A SALUTE TO THE MEDICAL FACULTY'S 110 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENTS

The Art and Science of Medicine
A SALUTE TO THE MEDICAL FACULTY'S 110 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Celebrating 110 years of NUS and Alumni Connection

DISTINCTION
AMONG THE WORLD'S TOP 10 FOR ACADEMIC AND EMPLOYER-REPUTATION

DEDICATION
ALUMNI WHO CONSISTENTLY GIVE BACK
HIGHLIGHTS OF 110 YEARS OF DISTINCTION AND DEDICATION

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1993 The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy was established as part of the National University of Singapore.

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2015 The Singapore National University Act was officially passed by Parliament.

2018 The Singapore government approved the establishment of the National University of Singapore at Woodlands.

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Dr. Lee Choo Neo made her debut in 1920 when she became Singapore’s first woman medical practitioner. Her breakthrough remained a rare feat, as only five other women graduated from a medical school in the decade that followed.

Dr. Chen Su Luan (1885–1972) was one of Singapore’s first local medical doctors. She was also an opium campaigner, philanthropist, and social reformer. She served in a number of important committees including the Tan Tock Seng Hospital Management Committee.

Dr. Thomas Chye was a lecturer at the Department of Psychology in the University of Malaya, and from 1958 to 1964, a reader in Psychology in the University of Singapore. Dr. Thomas also served as Singapore’s Minister for Science and Technology from 1968 to 1975 and was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Singapore. He prompted the move of the University from Bukit Timah to Kent Ridge and initiated the setting up of the National University Hospital.

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015 is an auspicious year for a double celebration of NUS and Singapore. While NUS welcomes its 110th anniversary, Singapore enjoys 50 years of independence. We have much to be proud of as alumni and Singaporeans. We hope that you will be part of the festivities for these key milestones, whether you are in Singapore or overseas.

Singapore’s development over the last 50 years has been intertwined with the history of NUS and the institution’s previous incarnations. Our faculty and alumni have served Singapore well in various roles as ministers, politicians, government bureaucrats, professionals, corporate titans and employees in every sector of Singapore’s economy, as well as in public services.

Given that NUS’ genesis arose from the Medical College which began in 1905, the spotlight for this issue is on our Medical faculty alumni. Our doctors, dentists and pharmacists have much to be proud of, and particularly because the Medical faculty has produced a strong alumni base – loyal, cohesive, active and generous. Indeed, without the Singapore doctors who managed and ran the General Hospital in the absence of their colonial medical superiors during the Second World War, the change from College (Raffles) to a University (Malaya) would not have taken place. In post-WW2, the Colonial government realised our medical alumni were well-trained, responsible, reliable and competent – and so our ‘University’ status became a reality.

For NUS alumni, the Carpenters’ song, ‘Yesterday Once More’ will resonate with special meaning and nostalgia in 2015. It says something about the times we shared as students on different campuses: our friendships, love, experiences, pranks, disappointments and challenges. These form our vivid recollections or perhaps, fading memories of campus days, varsity life and bonds with our alma mater. For some the campus was the grounds of courtship, cementing lifelong partnerships which alumnus Mr Yeo Keng Joon (Business ’85) celebrates in his ‘Campus Couples’ initiative. At the Office of Alumni Relations, we treasure all forms of relationships to the University and hope you can join our reunion celebrations at the Bukit Timah Homecoming on 4 July 2015, and the Kent Ridge Alumni Family Day on 15 August 2015.

I wish everyone a Happy and Healthy 2015. To all our Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean alumni, I wish you a very Joyful, Peaceful and Prosperous Lunar New Year in the year of the Goat. May you stubbornly keep your sustained relationships to your alma mater alive!

ASSOC PROF VICTOR R SAVAGE
DIRECTOR, NUS OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS
Arts and Social Sciences ’72
STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY ADDRESS 2014: REFORMULATE SUCCESS TO INFLUENCE THE FUTURE

The University will build on its existing formula for success, which focuses on strategic partnerships, talent, educational innovation and building global research peaks.

**WE MUST MAKE STRATEGIC ADJUSTMENTS TO OTHER PARTS OF THE NUS FORMULA, TO GIVE FRESH IMPETUS TO OUR PROGRESS AND FURTHER STEEPEN THE TRAJECTORY OF OUR GROWTH.**

NUS PRESIDENT PROF TAN CHORH CHUAN

in addition to the existing NUS Launchpad@Silicon Valley; and grow the NUS Launchpad@Suzhou out of the NUS (Suzhou) Research Institute, NUS will partner with SingTel (innov8) and the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore.

NUS will also increase incubator capacity on campus to house a student entrepreneurial community of more than 2,500, while expanding the existing space at Block 71 to cater to the rising number of start-ups.

NUS will translate and apply its research in transformative ways, especially in strategic areas for Singapore. To boost the translational impact of NUS’ research, the University will continue to work with local partners and industry to develop major clusters of translational programmes.

Prof Tan highlighted a new translational programme – the Centre for Healthcare Innovation and Medical Engineering – which will be established with an initial funding of $35 million. Accorched by the Schools of Medicine and Computing, the Faculty of Engineering, and the National University Health System, the Centre will develop healthcare technologies that address the issues of functional ageing.

Prof Tan also cited two recent initiatives by the NUS Risk Management Institute (RMI) that depicts NUS’ success in translational impact.

The first is the International Monetary Fund (IMF)’s intention to adopt RMI’s stress-testing system, which centres on its corporate default prediction model and database, into IMF’s Financial Sector Assessment Program. The two entities will soon sign a formal research agreement.

RMI has also developed a “public good” Credit Research Initiative, which provides the probabilities of default for more than 60,000 companies in 106 economies on a daily basis, with results freely accessible. This initiative has influenced work in this field and attracted collaborations with several financial institutions.

In closing, Prof Tan announced that NUS will mark its 110th anniversary as a sovereign nation in line with the two themes that have defined the University since 1905. The themes are the commitment and tradition of service to the advancement of the country; and the unswerving dedication to excellence and aspirations to global prominence. We believe, we are well-positioned to make use of our considerable strengths to paint exciting new parts of the future,” he said.
CLOSE TO 1,200 GUESTS TURNED UP at this year’s China Film Festival (CFF) held at the Shaw Foundation Alumni House from 18 to 21 October.
Organised by the NUS Office of Alumni Relations (OAR), in collaboration with the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Singapore and the Singapore China Friendship Association, this year’s CFF celebrated a third consecutive year of success these three parties have had in bringing the best of Chinese films to alumni audiences. Much to their delight, award-winning movies were featured this year. They included perennial classic The Monkey and martial arts drama The Grandmaster were featured this year. They included their delight, award-winning movies of success these three parties have celebrated a third consecutive year.

Friendship Association, this year’s CFF Singapore and the Singapore China Friendship Association – their partnership in planning and putting together this year’s Festival. He also thanked Ambassador Duan of the Embassy of China for his advice and support and for the Embassy’s strong partnership in planning and putting together this year’s Festival. He also extended his thanks to Associate Professor Victor R Savage, Director of OAR and colleagues from OAR, for working hard to bring the event onto campus.

At the end of each screening, four lucky winners walked away with sponsored tea pot sets and special-edition wallets, courtesy of Suntech International Group Pte Ltd.

CHINA FILM FESTIVAL 2014

EDITOR’S PICK

THE BOOK OF DANIEL: ADVENTURES OF A FASHION INSIDER
He’s been anointed the ‘Godfather of Singapore fashion’ and hailed as ‘Singapore’s Fashion Royalty’ but Daniel Boey (Arts ‘89) is not a fashion designer.

On the cusp of his 50th birthday and several months shy of his 20th anniversary in fashion, we take an unashamed, no-holds-barred look at his colourful life in the fashion industry. From his clueless early days as a shy kid through the time he picked up his first fashion magazine, his early dalliances with fashionistas, packing his bags for an uncertain future in the West, to his rise into the realms as a feared industry personality and eventual mentor to many of Singapore’s top fashion model and designers, Daniel takes us on a dizzy roller-coaster ride through his tumultuous time in a tough, unforgiving, unpredictable and often superficial industry.

With forewords by Singapore’s top couturier, one of the nation’s most beloved actors, two of Singapore’s most popular radio personalities and a bevy of supermodels, this book is a fantastical journey of one singular sensation.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Daniel Boey is a fashion director, lifestyle curator and television personality who was hailed as “one of the Singaporeans who matter most in 2009” by CNNGo. His extensive portfolio includes work in most of the world’s fashion capitals, for high-profile clients like Vivienne Westwood, Christian Dior and Louis Vuitton. He served as creative director and has designed experiences for fashion events worldwide and is also a governor on the board of the Asian Couture Federation, Fashion Consultant to the DesignSingapore events in London, Beijing, Shanghai and Milan, and sat on the panel of the Haute Couture symposium in 2012 with Suzy Menkes. His television credits include appearing as the fashion director in the inaugural season of Asia’s Next Top Model.

The Book of Daniel is available at all select bookstores and retailing at $54.70 (before GST).

THE PRESENT-DAY NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE Began as Singapore’s First Medical School – The 110 Year-Old Faculty Has Graduated the Majority of Singapore’s Physicians. By Theresa Tan

Within the many buildings and campuses that the Medical School has moved in and out of throughout its rich history, lies the true heart of the School – the doctors it produces and the impact they create.

For decades, the School of Medicine has been faithfully producing physicians who are taught to honour their public mission to serve Singapore, to value their patients and accord them their best care. Many of these medical graduates have gone on as doctors to change lives and some, society. The late Dr Benjamin Sheares (Medicine ‘29) was one such forerunner. He achieved distinctions in his final examinations in Obstetrics and Gynaecology and worked as an obstetrician at the then Kandang Kerbau Hospital, and a professor at the University of Malaya.

Dr Sheares sowed back to his alma mater – he entered King Edward VII College of Medicine in 1913 and
I’m constantly encouraged by patients and families who come back to see me. Their kindness and generosity can only spur us to work harder.

Associate Professor Quah Thuan Chong (Medicine ’76)

Associate Professor Low Cheng Ooi (Medicine ’50)

I’m continually encouraged by patients and families who come back to see me. Their kindness and generosity can only spur us to work harder.

When I was serving my National Service as a medical officer, I found her collapsed in the bathroom on my return (home) one day, and I started cardiosplomuscular resuscitation on her till the ambulance arrived.

“She did not make it and died shortly after. It was a shocking experience for me and it changed my life completely. My mother was only 55 when she passed away.”

I then decided that I would take up Cardiology, and specifically Interventional Cardiology, so that I can make a difference to heart attack patients in future. Although I could not save my own mother, I hoped to be able to save someone else’s parent or spouse.”

Having performed nearly 10,000 cardiac catheterisation procedures both locally and overseas over the last 20 years, Prof Tan has made an impact on many people’s lives. “For that, I am grateful to Professor Maurice Choo (Medicine ’74), then Chief of the Cardiac Department.

“I had always thought that I would be an obstetrician and a gynaecologist because I topped the subject in my class,” he says. “However, something happened in my life that changed my initial plan. My mother had sudden death, presumably from a heart attack...”

HONOURING THE PAST

In 1905, the Straits Settlement and Malaya States Government Medical School was officially opened at George Town. Following a petition by the General Council of Medicine, a new building — the Tan Teck Guan Building, named for his father, Tan Teck Guan Building was opened to add to the existing facilities. It housed various offices, a library, a reading room, a lecture room and a pathology museum.

In 1912, the Chair of Physiology was established. That same year, the School was also renamed the King Edward VII Medical School.

By 1916, the General Council of Medical Education of Great Britain accorded official recognition for the King Edward VII School of Medicine’s Licentiate of Medicine and Surgery Diploma.

In 1921, the School was renamed King Edward VII College of Medicine. Chairs of anatomy, medicine, midwifery and gynaecology, clinical surgery and surgery were also created.

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HONOURING THE PAST

In 1905, the Straits Settlement and Malaya States Government Medical School was officially opened at George Town, following a petition by Chinese Legislative Councillor Mr Tan Jiax Kim.

The school offered a full-time five-year course to train doctors in medicine, surgery and midwifery. Seven young men graduated in 1910 with a Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery (LMS).

In 1911, Mr Tan Chay Yan, a rubber tycoon, donated S$15,000 to the School for the creation of the Tan Teck Guan Building, named for his father. Tan Teck Guan Building was opened to add to the existing facilities. It housed various offices, a library, a reading room, a lecture room and a pathology museum.

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Alumni and Former Dean of the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSoM), Prof Tan speaks to The AlumNUS about teaching, and being a medical student today.

WHAT ARE SOME MEMORABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY?
Many distinguished alumni have gone on to serve not just in the medical profession but in other areas in Singapore and around the world; for example, Dr Andrew Chew (Medicine ’83) is the President, NUS. Dr Leo Tan (Medicine ’83) is the head of the Institute of Infectious Diseases and Epidemiology of Tan Tock Sang Hospital. She is also Clinical Director of the Communicable Diseases Centre (CDC). Her work in public health includes the comprehensive HIV programme she started at CDC in 1993, and Prof Leo continues to devote her efforts to improving HIV management as well as the general well-being of those infected and affected by the disease.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR MEDICAL GRADUATES GOING OUT INTO THE WORLD?
Many of you may feel that your academic capacity is necessary – but not sufficient. Students intrinsically need to be interested in people and have a sense of wanting to help. At the end of the day, the practice of medicine is not about the technical delivery of care; it is about delivering that care with compassion and empathy in ways that connect and comfort patients and their families.

I would say that, because the field of medicine is itself changing quite rapidly, we are also looking for people who are curious about the future and who are interested in contributing innovations and new ideas.

WHAT ADVANCEMENTS WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO SEE IN THE FUTURE?
I hope to see all the steps that we are currently taking being continued. Public health is one of the areas that needs to be strengthened. Healthcare is an area that needs to be taught as well.

WHAT IS THE BEST GIFT THAT YOU HAVE EVER RECEIVED?
“It is the best gift.”

PROFESSOR TAN CHORH CHUAN
(MEDICINE ’83) PRESIDENT, NUS

ALUMNUS

110 YEARS OF MEDICINE

A LASTING LEGACY

IN THE PAST

109 YEARS OF MEDICINE

...Continued from page 7

at NUS, who accepted me as a Cardiology trainee when the training positions there were highly limited and competitive. I have served at NUS for the past 27 years, Prof Tan still sees many patients who are on follow-up with him after 15 years. “While I am definitely not the richest doctor around, I am wealthy with the showers of gratitude and thanks which many of my patients bestow on me,” he says. “Recently in Jakarta, I was hosted to a banquet by 26 of my Indonesian patients and their families. It was such a heart-warming experience! That, to me, is the best gift.”

IMPACTING A NATION

Then there are the School of Medicine graduates who help people on a larger scale. Professor Ivy Ng (Medicine ’83), Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SingHealth is one. “In SingHealth, we’ve made everything revolve around the patient. The biggest challenge is really how we can improve patients’ lives,” she says. Prof Ng oversees the largest healthcare group in Singapore comprising two of Singapore’s healthcare group in Singapore

PROFESSOR TAN HUAY CHEW (MEDICINE ’87)

Although I could not save my own mother, I hoped to be able to save someone else’s parent or spouse.

In 1929, the School of Dentistry in Medical College saw its first enrolment of seven students for its four-year course. A public clinic was opened at the King Edward VII College of Medicine.

200 pre-War II medical students resumed their studies at the King Edward VII College of Medicine in 1946. The British Medical Council recognised the College’s Dental Surgery degree.

In 1949, the University of Malaya was formed, amalgamating Raffles College with King Edward VII College of Medicine, which now became the Faculty of Medicine in the University.

In 1959, it became necessary for there to be two autonomous campuses, one in Kuala Lumpur and one in Singapore. The University of Malaya in Singapore was reconstituted.

In 1964, the School of Post-graduate Medical Studies was established. In 1965, the Faculty celebrated its diamond jubilee. The Medical Progress Fund was started and aimed to raise S$4,750,000 to build an Institute of Medical Specialties and a library extension to the Medical Faculty. In 1966, the Department of Dentistry departed from Medicine and became a faculty on its own.

In 1970, the School of Postgraduate Medical Studies began a new degree, the Master of Medicine, for specialisations in surgery, internal medicine, paediatrics or obstetrics and gynaecology. The School of Post-graduate Dental Studies was also announced.
years,” says Prof Leo. “Sadly, it was something remote to the kind of infectious diseases (ID) training I received locally as well as abroad. I was trained as an acute ID person: solve the immediate infection and move on, case closed.

“However, soon I realised when I started running the HIV programme that providing treatment opinions or pushing my pen writing out prescriptions was merely a small fraction of what the patients need in totality. The huge unmet demands from social psychological aspects brought on more suffering than the illness in many instances. Something about disease prevention then lingered in my mind.”

What changed things for Prof Leo was the first challenge of an outbreak of NiV. “The ground was totally unprepared and disconnected. Cases were drained to CDC, public health aspects such as contact tracing, epidemiology was done then by the Quarantine Epidemiology department in the Ministry of Environment, food control and operation by the Ministry of National Development.”

From that first encounter with NiV, Prof Leo drew ammunition. “Much of the immediate responses we put in place for SARS were disconnected. Cases were drained to CDC, public health aspects such as contact tracing, epidemiology was done then by the Quarantine Epidemiology department in the Ministry of Environment, food control and operation by the Ministry of National Development.”

Today, Prof Leo is overseeing the setting up of the upcoming infectious diseases hospital, the National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID), which opens in 2018, and which is already making waves for its state-of-the-art technology.

“The primary objective of NCID is to ensure Singapore has the healthcare capacity and ability to swiftly respond to an outbreak. The building is designed to be fully equipped and self-contained, with the full suite of care facilities; a screening centre, outpatient, inpatient isolation beds, intensive care, imaging, laboratories, etc. “The principles of the design of NCID take in several factors: flexibility, that is, to design a building effective during an outbreak and good for regular routine day to day use; scalability, that is, to scale the capacity that was modelled after SARS where over 300 beds were used during the height of the outbreak, and as and where needs arise able to expand its capacity. Last but not least, to ensure safety to the users within the building and safety to the environment,” she says.

**RISING TO THE NEED**

According to the Ministry of Health’s statistics, Singapore had 10,095 doctors in 2019. In 2012, then Minister Mentor Mr Lee Kuan Yew pegged the number of foreign doctors at around 3,000. Back then, Singapore was producing 425 doctors a year which he pointed out was insufficient for the nation.

For some time now, consistent efforts have been made to increase the number of doctors in Singapore, although the crunch will probably only be eased as the years progress and greater numbers of medical students graduate. YLLSoM’s current intake is 300 a year. Two other medical schools have been set up in the past decade to meet the manpower crunch: the Duke-NUS in 2005 – with an intake of about 60 graduate students each year – and the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine at the Nanyang Technological University in 2013.

“Every outbreak tells a story and every outbreak provides new learning points,” she says. “For every outbreak we’ve been through will enhance and add on to our knowledge and capability. We are as ready as where the current knowledge allows, there will be new things and fresh challenges ahead. It is prudent the system is flexible and responsive. I believe we have come a long way since Nipah and SARS – and the system in place will support us through future challenges.”

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**HONOURING THE PAST** (continued)

In 1972, a new renal unit in the Department of Clinical Medicine to treat kidney patients was opened. The Unit on Human Reproduction was set up by the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (O & G), and was opened at the Kandang Kerbau Hospital for Women. The hospital was designated one of the 10 World Health Organization (WHO) Clinical Research Centres on Human Reproduction. The Department of Psychological Medicine was introduced to the Faculty in 1979.

In 1982, the Department of O & G became one of the few medical centres in Southeast Asia to have an active in-vitro fertilisation programme which attracted researchers worldwide. In 1988, the move of the Faculty of Medicine from Outram Road to Kent Ridge, the site of the National University of Singapore. Full relocation was completed in 1987.

In 1988, the Department of O & G achieved a successful micropregnancy pregnancy using a technique called Micro-insemination Sperm Transfer (MIST), a world’s first.

In 1991, there was a review of the Medical curriculum, which led to the setting up of new departments and the re-organisation of the five-year medical course. In 1994, the National University Medical Institutes – today these include the National University Cancer Institute and the National University Heart Centre – were established.
COMPASSION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUALITY FOR A DOCTOR AND IS WHAT PATIENTS EXPECT MOST FROM A DOCTOR... WE WANT OUR GRADUATES TO BE DOCTORS WHO ARE BIG IN HEART AND SKILLED IN THE ART AND SCIENCE OF MEDICINE.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR YEOH KHAY GUAN (MEDICINE '87)

latest pedagogies and simulation training which gives its students intensive hands-on training and experiential learning, and allows for repeated practice in a safe and realistic environment to enhance their skills. Says Assoc Prof Yeooh, “We emphasise awareness of global health issues as the world is more interconnected and inter-dependent than ever before, and the majority of our students enjoy overseas elective attachments and actively participate in overseas community improvement projects in the region.”

It is no small feat grooming medical graduates year upon year, decade upon decade, who not only emerge from the University with the tradition, dedication and compassion that their predecessors have graduated with, but who are ready for a world in which technology and communication have redefined the way medicine is practised and studied.

Infrastructural changes to prepare the faculty for new challenges in the new millennium began in 1999 with a review of the Medical curriculum, which led to the setting up of new departments and the re-organisation of the five-year medical course. In 1994, the National University Medical Institutes – today these include the National University Cancer Institute and the National University Heart Centre – were established with the primary objectives of boosting medical research and developing facilities and expertise for top-level research into the 21st century. Assoc Prof Yeooh emphasises that through YLLSoM’s current curriculum – which includes cross-disciplinary exposure in every medical student’s first year – students receive an education at the School that prepares them to bring their training and their unique gifts to the world in a way that is beneficial.

“Compassion is the most important quality for a doctor and is what patients expect most from a doctor. That is why we look for students with qualities that will make them good doctors. These include intrinsic motivation, a genuine desire in wanting to help others in need and to make a difference. We want our graduates to be doctors who are big in heart and skilled in the art and science of medicine,” he says.

“To be a good custodian of people’s health, the 21st century doctor needs to be a good communicator, able to build rapport with patients and combine knowledge and technology with wisdom and compassion. The School places great emphasis on nurturing values such as empathy, professionalism and good communication skills.”

Nurturing these values begin in the first week of school in a ‘White Coat Ceremony’, where teachers assist students in donning white coats as a symbolic gesture of passing on the values and attributes of professionalism. Students are given the opportunity to reflect on, discuss and sign a ‘Statement of Commitment to Professionalism’ within their first week of school.

In 2002, the one-third quota of females being admitted to Dentistry was lifted, after the Association of Women Doctors Singapore - formed in 1998 - successfully lobbied for it.

In 2004, Sweden’s Karolinska Institutet (KI), one of Europe’s largest medical universities, set up an office at the Faculty. This, KI’s first overseas office, helps facilitate existing programmes such as the NUS-KI Joint PhD Programme in Genetic and Molecular Epidemiology and promote new initiatives between KI and NUS.

In 2005, the NUS School of Medicine turned 100, and it received a birthday gift of $5100 million from the Yong Loo Lin Trust. The School was bestowed its current name, the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSoM) that year.

In 2008, the National University Health System (NUHS), an academic health science centre set up as a joint venture between NUS and MOH Holdings Pte Ltd, was established. NUHS groups NUS with YLLSoM, the Faculty of Dentistry and the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health under a common governance structure in order to develop and promote academic medicine.

A $5148 million Singapore Centre for Nutritional Sciences, Metabolic Diseases and Human Development was jointly established in 2013 by YLLSoM and the Singapore Institute for Clinical Sciences under Singapore’s Agency for Science, Technology and Research. The Centre aims to be the leading hub in Asia for research into the connections between nutritional sciences, metabolic diseases and human development.
The teaching and assessment of professionalism and ethical practice are integrated throughout the five years through a longitudinal Health, Ethics, Law and Professionalism (HELP) track led by our School’s Centre for Biomedical Ethics,” says Assoc Prof Yeoh.

“The School nurtures empathy by helping students understand how patients manage their disease in the context of their everyday life. The School also encourages and supports student involvement in community service programmes, especially those targeted at the underserved communities. Such community involvement projects give students deep insight into the communities they serve and empower them with the knowledge that they can give back to society and make a difference.”

Assoc Prof Yeoh says his proudest moment is “the annual Commencement Ceremony when our students formally graduate. As an educator, the greatest gratification comes from seeing our students master their skills and take their place in the world as confident, competent and compassionate doctors.”

CHILDHOOD AMBITION

A NEIGHBOURHOOD GP’S CARE AND COMFORT SPURRED PROF IVY NG TO PURSUE MEDICINE

One lasting memory Professor Ivy Ng has of her childhood is going to the neighbourhood general practitioner’s clinic with her mother whenever she fell sick. “He had this big wooden bed, and on the side was this little drawer,” she recalls. “And in that drawer, he would keep sweets.

“The whole memory of being sick and being comforted by the care of a physician – that was the basis of me entering medicine. It was my childhood ambition.”

Prof Ng graduated from the National University of Singapore’s School of Medicine and went on to do her houseman training at Singapore General Hospital (SGH). “I did Paediatrics as an intern and enjoyed my time there the most,” she says, explaining her choice of specialty. “I love kids, and Paeds is one of the few specialties in which the ability to see your patients recover well is higher.”

She worked in the Department of Paediatrics in SGH until 1997 when she joined the newly-rebuilt KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital (KKH). In 2002 she became KKH’s head of the Paediatrics Department, Chairman of its medical board in 2003, and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in 2004.

She served as Deputy Group CEO of SingleHealth from 2008 until 2012 when she became its Group CEO. “The whole memory of being sick and being comforted by the care of a physician – that was the basis of me entering medicine. It was my childhood ambition.”

Prof Ng credits her former School of Medicine tutor Professor Tan Cheng Lim (Medicine ’82) – when they were both undergrads, chow Genetics as her sub-speciality two decades ago. She is renowned for her work on Thalassaemia and in genetic counselling, and is currently also Senior Consultant in the Genetics Service, Department of Paediatric Medicine at KKH and Director of the National Thalassaemia Registry.

“Genetics helps us to understand disease better, and it improves the potential for precision medicine. Genetics helps you to tailor customised therapy for a patient,” she says. “The patient is at the heart of all we do.” she says, echoing the motto of SingleHealth. It is not a vain proclamation: Prof Ng is known for her patient-centric focus, which helped her to establish KKH as a respected women’s and children’s hospital. Under her leadership and emphasis on service quality, KKH received the WHO-UAE Health Foundation Award in 2009 for outstanding clinical outcomes achieved through its integrated perinatal care programme. Prof Ng is also an active member of the KKH Health Endowment Fund which provides medical and other support for needy patients.

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HISTORY IN THE MAKING

HOW THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE GREW FROM A TINY MEDICAL COLLEGE INTO A WORLD-CLASS INSTITUTION.

BY AMIR ALI

A MODEST START

It was 1905 and Singapore was already a bustling port, with a large number of immigrants contributing to unprecedented economic prosperity. There was thus a growing need to provide modern healthcare to a growing population. Seeing this, government officials and philanthropists, including Tan Jiak Kim, decided to establish a medical school.

In 1909, seven men graduated with a Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery Diploma from Tan Tock Seng Hospital. (These students were all accepted by the new Syonan Medical College, established by the Japanese to serve as their medical corps to receive medical at this College and were intended as a college for higher education in the arts and sciences.)

TAN CHAY YAN – was added to the existing facility in 1940, serving as the administrative block housing offices, a library and lecture rooms. (This handsome brick building has since been designated a National Monument and stands near the College of Medicine Building, built in 1926.)

The school was founded on endowments, and so this would continue. In 1921, the King Edward VII Memorial Fund gave a gift of $824,800 for the endowment of a professorship of Physiology. This led to the school being renamed the King Edward VII Medical School in honour of the gift.

In 1946, the Licentiate of Medicine and Surgery Diploma offered by the school was recognised by Great Britain’s General Council of Medical Education. Having gained significant renown, the college did not just benefit Singapore but students from Malaya, as well. In 1948, the Government of the Federated Malay States built a hostel that housed 72 students at Sepoy Lines.

MEDICAL EDUCATION CAME TO A HALT AFTER JAPANESE FORCES INVADED MALAYA IN 1941. ONLY FIVE DOCTORS AND FIFTEEN DENTISTS GRADUATED JUST BEFORE THE IMPERIAL ARMY ARRIVED IN SINGAPORE IN 1942, DUE TO EXAMS BEING BROUGHT FORWARD.

A PERMANENT HOME

With its reputation on the rise, the Medical School’s name was again changed in 1942 to the King Edward VII College of Medicine, to better reflect its status as an institution of university standard.

A new building was needed and the College of Medicine Building – with its splendid Doric colonnades and has relief eagle greeting visitors – was a fitting (and lasting) reflection of the grandeur of the institution. For 60 years from its completion in 1956, the building was the centre of medical education in Singapore. “There are few buildings which feature as significantly in the history of medical education in Singapore as the Tan Teck Guan Building and the College of Medicine Building,” said De Kwa Soon Bee, then Permanent Secretary for Health and Director of Medical Services in a book published in 1987.

In 1972, the first cohort of students to complete the new six-year medical course graduated. Among these graduates was Dr Benjamin Sheares, who would go on to become the second President of Singapore. That was also the year that Raffles College was opened as a campus on Bukit Timah Road. With medical education the preserve of King Edward VII College of Medicine, Raffles College was intended as a college for higher education in the arts and sciences.

THE WAR YEARS

Medical education came to a halt soon after Japanese forces invaded Malaya in 1941. Indeed, a lucky five doctors and five dentists managed to graduate just before the Imperial Army arrived in Singapore in early 1942, due to exams being brought forward in anticipation of this event.

The College of Medicine was closed by the Japanese on 16 February 1942. The occupying forces used the facility as a base for their medical corps to receive casualties of war. The building would soon be used by the Japanese as a serum and virus institute. Meanwhile, students of the King Edward VII College of Medicine were all accepted by the new Syonan Medical College, established by the Japanese Military Administration at Tan Tock Seng Hospital. These 200-odd students learned nothing medical at this College and were instead taught Japanese songs and customs. At the same time, Raffles College was requisitioned by the Japanese to serve as their military headquarters.

When the Japanese Occupation ended in September 1945, the British colonial government made it an urgent priority to re-establish hospitals, clinics and public health
Raffles College, too, was reopened, to continue their medical education. Some 200 students who had left before being reopened in June that year. The Faculty of Medicine Building was given back to both colleges resumed operations.

In 1950, the University of Malaya conferred its first Bachelor degrees – in Medicine and Surgery – to 17 graduates. Soon, yet more space was required, and a new two-storey building was built behind the Tan Teck Guan Building to provide more classrooms and laboratories. In the following years, the University established a number of new departments. The Departments of Education, Zoology (within the Faculty of Science), Orthopaedic Surgery and Engineering were established by 1952. A Philosophy department began in 1954, and a four-year Law course was taught from 1955 onwards.

The pre-Independence era brought about some changes. A Commission was formed in 1957 to review the constitution, administration, finances and expansion of the University of Malaya. In view of constitutional changes in Malaya and Singapore, the Aitken Commission, as it was known, recommended that a single university system be established in each of the two territories. Two autonomous divisions were thus established – one in Singapore and the other in Kuala Lumpur – each with its own council, academic committees and staff. The Faculty of Medicine operated as the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Malaya in Singapore.

A Legislative Assembly election in 1959 saw the People’s Action Party sweeping a majority of the available seats, and party leader, Mr Lee Kuan Yew became the first Prime Minister of Singapore. Dr Toh Chin Chye, who lectured in the Department of Physiology, led the committee that designed the state crest, anthem and flag, which were unveiled on 1 December 1959. Dr Toh would go on to become Minister of Science and Technology, and Vice-Chancellor of NUS. He also later prompted the University’s move from Bukit Timah to Kent Ridge and initiated the creation of the National University Hospital.

In 1961, the Singapore Division of the University of Malaya became the fully-fledged University of Singapore. The KL Division, meanwhile, retained the University of Malaya name. Dato Lee Kong Chian – a wealthy businessman and philanthropist – was appointed the newly-minted University’s first Chancellor.

In 1965, the Aitken Commission recommended that the University of Singapore and Nanyang University merge to form the National University of Singapore. The Aitken Commission further recommended that the University of Malaya name be retained. The KLE Division, meanwhile, retained the University of Malaya name. Dato Lee Kong Chian – a wealthy businessman and philanthropist – was appointed the newly-minted University’s first Chancellor. Dr BK Sreenivasan was the first Vice-Chancellor of the University.

The Beginning of the Modern Era

The late ‘50s saw the start of Singapore’s meteoric rise in economic growth and international stature. The University of Singapore, too, was rapidly expanding its programmes and admissions, with the donation of many funds and gifts. The United States government, for example, gave a research grant worth S$36,000 to the Department of Pharmacetics to study the action of drugs on the human body, the first time such a grant was issued by the US to a university in Southeast Asia. The Ford Foundation provided a US$100,000 grant to help expand the University Library.

Meanwhile, the Medical Progress Fund was started through the generous donations of local businessmen and entities. S$8 million from the Lee Foundation and more than S$100,000 each from Tan Sri Runme Shaw, Tan Chin Tuan, Nanyang Siang Pau, Reuben Meyer Trust Fund, Dato Dr Aw Cheng Chye, Dato Lee Chee Han, Mr Yap Tew of Chin Bo and Company, and the Singapore Turf Club.

At the time, the University of Singapore was scattered around the island. Singapore had become an independent Republic, and the city’s British colonial authorities had vacated a number of prime sites. In 1968, a site was secured for a new campus at Kent Ridge, then Minister for Science and Technology initiated the relocation of the University to Kent Ridge. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had similarly advised the Singapore government to house the many departments and faculties of the University in a single campus. In 1970, the Master Plan proposal for a new campus was accepted by the Cabinet, and the ground breaking took place in 1972. Construction commenced in 1973.

The National University of Singapore is Born

The government announced the National University of Singapore Act in 1973. Under the Act, the University of Singapore and Nanyang University merged to form the National University of Singapore. Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam (Science ’62) was appointed the first Vice-Chancellor of NUS. The University was formed on 8 August 1980, an auspicious date indeed (8/8/80).

With the University’s Central Administration and many faculties already at Kent Ridge – including the Faculty of Engineering, which moved from its former home at Prince Edward Road – halls of residence were opened for students to live in, and the modern era NUS was up and running.

Completing the picture, a new Coat of Arms was adopted by the University in 1982. The design incorporated symbols from the crests of both the University of Singapore and Nanyang University. It was only later, between 1983 and 1987, that the Faculty of Medicine would move fully from Sepoy Lines to Kent Ridge. The

venerated College of Medicine Building was recommended for preservation. In 1988, the new King Edward VII Hall opened at Kent Ridge, signalling the beginning of a new era for medical students in Singapore.

Looking to the Future

Medical education had largely remained the same throughout a tumultuous 20th Century – but given the rapid technological advances occurring in the world, a new revamp was needed to take Medicine into the 21st Century and beyond. To this end, the Medical Faculty began to revamp the curriculum in 1993, which saw the creation of new departments and the reorganisation of the five-year course into three distinct blocks. The curriculum was further revised in 1997, with problem-based learning introduced in 1999. (Problem-based learning is a pedagogical approach where a problem stands at the beginning of the learning process, rather than teaching theories and concepts before students attempt to apply them in a practical application.)

The University’s campus wide opting-on-line system, NUSNET, went online as early as 1991. It was the largest such network in the Asia-Pacific region, and connected NUS to a worldwide network of 3,000 academic and research systems via the Internet, greatly enhancing its research productivity.

In line with the pedagogical advances made by the venerated British and American tertiary education systems, NUS introduced a semester-based modular system, incorporating the best of the British and American systems. First introduced to the Faculty of Business Administration, the modular system was later extended to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Engineering Science and the School of Building and Estate Management. The University took up the challenge set by then Prime Minister Mr Goh Chok Tong (Arts ’64) in 1997 to make Singapore the

Five honorary graduates (from left), Sir Roland Braddell, Morris Jamieson, Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders, Professor Edgar K Tratman and Sir Raymond E Priestley in procession to the Oei Tiong Ham Hall to receive their Honorary Degrees at the first Convocation of the University of Malaya in 1950.
of the East, by working towards becoming a world-class university. A need-blind admission policy, in which a student’s financial situation is not a consideration in their possible enrollment, was introduced to attract more top students from Singapore and the region. Scholarships were established for outstanding (but financially needy) undergraduates. True enough, NUS’ academic standing was on the rise, being voted one of the top 10 varsities in the Asia Pacific region. The vision of becoming a top university globally never waned, and in 2002 NUS vision and new mission were articulated. The NUS Vision “Towards a global knowledge enterprise, building synergies between education, research and entrepreneurship” and NUS Mission “To advance knowledge and foster innovation, educate students and nurture talent, in service of country and society” position the University to embrace new challenges and seize new opportunities in a rapidly innovating knowledge-driven global economy.

The Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine opened in 2004 as an autonomous school for study and research in public policy, particularly in the study of public policy in Asian societies.

NEW NAME, NEW START

In 2005, NUS celebrated its centennial. The year-long celebrations kicked off with an Ushering In ceremony at which the new NUS flag was raised and the NUS Centennial Sculpture unveiled. As NUS was built on the foundations of the Medical School, the centennial of the school was observed, too. This milestone was celebrated with a S$100 million gift from the Yong Loo Lin Trust. The late Dr Yong Loo Lin was a Hong Kong doctor-turned-businessman who was a strong advocate of education. The Yong Loo Lin Trust has made many significant contributions in the name of medicine. The National University of Singapore School of Medicine was renamed the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSoM) in honour of this transformational gesture. A post graduate school of medicine was planned to further advance the teaching of Medicine. NUS signed an agreement with Duke University in the US to establish the Duke-NUS Graduate School of Medicine (Duke-NUS), at a purpose-built building at College Road – right next to the spiritual home of medical education, the College of Medicine Building. A new governance structure was devised for the YLLSoM, the Faculty of Dentistry and the National University Hospital (NUH), together, they would jointly form the National University Health System (NUHS) which would allow doctors, faculty and staff to work more effectively together, achieving greater synergies in the delivery of care, medical training and research. The Duke-NUS was officially opened in 2009. (The inaugural class graduated in 2013 with a joint M.D. degree from NUS and Duke University)

That same year, Professor Tan Chorh Chuan (Medicine ‘83) – who had recently taken over as President of the University – announced a new Vision and Mission for NUS: “A leading global university centred in Asia, influencing the future.” It is hoped that NUS will be recognised as a key authority on Asia that could hold influence on the region. The Kent Ridge campus saw further development, with a spanking new Alumni Complex – comprising the Shaw Foundation Alumni House and the NUS Society’s Kent Ridge Guild House. – opened by NUS Eminent Alumnus Minister Mentor Mr Lee Kuan Yew. The Alumni Complex serves as a focal point for the NUS community to bond with one another.

Like the University, donations to NUS have become larger and more impressive over the years. In 2004, the family of the late businessman Khoo Teck Pheat gifted S$50 million to the NUHS and NUS for the expansion of the University’s Children’s Medical Institute. The following year, YLLSoM received S$150 million pledged by Dato Sri Dr Tan Chorh Chuan to advance medical education and research. In light of these donations and support from the authorities who have earmarked much of the south-western part of the island for education and research, the future of NUS is bright. In 2009, the first two residential colleges of the new University Town complex welcomed their first residents. (UTown was officially opened in late 2013 by President H.E. Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam.)

In 2013, a S$18 million Singapore Centre for Nutritional Sciences, Metabolic Diseases and Human Development was established by YLLSoM and the Singapore Institute for Clinical Sciences. The centre aims to be the leading hub for research into nutritional sciences, metabolic diseases and human development.

Today, NUS is a modern start as a medical school born of necessity to its future as a leader in global education – has become a leading light in Asia. Here’s looking forward to another century of innovation and leadership ahead.

IN 2005, THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE WAS RENAMED THE YONG LOO LIN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE IN HONOUR OF THE S$100 MILLION DONATION FROM THE YONG LOO LIN TRUST.

THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

FROM PRESIDENTS AND PRIME MINISTERS TO PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS AND PLAYWRIGHTS, THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE (NUS) COUNTS A WIDE VARIETY OF LUMINARIES AS ALUMNI.

PRESIDENTS OF SINGAPORE

Dr Benjamin Sheares (Medicine ’29), Mr S R Nathan (Diploma, Social Studies ’54) and Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam (Science ’62) all graduated from NUS. Dr Tan enrolled in 1959 as a student at the Department of Physics in the University of Malaya. He lectured at the newly-renamed University of Singapore in the Physics Department and later lectured in the Department of Mathematics from 1967 to 1969. He was later appointed as the again-renamed NUS first Vice-Chancellor in 1980, a post he held till 1981. In 2011, Dr Tan succeeded Mr S R Nathan as NUS’ ninth Chancellor.

PRIME MINISTERS AND CABINET MINISTERS

Former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad (Medicine ’54) and his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad (Medicine ’55), were trained at the University of Malaya in Singapore. Emeritus Senior Minister Mr Goh Chok Tong graduated in 1964. Both Dr Goh Keng Swee and Dr Teo Chee Hean – pioneers of Singapore who helped to shape the nation in the formative years – came from the colleges that pre-dated the University: Dr Goh from Raffles College and Dr Teoh from the King Edward VII College of Medicine.

THINKERS AND EXPERTS

Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr Margaret Chan (Medicine ’85), holds a Masters of Medicine in Public Health from NUS. Dr Noeleen Heyzer (Arts and Social Sciences ’71), the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and UN Secretary-General’s Special Adviser for Timor-Leste, also holds an MSc from NUS. Dr Khoo Teck Pheat (Arts and Social Sciences ’71) – thinker, former ambassador and Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy – was a Pioneering Scholar and graduated from the University of Singapore with a degree in Philosophy.

ACTORS AND PLAYWRIGHTS

Playwright Mr Harsha Sharma (Arts and Social Sciences ’90) is an alumnus. TV actors Mr Benjamin Sheares (Arts and Social Sciences ’60), Ms Jeannette Aw (Arts and Social Sciences ’01), and Mr Tay Ping Hui (Arts and Social Sciences ‘96) too hail from the University. And Dr Goh Chok Tong graduated in 1964. Both Dr Goh Keng Swee and Dr Teo Chee Hean – pioneers of Singapore who helped to shape the nation in the formative years – came from the colleges that pre-dated the University: Dr Goh from Raffles College and Dr Teoh from the King Edward VII College of Medicine.

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AN EYE OPENER

STUDYING MEDICINE OPENED HER EYES TO THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS BETWEEN THE DISCIPLINE AND THE ENVIRONMENT FOR OPHTHALMOLOGIST AND FORMER NATURE SOCIETY PRESIDENT, DR GEH MIN (MEDICINE ’74), BY ARTI MULCHAND

Medicine was not actually my first choice for a career. I was not averse to it, but I had wanted to study architecture. It was my grandmother, whom I was close to and respected very much, who persuaded me to become a doctor.

So I studied medicine—and was miserable for the first two years. The preclinical sciences involved a lot of rote learning and staring down microscopes at slides that looked pretty identical to me. The wards of the human body did not fascinate me then, and I almost gave up in despair.

It was only in my third year when we were allowed to go into the wards and see actual patients that everything suddenly fell into place and became meaningful, and interesting. I also encountered inspiring teachers. One was Emeritus Professor Sir Gordon Arthur Ransome (1910-1978), one of the pioneers of modern medicine in Singapore, who taught me in my final year.

He was legendary as an erudite physician and inspired diagnostician, but the story I found most moving [about him] was about a final-year medical student who had starved his ‘long case’. [This was] a patient that [a medical student] would have dealt with from start to end, from taking their history to making a diagnosis—with Prof Ransome. [Fluking his long case] meant that the student had failed the entire finals and would have to repeat the year.

Although devastated, the student thanked the patient and helped him to get dressed—and so impressed Prof Ransome that he changed the fail mark to a pass on the grounds that medical knowledge could always be learnt, but consideration for the patients came first. To Prof Ransome, someone who had that quality under duress deserved to pass.

Medicine has always got to be about that doctor-patient relationship.

Seeing is Believing

I chose to specialise in ophthalmology because I find the eyeball fascinating. I also like using my hands but did not have the stamina or guts—not pun intended—to deal with more heroic life-saving surgery. But the idea of being able to restore vision—that was so romantic.

And I learnt a lot from the biggest medical challenges I faced, especially when it came to diseases that you cannot cure, like glaucoma.

What makes the difference is picking up the early signs which may not be very obvious, and preventing these from getting any worse. You can’t restore sight, but you can slow down visual loss.

The same can be said for environmental degradation. You have to look for the early signs and then prevent further damage. Like in climate change, we do all we can to mitigate, or at least adapt. If you cannot cure it, then you have to buy as much time as you can.

Treating a patient is also not black and white—you have to see every shade, and keep on looking for an optimal solution. That might have helped when I became President of the Nature Society in 2000 and also when I was a Nominated Member of Parliament. I could appreciate that policymakers cannot guarantee the future in absolute terms.

This prompted a more measured approach, a contrast to the earlier head-on collisions the Nature Society had always tried to mount. But the incident did influence a more collaborative approach.

Both sides—the Society and the Government—had started to take on a more moderate approach and we realised we would get a lot more accomplished if we worked together.

A more moderate approach does not mean agreeing to compromise from the start. We just tried to see things from the other’s point of view.

One of the early situations was dealing with the ecologically-rich Chek Jawa mudflats on Pulau Ubin. There seemed to be no way of reversing the government’s decision to reclaim the land. We were also dealing with a battle on the Kranji Marshes front, where a golf course was planned.

There was a lot of bargaining going on, and there was an indication that [the Government] would give way on Chek Jawa if we backed down on Chek Jawa.

A committee member was indignant, and said: ‘Dr Geh, if you had two patients who were critically ill, what would you do? You would fight for both lives.’

‘That became my guide—we had to fight for every single inch of nature we could. It might involve some compromise, but we should treat each as though it was a human life.’

Learned From Nature

I can’t say that being an environmentalist—which is what others call me, not what I call myself—also makes me a better doctor, but it certainly requires me to see life as an integrated whole.

Human health and the health of the planet are intertwined. We like to think of ourselves as separate from nature, but we are not.

A lot of diseases are linked to environmental problems, like pollution, haze, dirty air and contaminated water. We depend on biodiversity and forests to keep the air clean and remove pollutants from water. Nature provides food through pollination and reproduction. We depend on other living things.

We also need nature. Studies show that getting outside, outdoor activity can prevent myopia. Based on a study involving genetically similar children in Singapore and Sydney, the children from Sydney—who read as much if not more than those in Singapore—had a lower incidence of myopia.

The reason seemed to be that they had three times as much outdoor activity. The body adapts. If you only look at things close up, you lose your distance vision. If you spend less time glued to your devices and more time outdoors, your eyes adjust. It slows down the damage.

Many renowned studies have shown that surgical patients recover faster if there is a view of nature from their beds. Modern drugs we have to cure or treat disease also ultimately come from nature—about 80 per cent of drugs in current use can ultimately be traced back to natural origins.

Urbanisation and overdependence on technology is destroying the way that we look at things. We are surrounded by man-made objects, but even items we see as man-made require natural resources.

The problem is that many who live ill disregard the laws of nature. Ignore them and you need to obey”. You need to understand the laws of nature. Ignore them and you might believe that we will lose the war, whether in terms of an individual’s health or the health of the planet.” 9

Eye surgeon Geh Min, who met her heart-surgeon husband while she was doing her housemanship at Tua Payoh Hospital in 1976, was the Nature Society President from 2000 to 2008, and a Nominated Member of Parliament from 2004 to 2006. In 2006, she was one of three recipients of the inaugural President’s Award for the Environment. She is a member of the Nature Conservancy’s Asia Pacific Council; Birdlife International; and the Climate Change Network.

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“FLYING DOCTOR” MANI JEGATHESAN (MEDICINE ’67) MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE FASTEST MAN IN ASIA FOR A TIME – BUT HE STILL COULDN’T SKIP CLASS IF HE WANTED TO GRADUATE!

BY ARTI MULCHAND

THE REST OF HIS MALAYAN TEAMMATES left for the Commonwealth Games in Perth held in November 1962, the sprint champion tipped to take the bronze or better in the 220-yard event stayed in Singapore. During the Asian Games in Jakarta earlier that year, Tan Sri Dr Mani Jegathesan, then 18, had won the 200m, setting a new record of 21.3 seconds. He also won silvers in the 100m, and the 1,600m relay.

Two years earlier, in 1960, he had competed at the Rome Olympics, then working under surgical legend Dr Yahya Cohen, got the go-ahead to miss a month of his clinical posting on one condition – that he spent a month of his vacation time as Dr Cohen’s “fetcher and gatherer”. It was an “amazing opportunity”, he recalls.

And a month before his final MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery) exams in 1966, Dr Jegathesan, who had competed at the Bangkok Asian Games, “ran out the night before his first event and returning to Singapore – and straight to his Obsterics and Gynaecology class with Dr Tow Siang Hwa (Medicine ’53) – on a Monday morning, with three gold medals in his bag and the title of the Fastest Man in Asia.”

When Dr Tow spotted me, he said: ‘Our champion has arrived.’ And they gave me a standing ovation.” Even the congratulatory telegram that had arrived from the President of Malaysia paled in comparison.

But the biggest win for him came in February the following year when, with the rest of his cohort, Dr Jegathesan made his way to the medical faculty at Outram Road at 9.15am, and waited for the Registrar to appear with a piece of paper with the names of those who had passed the MBBS.

“I just honed in on the middle of the list – the Js – and looked for any indication of a very, very, very long name. And it was there. I got a piece of paper that said I passed and then I bought a night train ticket back to KL, where I was expected to return to work,” he recalls.

He completed his one year housemanship at Hospital Kuala Lumpur, and in 1968, a chance encounter while waiting to find out where he would be posted as a Medical Officer sealed his fate. He was at a hawker centre near the hospital when a senior gentleman recognised him as “that athlete fellow”.

“He said he was George De Witt, Deputy Director of the Institute for Medical Research (IMR) next door, and asked if I would like to work there.” Dr Jegathesan joined the IMR as a trainee pathologist, and that year, also competed at the 1968 Mexico Olympics. He set Malaysia’s standing record of 20.92 seconds for the zoom in a semi-final, and then announced his retirement from sports. Twenty years later, he became the IMR’s Director, holding the post for five years before moving on to become Deputy Director-General (Research and Technical Support) at the Ministry of Health, Malaysia.

Throughout his career, Dr Jegathesan has made significant contributions in the global control of infectious diseases, and served as a consultant to agencies including the World Health Organization.

Even after his “retirement” from sports, Dr Jegathesan found himself back in Olympic stadiums in various capacities between 1972 and 2011, including as chef de mission for the Malaysian team.

Today, he is the Chairman of the medical committee of the Olympic Council of Malaysia, the Olympic Council of Asia, and the Commonwealth Games Federation.

But some of his best memories were made in the Outram campus masterclass “both the art and science” of medicine, he says.

It is where he met his wife of 45 years, a pharmacy student. They have three children and five grandchildren, with another on the way. And the friendships he forged in his first year anatomy class remain to this day.

“My fellow students and I spent two years dissecting one half of a human body. That forces some serious bonding. Years can go by without contact, but when we meet, it’s like we’re back [at University] – and right next to that cadaver,” he says with a laugh.

[MY FELLOW STUDENTS AND I SPENT TWO YEARS DISSECTING ONE HALF OF A HUMAN BODY. THAT FORCES SOME SERIOUS BONDING. YEARS CAN GO BY WITHOUT CONTACT, BUT WHEN WE MEET, IT’S LIKE WE’RE BACK [AT UNIVERSITY] – AND RIGHT NEXT TO THAT CADAVER!]
WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO EXCEL IN BOTH SPORTS AND MEDICINE? SIMPLY SCIENCE, SAYS DR BENEDICT TAN (MEDICINE ‘91).

BY ARTI MULCHAND

EXACTLY FIVE HOURS – not even just half an hour more, and especially not the seven hours of sleep that is accepted as ideal. Five hours is Sports Medicine specialist and former sailing champion Dr Benedict Tan’s “sweet spot for sleep.”

“I need five hours to function normally. Six hours and I don’t feel any more refreshed, and seven makes me even more tired. I can go on four hours for two days straight, and three hours for one,” says the 47-year-old Chief of Sports Medicine at Changi General Hospital (CGH).

Dr Tan came to that conclusion “experimenting with sleep hours” while studying Medicine at the National University of Singapore. Sleeping less, he says, is a “form of forced efficiency” and helps him get as much as he needs out of his day.

He had also worked out that three hours of studying would make up for a missed lecture, and that making the leap from the 80th to the 90th percentile of his cohort required more hours in the second year, running to East Coast Park after his 3pm lecture on most days to make the most of the remaining daylight. After a quick dinner, it was to the gym until 10pm, and then back to NUS to study with his clinical group until 2am.

“I knew I had to spend a lot of time in the water racing and training, yet I couldn’t become a half-baked doctor,” he says.

What has stayed with him to this day is the fact that his lectures were not prescriptive and, instead, made him accountable for his decision. “The faculty treated me like an adult. They laid down the high standards expected, and as long as I met them I could train and race as much as I wanted. As a doctor, that’s important. You alone are responsible for caring that you remain a good one.”

During his housemanship, he would cover night call duties for his colleagues to chalk up experience. Those all-nighters also meant he could bed down straight into the orthopaedic ward, he explains. “If you wanted to sail better, you had to spend more time sailing. If you wanted to be a better doctor, you had to see as many patients as you could,” explains Dr Tan who, as a houseman, delivered 3 babies solo.

SCIENCE OF HIS SUCCESS

THE FACULTY TREATED ME LIKE AN ADULT. THEY LAID DOWN THE HIGH STANDARDS EXPECTED, AND AS LONG AS I MET THEM I COULD TRAIN AND RACE AS MUCH AS I WANTED.

SPORTS Medicine was where I could make a bigger difference, even if people thought I was crazy to give up Ophthalmology,” he recalls now, with a laugh.

He became Deputy Director (Sports Science) at the SSC’s Sports Medicine and Research Centre, building the department of five scientists and technicians into a 35-member team, covering all five disciplines under Sports Science, including strength and conditioning as well as sports nutrition. A second call came in 2002, this time from the then Chief Orthopaedics Professor Low Cheng Ooi (Medicine ’80) and the then-Chief Executive Officer Dr Tan Jee Lim (Medicine ’80), and the then-Chief Executive Officer T K Udairam (Arts and Social Sciences ’96) of CGH. They were keen to elevate sports medicine to a specialty – something other public hospitals had not yet done.

“They were real visionaries, and the whole hospital had bought into the idea. And being at CGH meant that Sports Medicine could ride on the Health Ministry machinery and get a lot more support. It was a chance for sports medicine to level up,” Dr Tan says. CGH now has 11 Sports Medicine practitioners, as well as specialist orthopaedic surgeons.

FULFILLING HIS ROLE

Today, Dr Tan clearly finds even more use for his theories of “forced efficiency.” On top of his administrative work, he does a minimum of nine clinical sessions a week and two evening sessions a week to keep himself “sharp.”

He is also a Senior Consultant at both the Singapore and Changi Sports Medicine centres, and Chairman of the Exercise is Medicine Singapore National Centre. The Asian Games and four-time SEA Games Gold medalist, and three-time Sportsman of the Year, retired from competing in 1996, but still sails recreationally.

He has completed all six of the World Marathon Majors, a championship-style competition for marathon runners that comprises six annual races in Berlin, Boston, Chicago, London, New York City and Tokyo. He is also a Nominated Member of Parliament, President of the Singapore Sailing Federation, sits on various other boards and panels, and has authored three books about sailing, running and weight loss. “At the end of the day, it is about the role I believe I have in society – to be a good citizen by doing all I can to push Singapore to greater heights, including in sports and medicine. I am doing what I need to do to fulfill that,” he explains.

What would he change given the chance to do it all over? Dr Tan’s answer is decidedly pragmatic. “Nothing. I have always been forward-thinking, and my decisions have been a series of rational ones made after careful consideration of all the facts. Logically, I would do it all exactly the same.”
THE 8Cs OF SUCCESS

City Development Limited’s reputation as an environmentally and socially responsible company owes much to Mr Kwek Leng Joo’s life motto — that monetary success alone is not enough. By WANDA TAN

Mr Kwek Leng Joo gave participants much food for thought at the latest NUS Alumni Great Eastern Life Breakfast Dialogue on 3 October 2014. Some 150 NUS alumni and students were at the M Hotel Ballroom on 3 October 2014 to hear the Deputy Chairman of City Developments Limited (CDL) ruminate on the topic, ‘Success – Is It All About Money?’.

Opening his talk with this question, Mr Kwek Leng Joo gave participants much food for thought. Some 150 NUS alumni and students were at the M Hotel Ballroom on 3 October 2014 to hear the Deputy Chairman of City Developments Limited (CDL) ruminate on the topic, ‘Success – Is It All About Money?’.

Having joined CDL’s Board of Directors in 1988, Mr Kwek served as Managing Director for 19 years prior to his February 2014 appointment as Deputy Chairman. Over the past two decades, he has played a crucial role in building the company’s portfolio of residential and investment properties. Today CDL is not only one of Singapore’s biggest landlords but also an international property and hotel conglomerate, with more than 400 subsidiaries and associated companies in 88 locations across 25 countries.

I PROPOSE A NEW DEFINITION OF SUCCESS THAT TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE ‘8Cs’ – THE AFOREMENTIONED 5Cs AS WELL AS CHARACTER, CREATIVITY AND COMMUNITY.

Under Mr Kwek’s leadership, sustainability has been the centrepiece of CDL’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) and business agenda since 1995. Founded on his vision to ‘conserve as we construct’, the company has adopted a triple-bottom-line approach in managing its business with a view to strike a balance between financial, social and environmental performance. To this end, the company focuses on the so-called ‘3Ps’ – profit, people and planet. Mr Kwek said of the last ‘P’, “We strive to see all our buildings are eco-friendly. We also prefer to work with suppliers and other stakeholders who adopt ‘green’ practices.”

CDL also engages with the public through a number of initiatives. “To spread the message of social and eco-consciousness, we organise annual youth competitions such as the CDL Singapore Compact Young CSR Leaders Award and the CDL E-Generation Challenge. And in 2013, we collaborated with the National Library Board to open ‘My Tree House’ – the world’s first green library for kids,” said Mr Kwek.

He added that CDL also has a Chief Sustainability Officer in the ranks of senior management. As a result of its commitment to environmental sustainability and CSR, CDL has won a plethora of honours. It is the first developer to receive the prestigious Built Environment Leadership Platinum Award in 2009 and the only developer to win ‘Quality Excellence Award – Quality Champion (Platinum)’ from Singapore’s Building and Construction Authority for two consecutive years (in 2013 and 2014). On the international front, CDL is also the first Singapore company to be listed on the world’s top three sustainability benchmarks – FTSE4Good Index Series since 2002, Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporations in the World since 2010 and Dow Jones Sustainability Indices since 2013.

Given CDL’s standing as a leading green developer, Mr Kwek was – not surprisingly – critical of modern-day notions of individual success. He lamented, “For many youths, success is usually defined in terms of financial wealth or how much money they earn. It’s all about achieving the ‘5Cs’ – cash, car, credit card, condominium and country club membership.” Instead, he challenged those present at the Breakfast Dialogue to step away from the ‘rat race’ and go beyond such myopic thinking.

“I propose a new definition of success that takes into account the ‘8Cs’ – the aforementioned ‘5Cs as well as character, creativity and community’, said Mr Kwek who sits on the Advisory Committee of NUS’ Master of Science (Environmental Management) (MEM) programme. “Character development is important if you are truly serious about growing as a person, while applying creativity to your work will help increase productivity. Lastly, we should not look after or think of ourselves as individuals, for we are all part of a larger community.”

Mr Kwek’s talk was followed by a dynamic Q&A session moderated by Dr Geh Min, an ophthalmologist, former Nominated Member of Parliament and Immediate Past President of the Nature Society (Singapore) She is also on the Advisory Committee of NUS’ MEM programme.

Dr Geh also spoke about her decade-long friendship with Mr Kwek and touched on his pioneering role in ushering the green movement into Singapore’s built environment. “Through his actions, he has shown that land is important not just as a money-making piece of real estate, but as a valuable natural resource worth conserving,” she said. “Even though he is a successful businessman, I think of him more as a dedicated environmentalist and a humanitarian.”

Another participant asked how other developers can be persuaded to adopt environmental practices. Mr Kwek acknowledged the increased competition among developers of comparable size in recent years. “There are four or five large developers in Singapore, including CDL. Nothing would please me more than to see the rest of them becoming green leaders and contribute to conserving the environment,” he said.

AN ENLIGHTENING PERSPECTIVE

Mr Kwek’s words left a deep impression on participants at the Breakfast Dialogue:

“My main reason for coming today was to network with fellow students and alumni, but I really enjoyed listening to what Mr Kwek had to say. His talk was a good reminder that success is not just about money.”

Zitong, a Year 2 Bachelor of Business Administration student

“I’m now in the final year of my course, so this session was a good opportunity to hear from a prominent figure in real estate before I enter the industry myself.”

Kevin Yap, a Year 5 Bachelor of Science (Real Estate) and Bachelor of Business Administration student

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First drink’s on us!

THIRSTY THURSDAYS

NUS Young Alumni Meetup
Entrepreneurship – The Big Picture

Noted entrepreneur Mr Andrew Kwan shares how his businesses flourish in a fragile economy. By Wanda Tan

According to a study of publicly-listed American companies on the S&P 500 index, the average lifespan of companies fell from approximately 60 years in the 1950s to about 15 years in 2013. The same is true if you look at companies on the Fortune 500 list. What this means is that the average lifespan of companies today is diminishing, and diminishing at a faster rate due to technological changes like Internet expansion.

Despite the gloomy outlook that Mr Andrew Kwan, Group Managing Director of Singapore-based investment holding company Commonwealth Capital Pte Ltd appraised his audience of, he himself was in a buoyant mood. Held at the Mandarin hotel, this event was the last in the series of morning talks conceived for NUS students and young alumni to engage with industry veterans, as well as network with one another.

The session was moderated by Associate Professor Tan Tin Wee from the NUS Department of Biochemistry who voiced his admiration for Mr Kwan’s outstanding business achievements. It all started in the early 1990s when, with a business partner, Mr Kwan co-founded Globamatrix Holdings (GMX) to sell window films for the automotive and building industries. By the end of the decade, the company had amassed a global market share and distribution network for high-end window film brands.

In 2002, GMX made its first foray into the F&B sector by investing in the Italian restaurant chain PantaMania, which at the time comprised only two food court stalls in Singapore. After GMX’s window film unit was sold to a US-based firm in 2004, Mr Kwan established Commonwealth Capital and expanded its F&B portfolio. Aside from PantaMania – which now consists of more than 50 outlets in South-east Asia, China and the Middle East – Commonwealth Capital now also owns brands such as Swisstreats, NYC Bagel Factory and Zac Meat & Poultry.

So what is the secret to his success? How has Mr Kwan – who has garnered numerous awards, including the Rotary Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASME) ‘Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2004’ – thrived when other businesses struggle to survive? That was the subject of his talk, ‘Entrepreneurship: A View from the Trenches’, in which he gave a no-holds-barred account of the triumphs and tribulations experienced as an entrepreneur. In particular, he identified three traits that all entrepreneurs must possess if they are to succeed.

The first is an appetite for disruptive technologies. “Just as [the late Apple co-founder] Steve Jobs ushered in the era of personal computing, entrepreneurs harbour a conviction that they can change the world. They see a gap that nobody else is serving,” said Mr Kwan who referred to this as the ‘romance of entrepreneurship’.

“Second, [as romantic as the journey might appear to be,] it is fraught with hard work and requires persistence. It is not just about talent, genius or education.” Nowadays, Mr Kwan spends about one third of his time on non-work pursuits, mainly with his wife – an NUS graduate through whom Mr Kwan joked that he has vicariously experienced NUS life – and their four children. But during GMX’s early days, Mr Kwan regularly worked around the clock on a variety of tasks, from ordering and unpacking shipments to meeting clients and typing up documents.

Lastly, Mr Kwan explained that being an entrepreneur offers rewards that go beyond monetary benefits. “There is a sense of empowerment that comes from being able to do what you want to do in your own time. You have the autonomy to do something you believe in, something you are passionate about,” he said. “That means you can’t be in it just for the ‘pot of gold’ at the end; you must enjoy the journey as well.”

He took questions from the floor during the second half of the Breakfast Dialogue. One participant asked for his thoughts on what role governments should play in promoting entrepreneurship. Mr Kwan’s answer was that government involvement in business requires a delicate balancing act. “Entrepreneurs are supposed to be creative and come up with their own ideas. So join the one hand it is counterintuitive for them to depend on external or government funding to get their businesses up and running.”

On the other hand, governments can contribute by bridging the gap between domestic and overseas markets. “The Singapore Government has [excelled] in helping local companies achieve the economies of scale or critical mass needed to establish a foothold overseas,” he observed in his capacity as Board Member of SPRING Singapore, an enterprise development agency under Singapore’s Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Another member of the audience commented on the challenges currently facing young start-ups in Singapore, such as over saturation of small businesses, rising rental costs and manpower constraints. But as Mr Kwan pointed out, free market principles will naturally resolve the situation and business owners should thus distinguish themselves from competitors. “If demand is only so big and the market is oversaturated with suppliers, it is inevitable that there will be a winnowing out of weaker players,” he noted.

There is a sense of empowerment that comes from being able to do what you want to do in your own time.

What they say...

Participants were impressed by what they had experienced at this final installment of the Breakfast Dialogue series.

“I wasn’t sure what to expect today as this is my first time here, but I had a good time. The session was very well-organised and allowed for an informal discussion with Mr Kwan.”

Mr Andreas Möbius, an Aeronautical Engineering exchange student from the United Kingdom

“I’ve really enjoyed the Breakfast Dialogue that I have attended. These events have given me a chance to hear from industry leaders whom I would not ordinarily get to meet.”

Mr Sam Loo (Business ’94) who has set up a corporate training firm
leadership is a somewhat nebulous concept that is difficult to pin down, with many so-called ‘gurus’ trotting their own theories and mantras. But how do we know if we even have what it takes to be a leader? According to Professor Hsieh Tsun-Yan, who has drawn on his experiences in the corporate sphere to forge a career in leadership counselling, there is a leader in each of us – we just do not know it yet.

A former President’s and Colombo Plan Scholar, Prof Hsieh went against the grain when, after completing his Bachelor’s degree in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Alberta, Canada in 1974, he turned down a spot in Singapore’s elite Administrative Service and instead sought an engineering job. In 1980, he joined McKinsey & Company as a consultant and then spent the better part of three decades with the global consulting giant. By the time he retired in 2008, Prof Hsieh had gained renown as the first ethnic Chinese to be elected as a Managing Director of McKinsey & Company’s Canadian and Southeast Asian offices.

In 2010, he founded LinHart Group, a leadership services firm that advises Chief Executive Officers (CEOs); boards of directors, owners and senior executives of large companies throughout Asia on issues of leadership development and succession. The Harvard MBA graduate also serves as Provost Chair Professor (Practice) of NUS Business School and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, and is a member of NUS Business School’s Management Advisory Board.

To a full auditorium at the U@live session, Prof Hsieh defined leadership as “a force in us that causes a large collection of people to do something they would not otherwise do, to do something better or to create something totally new”. Unlike managers, who are content with preserving the status quo or making only incremental improvements, leaders have the ability to attract and influence followers to go beyond their usual limits for a positive outcome.

“There is a huge opportunity for the world to be a better place if all of us become leaders – not just in high office [as CEOs of companies and presidents of countries] but even among, say, fellow colleagues in your hospital ward,” he said. In particular, he identified four arenas in which an individual’s leadership style is shaped: as a volunteer in community service organisations, when parenting children, in one’s relationship with a spouse, and in the workplace.

“The problem,” said Prof Hsieh, “is that the world is full of [social] constructs that try to convince us we are not leaders. For example, you may have been told at work that you cannot ask questions above your pay grade.” So what is needed to unleash one’s leadership? He touched on the three vital elements of knowing (possessing knowledge in a specific field), doing (demonstrating the required skills), and most importantly being (recognising one’s uniqueness). “People follow leaders because of who they are, not just because of what they do or what they know.” Prof Hsieh then engaged in an animated discussion with moderator Mr Viswa Sadasan (Arts and Social Sciences ’83) and the audience on the oft mentioned leadership crisis in Singapore. Ms Sadasan got right to the heart of the question, questioning whether there is in fact a dearth of good leaders in the first place. “I get put off whenever I hear the government say that we have a shortage of talent. The way I see it, the only reason they say so is because they see talent only in President’s Scholars,” he claimed.

“People follow leaders because of who they are, not just because of what they do or what they know.” Prof Hsieh then engaged in an animated discussion with moderator Mr Viswa Sadasan (Arts and Social Sciences ’83) and the audience on the
NS INDRANEE THURAI RAJAH (LAW ’86)

ASPIRE-ING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Ms Indranee Thurai Rajah, Senior Minister of State for Law and Education, is unfazed about steering the course to overhaul the landscape of Singapore’s post-secondary education.

WE NEED TO PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING SO THAT PEOPLE WILL UPGRADE THEIR SKILLS – A COMBINATION OF THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE, APPLIED OR HANDS-ON LEARNING, AND EXPERIENCE.

LIKE it or not, there is a general perception in Singapore that junior colleges (JC) are superior to polytechnics and Institutes of Technical Education (ITEs) when it comes to post-secondary education. But as Ms Indranee Thurai Rajah (Law ’86), Senior Minister of State for Law and Education told a packed audience, this situation has gone on for far too long. And those in attendance clearly agreed that this situation has gone on for far too long. And those in attendance clearly agreed.

In August 2014, the Committee released a report comprising a set of recommendations to enhance the academic and career prospects of Polytechnic and ITE students. Ms Rajah briefly summarised these recommendations, which include the provision of education and career guidance (ECG) offices at secondary and post-secondary schools, enhanced internship and training programmes with industry partners, more places for students who wish to pursue Higher National ITE Certificate (Higher Nitec) courses, and more modular post-diploma courses to impart sector-specific skills.

Ms Rajah noted that the Committee aims “to create multiple pathways to success [for the purpose of] valuing each person and each job.” The current ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach places undue emphasis on the more academic JC route. But once the new recommendations— which have been accepted by the Singapore Government — are implemented, students who go to Polytechnics and ITEs will be able to carve out equally successful careers.

In the ensuing Q&A session, Ms Rajah addressed doubts over the merits of the ASPIRE Committee report in a good-natured yet thoughtful manner. ULive moderator Mr Virendra Dasgupta (Arts and Social Sciences ’93) kicked things off by bringing up the proverbial ‘elephant in the room’: How effective are such reforms in the face of deeply entrenched mindsets that have, for decades, perpetuated Singapore’s stratified education system?

“The Singapore Government should be lauded for setting up the ASPIRE Committee, whose recommendations are long overdue,” he said. “But even if different progression pathways exist, the perception remains that some pathways are put on a pedestal – JCs are still preferred to polytechnics and ITEs, and ‘hard’ science subjects are favoured over ‘soft’ arts subjects. How can we ensure a more level playing field?”

Ms Rajah – while acknowledging the challenges associated with changing fixed mindsets – expressed optimism that the status quo can be broken.

“It won’t be easy and it will take time, but I do believe that change is possible. [The reform process] will hopefully gather momentum once parents see the results of recommendations to enhance the academic and career prospects of Polytechnic and ITE students.

The Singapore Government – are fully committed to fl atten the hierarchical structure of Singapore’s education system and ‘VUCA’—environment makes it difficult to plan for the future. Thus, we need people who can adapt to change quickly,” said Ms Rajah, Chairperson of the ASPIRE Committee. “We need to promote lifelong learning so that people will [continually] upgrade their skills – not just vocational skills, but a combination of theoretical knowledge, applied or hands-on learning, and experience.”

But as Ms Indranee Thurai Rajah (Law ’86), Senior Minister of State for Law and Education told a packed audience, this situation has gone on for far too long. And those in attendance clearly agreed that this situation has gone on for far too long. And those in attendance clearly agreed.
WHERE POLITICS MEETS ECONOMICS

Singapore’s Ambassador-at-Large Professor Tommy Koh (Law ’61) gives his perspective on how things stand in the ASEAN bloc. By Wanda Tan

Professor Tommy Koh at the inaugural session than Professor Tommy Koh (Law ’61), Ambassador at Large at Singapore’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs? Prof Koh’s glittering career in public service spans almost 50 years, most notably as former Ambassador to the United Nations and the United States. He has also enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with NUS ever since his student days, and in 1973 – 1974 served as Dean of the Faculty of Law. Today he holds a number of positions at NUS, including Special Advisor to the Institute of Policy Studies, Chairman of the Governing Board at the Centre for International Law, and Rector of Tembusu College.

The first Global Conversations was held on 4 November 2014 at The Westin Hotel. Prof Koh’s talk, titled ‘Economic Integration Versus Political Disputes in Asia: Which Side Will Prevail?’, focused on issues concerning the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Singapore is one of 10 member states.

Despite tepid recovery in the US and Europe, things are generally looking up for ASEAN on the economic front. “Most countries are liberalising trade by reducing both tariff and non-tariff barriers. They are also pursuing greater regional and inter-regional economic integration,” said Prof Koh. At the regional level, ASEAN has launched negotiations for a proposed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership with six countries – Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand – each of which already has existing free trade agreements with ASEAN.

At the inter-regional level, there appears to be a face-off between two trade pacts currently under negotiation. The US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which excludes China, is viewed as a rival to the China-backed Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), which was broached by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders. But as far as Singapore is concerned, Prof Koh said, “We support both the TPP and FTAAP, and believe them to be complementary initiatives.”

However, the news is not as promising on the political front. Worryingly, the long-running tensions between China and Japan have escalated in recent years due to the territorial dispute over ownership of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea. “Unlike in the West, the Cold War in Asia [between Beijing and Tokyo] is not yet over,” he explained. “There has not yet been a historical reconciliation between [both sides], and the ghosts of the past are still present today.”

Prof Koh then raised what he termed the “$4-trillion-dollar question”: Will the US, the incumbent begmon, and China, a rising challenger, become cooperative partners in the future or will the two powers go to war? “Economic interdependence is [sadly] not a guarantor of peace,” he warned. “At the end of the day, politics trumps economics. We must never underestimate man’s capacity for irrational behaviour.”

He highlighted ASEAN’s role as a convenor in bringing China and Japan as well as China and the US to the negotiating table, for example during the annual East Asia Summit. “[It] [their] relationship deteriorates, Asia will be badly affected. Ultimately, we need figureheads on both sides who have the political will to settle disputes.”

Prof Koh’s speech was followed by a Q&A session in which Mr Lim Cheng Teck, Chief Executive Office for ASEAN markets at Standard Chartered Bank, served as moderator. Given the bank’s presence in all ASEAN countries and the region’s high growth prospects, Mr Lim was as eager as the rest of the audience to learn whether “ASEAN’s economic miracle” could possibly be derailed.

One participant brought up the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the Arab region, and wondered what impact such religious extremism might have closer to home. Although quick to defer to more-qualified pundits on this complex matter, Prof Koh answered in broad strokes. “Within the ASEAN region, the Islamic countries of Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia are mostly made up of moderate Muslims [as opposed to those, like ISIS members, who reject the West and other Islamic factions]. My hope is that, in the struggle for the ‘soul of Islam’, moderates will win.”

Prof Koh was also queried about China’s seemingly culpability in fomenting border conflicts with ASEAN countries like the Philippines and Vietnam over parts of the South China Sea. “It is wrong to villainise China and blame it as the root of all troubles,” he said adamantly. “China want a prosperous country and a strong military, which is understandable after years of being bullied by other countries [such as England and Japan] in the past.”

But he was apprehensive about what could happen if China were to use its clout in an undesirable manner. “ASEAN’s vision is that our region should be open to all powers big and small. We welcome all nations that have good intentions, but we never want to be under any country’s sphere of influence, be it China or the US.”

ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE IS [SADLY] NOT A GUARANTOR OF PEACE. AT THE END OF THE DAY, POLITICS TRUMPS ECONOMICS. WE MUST NEVER UNDERESTIMATE MAN’S CAPACITY FOR IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOUR.
CLASS GIVING WELL-RECEIVED

Class gifts have been a major tradition of almost every educational institution, and NUS is no exception. There are many causes in NUS which need support, and one such worthy cause is helping future colleagues with the cost of education.

An alumnus from the MBBS Class of 1981 remembers the strong bonds the class forged. “We have a special friendship as we have been through much together. Bonding starts from Day One at Medical School. I remember the fights and the quarrels but also the helping of one another in all matters big and small. We had a class gathering where almost the whole class came together and many from various parts of the world came back to meet up and catch up with one another,” shares Dr Francis Seow (Medicine ’81).

In 2010, the MBBS Class of 1981 felt it was time to make a difference, and active fund-raising for a Bursary commenced, with the response still going strong today. Currently, the School administers 414 bursaries annually to students from families with a certain per capita income a month, but it is estimated that up to 300 students are in financial need.

Professor John Wong (Medicine ’81) says, “We are who we are because of NUS. NUS allowed us to become doctors and gave generously. With the unexpectedly positive response, the donated amount exceeded target and the Balaji Sadasivan Fund was eventually transformed into an endowment.”

Professor Yeoh Khay Guan, the current Dean of YLLSoM, expresses great confidence in the School’s alumni. He says, “Class bursaries are a very meaningful way of creating a lasting memory of what you and your classmates stand for, and have come together to do. It creates a long-term legacy, which will last forever and each year gives young students a helping hand. Each of us is successful today because an opportunity was given to us. Now that we are in a position to do so, let us give back and help a student in need.”

Both were initiated by alumni who wanted to honour the memory of a classmate who had passed on. For the latter, the class believed Dr Sadasivan would have supported the idea of funds channelled to help financially needy students rather than spent on an obituary in the newspapers. Many saw this as an opportunity to help future doctors and gave generously. With the unexpectedly positive response, the donated amount exceeded target and the Balaji Sadasivan Fund was eventually transformed into an endowment.

THE LEGACY OF AN UNCOMMON EDUCATION

or Mr Darren Tan Kim Poh (Business ’97), going to school was not just about receiving an academic education. During the years he attended the Delta Circus Primary School (DCPS), Raffles Institution (RI), Saint Andrew’s Junior College (SAC), and the National University of Singapore (NUS), he was on a heart-warming journey of extraordinary learning, character-building, and soul-nurturing.

To reciprocate, he made a bequest — naming all his alma-maters (except DCPS, which regrettably, has been defunct since 1992) beneficiaries of his CPF, insurance payouts and cash.

Legacy giving is a good way of planning one’s estate so as to make an impact that can be felt for generations. It allows donors such as Mr Tan to support causes close to their hearts. Each bequest, large or small, has its own story, and Mr Tan’s story is a simple one of appreciation and gratitude.

“I have fond memories of my years spent at school. My alma-maters have all been instrumental in moulding my heart and soul beyond the academic aspects. Therefore, as a gesture of gratitude, I am pleased to make a legacy gift to NUS,” says Mr Tan, who grew up in a humble family.

Mr Tan’s father was an odd-job labourer while his mother was a housewife. The family struggled to make ends meet during his and his sister’s schooling years. Bursaries he received from primary to tertiary levels took him through the difficult times. He now empathises with less well-off students encountering similar challenges and is particularly enthusiastic about giving towards bursaries.

“I can relate to the struggles that some bursary recipients may experience. Just like the metamorphosis of a caterpillar – if anyone tries to cut open the cocoon with the intent of freeing the struggling butterfly, it will result in underdeveloped wings that will never fly. The struggle to emerge makes the butterfly strong. The butterfly then rests for a few hours before soaring with the fully-developed wings. So, my advice to them is to look at the positive side of the struggles they may encounter and appreciate how adversity makes them stronger,” Mr Tan advises.

The Business Administration alumnus believes very much in the importance of education and its holistic influence on one’s values and character.

To Mr Tan, well-known community leader and businessman Mr Lee Kong Chian is the paragon of philanthropy, and like him, Mr Tan is mindful of one’s duty in giving back to society. He hopes to encourage fellow alumni to give back or even consider making bequests as well.

“Yesterday is the past. Tomorrow is the future. Today is a gift. That’s why it is called the present. The future – generations of NUS students – cannot change their present. The future – generations of NUS students – cannot change their past, but your present can make a difference to their future,” he adds.
Honouring the Past and the Future:
ANN WEE NUS SOCIAL WORK ALUMNI AWARD

The Ann Wee NUS Social Work Alumni Award was launched at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 85th Anniversary Dinner by Professor Tan Eng Chye (Science ’85), NUS Provost and Deputy President (Academic Affairs). Prof Tan said, “This award is a reminder that while we strive for world-class standards in research and innovation, ultimately the work we do impacts community and society. I hope that our alumni, not just those from Social Work, will be inspired by the selfless contributions from Mrs Wee and the social workers as symbolised in this award.” The idea of setting up the award and naming it after Mrs Ann Wee was proposed by several social work alumni and friends.

The birthday celebrations, together with Mrs Ann Wee (centre), Dean Prof Bruce Yee, former deans and NUS senior management, cutting a birthday cake to commemorate the happy occasion.

This year’s 85th Anniversary celebrations by the NUS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) culminated in a dinner event for 300 guests at the NUS Society Guild Hall on 22 November. Graced by Guest-of-Honour, Mr Wong Ngit Loong (Engineering ’65), Chairman of the NUS Board of Trustees, the event featured the theme of ‘An Evening of Asian Nostalgia’, with guests dressed in their best ‘ethnic chic’. FASS Dean Professor Brenda Yeoh spoke on the academic milestones in FASS’ journey. A silent auction of artworks contributed by faculty, alumni, students and friends during the evening raised over $542,000 for the FASS Student Leadership Award (FSLA) – one of the two awards launched during the event. The event also coincided with both alumni Emeritus Professor Edwin Thumboo (Arts ’56) and Mrs Tan Suan Imn (Arts ’62) celebrating their birthdays on the day itself.

For a list of award recipients, visit: https://bizalum.nus.edu.sg/proud-to-be-blazing/10-year-anniversary-award-recipients

NUS BUSINESS SCHOOL EMINENT BUSINESS ALUMNI AWARDS 2014

A total of 10 outstanding Business School alumni were honoured at the biennial NUS Business School Eminent Business Alumni Awards 2014 on 4 November at the Mandarin Orchard Singapore. The awards were presented by Guest-of-Honour Mr Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry, together with Mr Peter Seah (Business ’68), Awards Committee Chairman and Professor Bernard Young, Dean of NUS Business School.

For USP alumni who are interested in joining this programme, please contact Jo at caijosephine@nus.edu.sg.

THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NUS SPORTS AWARDS CEREMONY

On 7 November this year, the Sports Club Alumni celebrated the 10th anniversary of the NUS Sports Awards Ceremony. Presented annually to deserving students who have attained outstanding sporting achievements and contributed significantly towards NUS sports, the event was graced by past NUS staff, awards recipients, Sports Club alumni and prominent alumni athletes.

Raffles Hall Alumni and External Affairs Committee

On 20 September 2014, Raffles Hall Alumni and External Affairs Committee organised the annual ‘Past Vs Present’ event and more than 60 alumni and current residents participated in tennis, volleyball and soccer.

Mr Tommy Toh (Science ’12) won the winner’s plaque and the Most Valuable Player (Past Team) award while Mr Tang Jian Hong, Nico (Year 3 Engineering student) won the Most Valuable Player award for the Present Team.

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES CELEBRATES 85 YEARS

The National University of Singapore Society (NUS) welcomed Prime Minister (PM) Mr Lee Hsien Loong on 3 October 2014 at the NUS 60th Anniversary Lecture. Titled ‘Singapore in Transition – the Next Phase’, PM Lee addressed the issues that framed the future for Singapore and urged Singaporeans not to become too self-centred or disregard events that are taking place in other places. NUS organised its 60th Anniversary Fundraising Concert on 24 October 2014 to benefit the NUS Alumni Bursary Fund as well. The Old Wine, New Spirits’ themed-concert raised $540,618 through generous donations from sponsors and donors. Well-known personalities such as Dawn Yip, Rahimah Rahim, Felinda Wong and Noor Quak also performed at the concert to benefit needy individuals.

The year-long 60th Anniversary celebrations culminated in an elegant Gala Dinner at the Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre on 11 November 2014. This milestone anniversary year saw NUS raising more than $810,000 for the NUS Alumni Bursary Fund.

Together organised by the University Scholars Programme (USP), this year’s 85th Anniversary celebrations by the NUS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) acknowledged the achievements of prominent alumni athletes.

Recipient of the NUS Business School Eminent Business Alumni Awards 2014 with Guest-of-Honour Mr Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry (seated, fifth from left) and the Awards Committee.

Prize winners were presented with plaques and medals by the Guest-of-Honour and the Awards Committee.

The annual Scholars Programme Alumni Network (SPAN) Get-Together organised by the University Scholars Programme (USP) was held at Marriott Singapore on 14 November this year, with about 100 USP alumni, students, faculty and staff turning up. Introducing the newly-established USP Alumni Society, the Acting President of the society’s interim executive committee, Mr Jamie Thong Yu Jin (Arts and Social Sciences ’08), shared with all the purpose of the Alumni Society as a platform for USP alumni to connect with peers, undergraduates, faculty and staff, and to enable greater collaboration in furthering meaningful causes and initiatives. The get-together concluded with great anticipation for the fledgling Alumni Society as USP enters its 10th year in 2015.

For a list of award recipients, visit: https://bizalum.nus.edu.sg/proud-to-be-blazing/10-year-anniversary-award-recipients

Recipients of the NUS Business School Eminent Business Alumni Awards 2014 with Guest-of-Honour Mr Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry (seated, fifth from left) and the Awards Committee.

Prizes for the new Alumni Society were presented to the USP Alumni Society’s Chairperson Mr Ahmad Tashrif (Engineering ’12) and the Awards Committee.

NUS BUSINESS SCHOOL EMINENT BUSINESS ALUMNI AWARDS 2014

Sponsoring the event were USP alumni and NUS staff, alumni and prominent alumni athletes.

The 10th anniversary of the NUS Sports Awards Ceremony

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the NUS Sports Awards Ceremony, the event was graced by past NUS staff, recipients, Sports Club alumni and prominent alumni athletes.

For USP alumni who are interested in joining this programme, please contact Jo at caijosephine@nus.edu.sg.
Honouring the best at the Engineering Alumni Gala Dinner

Every year the Faculty of Engineering honours outstanding alumni at the Distinguished Engineering Alumni Award (DEAA). This year on 10 October, the DEAA 2014 was conferred upon Mr Tang Kin Fei (Engineering ’74) and Mr Quek Gim Pew (Engineering ’81) at the annual Engineering Alumni Gala Dinner. Mr Tang, from Mechanical Engineering, is cited for spearheading Sembcorp’s growth, turning the onshore plant engineering business into a profitable one within five years.

As Chief Executive Officer of DSO National Laboratories, Mr Quek Gim Pew, from Electrical Engineering, has led the organisation into a premier R&D institution with more than 1,300 research scientists and engineers – developing Singapore’s defence capability in the realms of air, land, sea and cyberspace.

NUS Dean of Engineering Professor Chua Kee Chaing (Engineering ’87), commended Mr Tang and Mr Quek as inspirational examples to all. “We hope the Engineering community imbued with similar passion, will continue to grow from strength to strength,” he said.

300 participants attended the event at the NUS Society Kent Ridge Guild House.

The Medical Alumni Association’s (MAA) 91st anniversary reunion was held from 21 to 23 November 2014 at Hotel Casuarina @ Meru, Ipoh. More than 50 Alumni Association members from Singapore attended the reunion hosted by their counterparts from the Ipoh Alumni Association Northern Branch, led by Dato Dr Y C Lee (Medicine ‘67) and his organising committee.

The reunion began with an informal gathering on the first evening, in which local cuisines and hawkers’ delights were served. There were also ‘live’ performances by alumni.

On 22 November, alumni gathered at the Meru Golf Resort in the early morning for a Golf Tournament. A city tour was organised for those not playing golf. In the afternoon, Dr Lee Mun Wai, a retinal surgeon trained at the Singapore National Eye Centre and the Lions Eye Institute in Western Australia, spoke on ‘The Changing Landscape of Retina Care’.

Highlights of the ‘formal dinner’ included a posthumous Honorary Membership Award to the late Professor Arthur Lim (Medicine ’56) and the appointment of the Association’s 91st President Dato Dr Y C Lee. The Sultan of Perak, the Royal Highnesses Duli Yang Maha Mulia, Paduka Seri Sultan Perak Darul Ridzuan, Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah and his consort Duli Yang Maha Mulia, Raja Permaisuri Perak Darul Ridzuan, Tuanku Zara Salim graced the occasion, attended by 400 Alumni Association members and guests. Dr J Y Lim (Medicine ’09)

91ST MEDICAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION REUNION IN IPOH

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TORONTO OVERSEAS CHAPTER ALUMNI DINNER

The NUS Toronto Overseas Chapter hosted its second event on 27 September this year. Alumni gathered to enjoy a sumptuous dinner and strengthened friendships over karaoke.

Mr Sir Philip Yong Li (Science and Business ’70)

CHENNAI REUNION DINNER

The NUS Office of Alumni Relations organised an alumni reunion for NUS alumni in Chennai at The Westin Evolve Ballroom in Chennai Tamil Nadu, India, on 6 September this year. Alumni from Bangalore, Pune and Hyderabad together with some Chennai-based alumni working in Singapore attended the event.

Mrs V V Jayashree (Arts and Social Sciences ’06)

ALUMNI HAPPENINGS EVENTS

ALUMNI HAPPENINGS OVERSEAS CHAPTERS
XIAMEN OVERSEAS CHAPTER’S FIRST ANNIVERSARY

The NUS Xiamen Overseas Chapter celebrated its first anniversary on 14 September this year. Director of the NUS Office of Alumni Relations, Associate Professor Victor R Savage (Arts and Social Sciences ’72), graced the event, together with Ms Phua Chen Yen, Vice-Consul (Consular & Administration) to Xiamen and 55 NUS Xiamen alumni and their family members.

A birthday cake was cut to commemorate the first anniversary and Mr Zhang Ke (Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music ’13), performed a violin solo piece.

Dr Ling Zhi Heng (Medicine ’08), General Secretary, NUS London Overseas Chapter conducted a heritage walking tour of Potong Pasir on 23 October this year. NUS Senior Alumni took part in this event.

A tour of Potong Pasir on 23 October this year.

Prof Arthur Lim specialised in ophthalmology and was the first Singaporean to be conferred Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of London in 1962. He was elected President of the Singapore Medical Association from 1968 to 1970.

In 1965, he started a private group ophthalmology practice named Eye Clinic Singapura. Its success became a platform from which, two decades later, he helped establish the Singapore National Eye Centre (SNEC), Singapore Eye Research Institute (SERI), and the Department of Ophthalmology at the National University Hospital (NUH) and the National University of Singapore (NUS). He was appointed Professor and was acknowledged by his peers as the ‘father’ of this specialty in the region, and a mentor and icon to many eye surgeons worldwide.

He was conferred a rare honorary MD by the National University of Singapore in 1999. Prof Lim had published more than 350 scientific papers and written 24 books in the past 40 years. He had also delivered 19 named lectures and had been on the editorial board of 15 international journals. He also led volunteer missions in South Asia and China to help patients with vision problems to regain their sight and to provide training to their local professionals. In recognition of his contribution in setting up training centres in China, he was given the Friendship Award in 1996 by the China government, after the Public Service Star and Public Service Star Bar awarded by the Singapore government in 1995.

Despite his busy work schedule, Prof Lim was also involved in charity and service organisations. He was especially passionate with alumni linked activities of his alma mater – under his Chairmanship in 2002, the NUS Universities’ Endowment Fund has built up more than a hundred million dollars in reserve. He was recognised with the Ernest T Stewart Award for Alumni Volunteer Involvement in 1999, an Outstanding Service Award at the NUS University Awards in 2002, and a Distinguished Alumni Service Award in 2005.

He had always been an active member of the Alumni Association and donated towards the renovation costs when the Alumni Medical Centre moved across the College Road premises in 1989. In appreciation, the auditorium on the second level was named after him.

As the longest-serving President of the Alumni Association from 1995 till 2014 for seven terms, Prof Lim was responsible for more effective communications between the Association and the Singapore Government, especially the health authorities.

Prof Lim excelled as a doctor, an author, a teacher, an artist, a sportsman and a philanthropist. The members of the Alumni Association have lost a committed president, a great leader, a top spokesman, a generous supporter and a dear friend.

By Dr Dominic W H Leung (Medicine ’75) Chairman (2000) Alumni Association Southern Branch
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“Hosting the APDSA (Asia Pacific Dental Students’ Association) Congress at the Orchard Mandarin Hotel in 1984... I worked through each night producing a daily newsletter. Those were pre-computer days and all I was equipped with was a typewriter, pens and markers, a pair of scissors, a photocopying machine and a huge stack of paper. Besides being a reporter, layout designer and photocopy girl, I also delivered the newsletters, sliding them under the doors of delegates’ hotel rooms in the wee hours of the morning.”

Dr Yeo Siang Khin (Dentistry ’89)

“From the first day, we were ‘thrown’ into the anatomy lab and [had to start] cutting and dissecting cadavers. That was an eye-opening experience although we could hardly open our eyes due to the stinging effects of the strong formalin.”

Dr Jazlan Joosoph (Medicine ’97), Specialist in Obstetrics and Gynaecology & Consultant, Raffles Medical

“I was a亏itall of education. “Thirsty Thursdays” are a great way to meet new classmates and enjoy some drinks at Molly Roffey’s Irish Pub.”

Dr Wei Ker-Chiah (Medicine ’98), Consultant/Chief of Department of Community Psychiatry, Institute of Mental Health

“‘The first time I told someone that their loved one was on the verge of death.’

Dr Sean Ong (Medicine ’14), House Officer, Tan Tock Seng Hospital,

“Having to purchase a set of real human skeleton for S$250 from a senior, and keeping it in my room at King Edward VII Hall.”

Dr Pradit Yeoh (Medicine ’78), Consultant, Drs Trythall, Hoy, Davies

“The nights spent rehearsing for our plays in the annual Medical Society concert... a time of great fun and bonding through the tiring rehearsals, prop-making sessions, and late suppers we had together.”

Dr Wei Ker-Chiah (Medicine ’88), Consultant/Chief of Department of Community Psychiatry, Institute of Mental Health

“Dates to REMEMBER

JANUARY

15 JAN Thu
Thirsty Thursdays
6.30pm, D’Bell
Register at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/event/TTjan15
Enquiries: Mr Kyaw Win Shwe at kyawwinshwe@nus.edu.sg

28 JAN Wed
U@live featuring
Tan Sri Dr M Jegathesan
7.30pm, Shaw Foundation Alumni House
Register at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet
Enquiries: Ms Josephine Chow at josephine@nus.edu.sg

29 JAN Thu
Movies On The House
The Book Thief (PG)
7.30pm, Shaw Foundation Alumni House
Register at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet
Enquiries: Ms Josephine Chow at josephine@nus.edu.sg

FEBRUARY

7, 9 & 10 FEB Sat, Mon & Tue
Indian Film Festival
8pm, Shaw Foundation Alumni House
Register at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet
Enquiries: Ms Josephine Chow at josephine@nus.edu.sg

25 FEB Wed
U@live featuring
Mr Jack Sim
7.30pm, Shaw Foundation Alumni House
Register at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet
Enquiries: Ms Josephine Chow at josephine@nus.edu.sg

MARCH

16 - 18 MAR Mon - Wed
Canadian Film Festival
8pm, Shaw Foundation Alumni House
Register at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet
Enquiries: Mr Kyaw Win Shwe at kyawwinshwe@nus.edu.sg

25 MAR Wed
U@live featuring
Ms Rani Singam
7.30pm, Shaw Foundation Alumni House
Register at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet
Enquiries: Ms Josephine Chow at josephine@nus.edu.sg

26 MAR Thu
Thirsty Thursdays
6.30pm, Molly Roffey’s Irish Pub – Dorsett
Register at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/event/TTmar15
Enquiries: Mr Kyaw Win Shwe at kyawwinshwe@nus.edu.sg
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.**
   Come network with fellow alumni at any of these popular and often complimentary OAR events.

2. **Read or join an alumni group.**
   NUS has over 55 Alumni Groups and over 15 Overseas Chapters. Join a group today to stay in touch and build closer ties with fellow alumni and the University.

3. **Check out your AlumNUS Card.**
   Check out exclusive offers and benefits for alumni at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/alumnuscard

4. **Take your way down to the Shaw Foundation Alumni House!**
   Your Home on Campus and an ideal meeting place for alumni events, seminars, reunions and gatherings.

5. **Nurture the giving spirit in you.**
   Step up to the role of class ambassador or come home to volunteer as an alumni mentor for the undergraduates. Find out how at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet

6. **Update your contact details with us!**
   Stay connected to NUS. Update your contact information with us at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/updatemyparticulars

7. **Stay connected through our numerous communication platforms!**
   - Read the quarterly magazine — The AlumNUS — that gives you the latest on NUS and our alumni community at alumnet.nus.edu.sg/alumnusmagazine
   - Check out AlumNET at www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet, your one-stop alumni web resource!
     - Download AlumNET from Google Play or Apple Store to view upcoming alumni events!
   - Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nusoar
   - Enjoy AlumMAIL, your NUS Lifelong Email Account.

www.nus.edu.sg/alumnet