr Heng and Ms Wong encouraged them to do the same.

Of their unwavering friendship, Mr Ow says, “I’ve known Ian since our National Service days and since we were in the same Faculty, we were in the same ‘makan’ group in NUS as well. I remember the two of us being fast asleep in the library during study session Ian and Pui Sum have joined us on many holidays over the years and we have even celebrated Christmas together for the past 25 years. Looking back, they have been with us through all of our ups and downs.”

It is no surprise to Mr Ow that this was the best way to celebrate their wedding anniversary – giving young students a chance to achieve their dreams,” explains Mr Ow, who is the President of Turner International Asia Pacific Limited, a Time Warner company.

The couple, who makes it a point to set aside some money for charity every year, leaves it to their daughter to research meaningful charities to support. But for them, NUS was a natural choice. “We gave in order to reconnect with lots of friends. Everyone is full of passion and energy about the future. I believe that all the experiences we go through during our school days form a good foundation for our relationships to grow. My fondest memories are of the many times Jennifer and I spent chatting with each other while waiting for classes to start,” Mr Ow shares.

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BURSARY FORGES A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP

Yuanlin (Arts '72) is a graduate who has just started her career. Mdm Juliana Lim (Arts and Social Sciences '72) is a committed community volunteer who has since retired from an illustrious career in the arts. Their paths crossed when Yuanlin received a bursary set up by Juliana in honour of her father. They met, they dined and they bonded – over shared ideals and a sense of mutual gratitude.

When the Bursary was awarded, Juliana wanted to know how the recipient was doing and whether she could augment the grant with other kinds of support. With these thoughts in mind, she started meeting up with Yuanlin regularly, and even introduced her to other family members. They quickly became fast friends who exchanged stories, experiences and advice.

Together, they handpicked the donor and also the name on the Bursary. I wanted to thank this person, because the Bursary has helped me so much,” shares Yuanlin. “When I was informed that the donor would like to meet me, I naturally became curious about the donor and also the name on the Bursary. I wanted to thank this person, because the Bursary has helped me so much,” shares Yuanlin. "When I was informed that the donor would like to meet me, I naturally became curious about the donor and also the name on the Bursary. I wanted to thank this person, because the Bursary has helped me so much," shares Yuanlin. For someone who was used to working during holidays to supplement her own daily allowance, the Bursary allowed Yuanlin to focus her energies on her studies. A school placement at The Singapore Buddhist Lodge Vision Family Service Centre also paved the way for her first full-time job there, doing counselling and casework. Helping students like Yuanlin was exactly what Juliana intended when she established the Class of '72 Bursary - James Lim Teck Liang Bursary. She was also extremely glad to give back to her alma mater through a class gift.

“Besides supporting the Class of '72 which spawned friendships that lasted 40 years, I also wanted to share the story of my father who was an educator and missionary. Apart from instilling in his five children the love of knowledge and virtues such as honesty, hard work and justice, he also demonstrated a generous spirit by conducting church choirs in his free time and offering housing in our tiny home, to his children’s bewilderment, to strangers in need of a place to stay, sometimes for years,” Juliana says.

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For someone who was used to working during holidays to supplement her own daily allowance, the Bursary allowed Yuanlin to focus her energies on her studies. A school placement at The Singapore Buddhist Lodge Vision Family Service Centre also paved the way for her first full-time job there, doing counselling and casework. Helping students like Yuanlin was exactly what Juliana intended when she established the Class of '72 Bursary - James Lim Teck Liang Bursary. She was also extremely glad to give back to her alma mater through a class gift.

Besides supporting the Class of '72 which spawned friendships that lasted 40 years, I also wanted to share the story of my father who was an educator and missionary. Apart from instilling in his five children the love of knowledge and virtues such as honesty, hard work and justice, he also demonstrated a generous spirit by conducting church choirs in his free time and offering housing in our tiny home, to his children’s bewilderment, to strangers in need of a place to stay, sometimes for years,” Juliana says.

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ALUMNI HAPPENINGS EVENTS

TEA AND CHAT AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE

In February 2015, NUS senior alumni organised two special events in addition to their annual lohei celebration on February 26. On 6 February, a group of about 60 senior alumni had the rare privilege of visiting Parliament House and being hosted to tea by Speaker of Parliament Madam Halimah Yacob (Law '78), and having a chat session with her. Mdm Halimah spoke informally with the seniors about her role in Parliament, and on Central Provident Fund and MediShield Life.

LEE KUAN YEW REMEMBRANCE BOOK

On 26 March 2015, senior alumni wrote their tributes to and remembrances of Mr Lee Kuan Yew, the founding father of modern Singapore, at a special LKY Tribute Session before the start of the Tea and Chat session by Mr Tee Tua Ba (Law '66) on the Laju ferry hijack. NUS Senior Alumni later compiled all the remembrances into a book which was delivered to the Prime Minister’s Office.

NUS Senior Alumni comprises an active group of seniors aged 50 and above, many of whom belong to Singapore’s Pioneer Generation. The group will be having its Fifth Anniversary Gala Dinner at the Shangri-la Hotel on 27 June this year, with Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong (Arts '64) as Guest-of-Honour.

Visit to UTown and the College of Alice and Peter Tan

On 13 February 2015, another group of senior alumni had the opportunity of touring the College of Alice and Peter Tan (CAPT) at University Town (UTown) and being hosted to dinner in the student dining hall by Rector J Y Pillay. The on-site visit gave our senior alumni first-hand insights into college living today, and the innovative curriculum which students enjoy, which CAPT Master Associate Professor Adeline Snow (Medicine '88) described in her talk to the seniors.

NUS – WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

NUS – WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

Date: 23 September 2015 (Wednesday)
Time: 7.30pm
Venue: Shaw Foundation Alumni House, Auditorium

U@live is a monthly speaker series that showcases outstanding members of the NUS community. Apart from having a live audience, U@live will also be webcasted live through a dedicated website where users can send in real time comments and questions directly to the speakers.

U@live Speaker Series are moderated by Mr Viswa Sadasivan, Chairman of the U@live Organising Committee and Member of the NUS Alumni Advisory Board.

4 th ALUMNI & FRIENDS GOLF TOURNAMENT

Alumni/Friends $150
Undergraduates $100
Raffles Country Club Members $80

1pm Shotgun, Raffles Country Club

Register Now!
alumnet.nus.edu.sg/event/ANF15

Reserve Your Seats Now!
Attend the forum live at the Shaw Foundation Alumni House.
Register at: www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet

OR

Join Us Online!
www.nus.edu.sg/ualive

Celebrating:

Presented by:
Office of Alumni Relations
Every year, the Communications and New Media (CNM) Department of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) organises Random Blends, a showcase of artworks, photographs, games and digital designs by students of the department. This year was the seventh iteration of the exhibition titled Random Blends 2015: Inter (_____). The showcase was officially launched on 4 April 2015 at the ArtScience Museum™ Marina Bay Sands. Mr Gabriel Lim, Chief Executive Officer of the Media Development Authority and Mr Michael Lee, local-born internationally acclaimed artist-curator and founder of art gallery Studio Bibliothèque, were the Guest-of-Honour and Special Guest respectively.

This year, Random Blends showcased over 30 works by CNM students and alumni. One such exhibit was called the ‘Analogue - A catalogue of fictional and imagined products for a world which expects an apocalypse and feels deep nostalgia for the past’. Our alumni Mr Edwin Tan (Class of ‘14) and Ms Eileen Chow (Class of ‘14) displayed their prototypes: iSpotifright – an ‘anti-spiritz surveillance robot’ that detects the presence of spirits and mGarden Necklace – a portable garden in a necklace that supplies a continuous stream of oxygen, respectively. Our soon to be alumnus Mr Dennis Ang’s prototype the OraclePendant – a ‘Naturalistic Decisions Maker’, was also displayed.

Over the years, Random Blends has not only been a platform to showcase the department’s current students’ talents but also one to keep in touch with alumni and offer them an opportunity to be a part of the CNM family after graduation.

LERE KUAN YEW SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY BEIJING ALUMNI CHAPTER CHINESE NEW YEAR DINNER

On 8 March 2015, about 30 alumni from the Beijing Alumni Chapter gathered together for an evening of sumptuous food and lively conversations in celebration of Chinese New Year. Alumni from each of the four programmes (MPAM, MPP, MPA and MPAM) were well represented.

Chapter Secretary, Ms Yan Shufen (MPA ‘10), welcomed the alumni and representatives from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKY School), namely Professor Hui Weng Tat, Professor Chen Kang, Ms Wang Tong from Academic Affairs (Admissions and Academic Partnership) and Mr Bernard Lee from External Affairs (alumni Relations and Development).

During dinner, Prof Hui and Prof Chen spoke about their respective research. Alumni also received updates on alumni network movements, and were enthusiastic about the growing number of alumni chapters, contribution of alumni to the recruitment effort and the upcoming alumni survey.

The gathering reinvigorated the Chapter’s commitment to support and further the missions of the LKY School and the evening ended on a high note with words of encouragement from Chapter President, Mr Wu Guanghui (MPAM ‘12).

Enjoy a COMPLIMENTARY movie screening and dinner.

Programme:
6.30pm Registration and Dinner Reception
8.00pm Movie

Venue: Shaw Foundation Alumni House, Auditorium
Register at: www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet
For enquiries, please contact Mr Kyaw Win Shwe at kyawwinshwe@nus.edu.sg or 6516 5769.

MOVIES ON THE HOUSE

Let’s CHILL OUT!

30 JULY 2015 PG-13

Admission is FREE
Venue: Shaw Foundation Alumni House, Auditorium
Time: 7.30pm
Register at: www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet
For enquiries, please contact Mr Kyaw Win Shwe at kyawwinshwe@nus.edu.sg or 6516 5769.

What happened that night of 3 December 1984 that killed 16,000, affected close to a million, and continues to impact lives more than 30 years later? Based on true events, ‘Bhopal – A Prayer for Rain’ is a film that captures the horrors of the Bhopal gas tragedy, the world’s worst industrial disaster.
**PRIVILEGES & OFFERS**

Your complimentary AlumNUS Card entitles you to a host of benefits and privileges! Get your complimentary AlumNUS Card at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/alumnuscard.

We welcome alumni business owners to come on board as our AlumNUS Card merchant partners. Drop us a note at carconnect@nus.edu.sg and make an exceptional offer to fellow alumni.

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**FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

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<tr>
<td>Molly Roffey's Irish Pub</td>
<td>10% off a la carte items at Molly Roffey’s Irish Pub and Miss Molly’s</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mollyroffeys.com">www.mollyroffeys.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Footin®</td>
<td>10% off regular priced items.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.foot-in.com">www.foot-in.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rae &amp; Rum</td>
<td>10% off all merchandise via discount code “ONEFORNUS”</td>
<td><a href="http://www.raeandrum.com">www.raeandrum.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonkotsu Kazan</td>
<td>Free 6-piece Gyoza with any order</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tonkotsukazan.com">www.tonkotsukazan.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Tipsy Owl</td>
<td>Receive one free muffin with purchase of one meal and one cocktail at The Tipsy Owl</td>
<td><a href="http://www.thetipsoowl.com">www.thetipsoowl.com</a></td>
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<td>Pies &amp; Coffee</td>
<td>- 50% off sliced cakes / tarts with purchase of 2 gourmet pies / brunch.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.piesandcoffee.com">www.piesandcoffee.com</a></td>
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<td>- 10% off total bill</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- 15% off whole cakes (4 days advance order is required. 25% off during birthday month).</td>
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**BEAUTY AND WELLNESS**

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<td>One Beauty Spa</td>
<td>- Award winning face treatment trial at $538 (usual price $522).</td>
<td><a href="http://www.onebeautyspa.com">www.onebeautyspa.com</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Award winning Mandarin Massage trial at $538 (usual price $512).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Additional $500 return visit voucher for each customer (can be used for package purchase).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picasso Hair Studio</td>
<td>- 20% off a la carte service.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.piceasso">www.piceasso</a> hairstudio.com.sg</td>
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<td>- Complimentary Redken Cocktail Hair Treatment with $5200 spent in a single receipt.</td>
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**FASHION AND RETAIL**

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**TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION**

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**SPORTS & OUTDOORS**

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**EDUCATION AND SELF-ENRICHMENT**

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**OTHER SERVICES**

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Terms & Conditions apply. The NUS Office of Alumni Relations and the AlumNUS Card merchants reserve the right to amend the terms and conditions governing the offers at anytime. All information is correct at press time. Visit www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet for the latest privileges and promotions.
Scholars & Ink Exhibition Opens

NUS Museum is also opening Scholars & Ink: Artworks from the ink genre and ink as a modern approach towards the Chinese ink genre. NUS Museum, the exhibition explores the history of Pulau Saigon. Later this year, Young Artist Award recipient and filmmaker Looi Wan Ping will be featured alongside other NUS alumni, investigating relationships between architecture and the notion of home.

From left: Mr Ahmad Mashadi (Head, NUS Museum), Ms Hong, Dr Tan, Prof Tan, Ho Cheng Yuet Siao (Curator, NUS Museum), Ms Yeoh, Dr Ho, Ms Sharon Tan (Director, NUS Centre For the Arts) and Mr Ling Yang Chang.

Works by five artists from the extended NUS community are featured in a new exhibition Scholars & Ink: Artists from NUS and the Alumni. Opened by Guest-of-Honour and NUS President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan (Medicine ’83) on 22 April 2015 at NUS Museum, the exhibition explores approaches towards the Chinese ink genre and ink as a modern medium for art. The artists are Dr Tan It Koon (Science ’62); Dr Ho Chee Lick; Ms Yeo Shih Yun (Business ’98); Ms Hong Sok Chern (Science ’89); and Mr Ling Yang Chang (Arts and Social Sciences ’87).

The opening was attended by more than 100 alumni, students and industry practitioners. The curator, Ms Chang Yueh Siang gave a tour of the exhibition.

“I think it is great that the University is promoting Chinese culture and arts, and it is the hope of the artists in those circles to see more support for such traditional art forms. Young artists would get exposure and explore more genres, and our students would be encouraged to develop other interests while studying in NUS,” said Dr Tan, who approached the Museum to explore hosting the exhibition. Scholars & Ink will not be the only project to feature talents from the University. Mr Ahmad Mashadi, Head of the NUS Museum said, “This is the second of three exhibitions this year that feature practitioners from the University, most of whom are alumni. A current installation by Debbie Ding investigates the history of Palau Saigon. Later this year, Young Artist Award recipient and filmmaker Looi Wan Ping will be featured alongside other NUS alumni, investigating relationships between architecture and the notion of home.”

NUS Museum is also opening access to its Chinese scroll and paper collection for scholarly and artistic research.

12 September 2015, Saturday

Be enraptured by the timeless masterpieces from great composers of different periods.

Highlights:
- The Little Night Music (W. A. Mozart)
- Für Elise (L. van Beethoven)
- Dreaming (R. Schumann)
- Nocturne (F. Chopin)

Features:
- Dr Robert Casteels, Conductor
- Mr Loh Jun Hong, Soloist
- NUS Alumni, Musicians

Organized by: Office of Alumni Relations
Celebrating: NUS110

Chair a talk! Enjoy networking opportunities! Be the master of ceremonies at OAR events!

For more on NUS Museums current exhibitions and upcoming programmes, visit www.nus.edu.sg/museum or the Museum’s Facebook Page.

SHANGHAI OVERSEAS CHAPTER

The NUS Shanghai Overseas Chapter organised a reunion dinner on 30 March 2015 at which 170 alumni showed. The Deputy Consul-General of Singapore in Shanghai, Mr Philip Wong and Director of the NUS Office of Alumni Relations (OAR), Associate Professor Victor R Savage (Arts and Social Sciences ’72) were among the VIPs who attended.

President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan, the founding father of modern Singapore, who passed away on 23 March 2015.

In his welcome speech, Dr James Gong Jing (Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy ’11), Chairperson of the Chapter said that Shanghai alumni are grateful for all that NUS has done for its students and alumni, including the provision of quality teaching, sound environment and precious network. Assoc Prof Savage updated alumni on the recent developments and achievements of NUS and said that OAR will continue to work closely with the NUS Shanghai Alumni Chapter to develop a stronger university-alumni relationship. Assoc Prof Savage also presented a token of appreciation to former Chairperson of the Chapter, Dr Chew Kim Fee (Dentistry ’90).

On 1 April 2015, the NUS Chengdu Overseas Chapter organised a reunion dinner for its alumni. The Guests-of-honour for the dinner were the Consulate General of Chengdu, Mr Gan Teng Kiat and the Director of the NUS Office of Alumni Relations, Associate Professor Victor R Savage (Arts and Social Sciences ’72). 31 alumni turned up for the event.

Mr William Gan (Computing ’98), Chairperson, NUS Chengdu Overseas Chapter led an interest group!

If you would like to start an NUS Alumni Group or join existing groups, do call us at 6516 5775 or email oarconnect@nus.edu.sg.
We would love to hear from you.

CONCLUSION

The NUS Alumni Group (AG) Network is a collective of 66 groups from faculties/schools, halls and varied interests. Each group caters to NUS alumni and aims to enrich their lives and strengthen ties among them through social and professional activities. Join us today.
ALUMNI HAPPENINGS OVERSEAS CHAPTER

The NUS Kuching Overseas Chapter successfully organised another reunion dinner on 8 March 2015. More than 20 alumni and their spouses attended this joyful occasion marked by good food and great company in a restaurant in Kuching.

Mr Paul Kho (Science '91), Chairperson, NUS Kuching Overseas Chapter

KUCHING OVERSEAS CHAPTER

Spring in Toronto is a much-anticipated event, much like the NUS Toronto Overseas Chapter Alumni dinner held on 11 April 2015. Alumni gathered at the Golden Light Buffet in North York, a spacious restaurant offering a variety of fresh and delicious items.

Amidst the lively conversations between new and old acquaintances, the night was punctuated by a solemn note. Dr Toh, the Chapter’s President, led the group in a minute’s silence to honour the passing of the founding father of modern Singapore, Mr Lee Kuan Yew.

The night was a wonderful testament to the strength of the NUS Alumni network in Toronto.

Mr Andrew Go (Business '01)

BEIJING OVERSEAS CHAPTER

On 3 April 2015, alumni from the NUS Beijing Overseas Chapter gathered to meet Associate Professor Victor R Savage (Arts and Social Sciences '72), Director of the NUS Office of Alumni Relations (OAR). Assoc Prof Savage introduced OAR and spoke about alumni development. Mr Lyon Sun Liyong (Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy '11), chairperson of the Chapter delivered the welcome message on behalf of all alumni in Beijing.

Ambassador Stanley Loh made a speech on Sino-Singaporean relations and cooperation between the two countries.

Mr Lyon Sun Liyong (Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy '11), Chairperson, NUS Beijing Overseas Chapter
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, SOUTH AFRICA

After the staid academic procession leaves the hall, soul singer James Brown’s “I Got You (I Feel Good)” erupts over the loudspeakers, mirroring the celebratory mood of new graduates.

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE
To promote environmental sustainability, the listing of all graduates is published solely in an electronic format and is available for the duration of Commencement. Singapore’s national anthem is also played twice— at the beginning and end of the ceremony.

KYOTO UNIVERSITY, JAPAN
Instead of the traditional suits for men or kimonos for women, graduating students are allowed to wear cosplay outfits. Many show up dressed as their favourite anime or manga characters.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, USA
Graduating students wear a ‘Stole of Gratitude’ during the ceremony and afterwards, place it around the neck of a family member, friend or mentor who had supported them throughout their time on campus.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, USA
F OR G RADUATING S TUDENTS.

WORLDWIDE DIFFER IN THEIR QUIRKY, UNIVERSITIES FROM FORMAL TO

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, UK
The ceremony is conducted in Latin. The Praelector of each college presents graduating students to the Vice-Chancellor in groups of four, declaring that they are worthy to receive their degrees. Each graduand kneels before the Vice-Chancellor, who clasps their hand and confers the degree. The new graduate then rises, bows and receives the degree certicate.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, USA

Supporting page images can be found at tail end of product.
Catwalk & Movie
ON-THE-GREEN
15 August 2015
Saturday
5pm to 9.30pm
NUS University Town

ACTIVITIES:
- Carnival Games
- Kids Educational Workshops
- Student Life Fair
- Alumni Networking Booths
- Celebrity Alumni Performances
- Alumni & Students Sports Challenge
- Best Food on Campus Contest
- NUS Pioneer Generation Staff Hi-tea

Register at: alumnet.nus.edu.sg/event/KR15

Organised by:
Office of Alumni Relations

Partners:
NUS 110
US 50

Sponsors:
DBS, Formthotics