

Secondary

**Mdm Low Loon Stacey
Tanglin Secondary School**

Mdm Low has been teaching in Tanglin Secondary School for the past three years. Besides her teaching responsibilities, she serves as a teacher counsellor, teacher-in-charge of the Interact Club and is a member of the National Education Committee. Mdm Low's motto "If you want to see the rainbow, you must bear with the rain" is fondly recalled by a student. Her love and warmth permeate 'all creatures great and small' and bring hope to all who need it. She never misses an opportunity to brighten the lives of people and animals. She initiated creative and fun fund-raising projects like Millennium Fun Fair 2000 and Reach Another Community Endeavour 2001. She is also involved in mini-business projects to raise funds for the needy and underprivileged both locally and overseas.



Dr Nick Aplin (left) presenting a token of appreciation to Guest-of-Honour, Dr Ng Eng Hen

Junior College/Centralised Institute

**Mr Chuah Soon Ann
Jurong Institute**

A teacher for 11 years, Mr Chuah heads the Physical Education Department at Jurong Institute. He embodies the spirit of the Caring Teacher in the way he uses sports to give each student a sense of self-worth. He has taken students who had never had a taste of success and through his patience and fortitude he coaxed them into becoming the National 'A' Division champion team in 2001. He encourages through personal example and jogs with individual students who need the extra push. He encourages students to balance their study and games commitments and even ferries students who are injured during games to and from school so that they do not miss classes. Achievement oriented yet caring and fair-minded, Mr Chuah is an inspiration to both his colleagues and students.

Award of Commendation Winners

Primary	Secondary
Mrs Leung Kim Ping Fuhua Primary School	Mr Anthony Tang Bowen Secondary School
Mrs Lie Lan Eng Judy Haig Girls' School	Mr Lim Chi Yan Broadrick Secondary School
Mrs Fong Chen Seng Kang Primary School	Mdm Chu Suat Bee Bukit Panjang Government High School
Junior College/Centralised Institute	Mdm Hamidah Ahmad Fuchun Secondary School
Mdm Loh Hwee Hwa Jurong Institute	Ms Vimala d/o Subramaniam Riverside Secondary School
Mrs Lam Wai Lin Temasek Junior College	

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NEWS

**the Caring
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(Contributed by Public & International Relations)

NATIONAL WINNERS

Primary

**Ms Chua Bee Choo Janet
Nan Hua Primary School**

In her six years at Nan Hua Primary School, Ms Chua was nominated for both the President's Award for Teachers 2000 and Outstanding Youth in Education Award 2002.

The fourth Caring Teacher Awards 2002, jointly organised by NIE and ExxonMobil Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd., with support from the Ministry of Education was opened for nominations in April this year. The awards, first given out in 1996, are aimed at acknowledging and rewarding those teachers in our schools, who through their daily deeds and actions, exemplify the values of caring, sharing and concern for the academic, moral, social, emotional and mental welfare of their students. Over 5,000 nomination forms were received when nominations closed on 15 May 2002.

She is involved in the school's Information Technology (IT) Committee and is the teacher-in-charge of a group of young school journalists who are guided in covering major school events. As an astute user of IT, Ms Chua communicates frequently with her pupils' parents in the belief that this will lead to a better understanding of her charges and their needs. Parents testify that Ms Chua is conscientious and caring towards her pupils and has been described as a "transformer of lives". One in particular attested that she had "taken extra efforts beyond her role of duty not only to educate children but also to shape their character".

An award ceremony was held on 23 August 2002 at the Orchard Hotel. Dr Ng Eng Hen, Minister of State for Education and Manpower graced the occasion as the Guest-of-Honour.

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Award winners: (from left) Ms Janet Chua, Mr Chuah Soon Ann and Mdm Stacey Low

PRESENTING THE CARING TEACHER AWARDS WINNERS

Three National winners received the Caring Teacher Awards 2002 and 10 others received the Award of Commendation.



**Introducing
Our New Editor**

Ms Lee Phing Phing who joined NIE as Head, Public and International Relations on 9 September 2002 will also assume the role of Editor for NIE News.

Having held various appointments in both the public and private sectors, Ms Lee's various stints in broadcasting and tourism, advertising and promotions, public relations and marketing communications will stand her in good stead as she confronts new challenges in the lush, green environment of NIE.

Ms Lee's more recent achievement had been her task as Chairperson of the Organising Committee for Suntec City's countdowns to 1999 and 2000. Ms Lee crossed over from SBS Transit Ltd where she was Deputy Director, Passenger Services, NorthEast Line.

Programmes

Education Workshop in Cambodia and China: Overseas Community Service

(Contributed by Asst Prof Jessie Ee, Specialised Education)

Asst Prof Jessie Ee (Specialised Education) conducted a two-day workshop from 31 May to 1 June 2002 for 50 Cambodian teachers, teacher trainers and school inspectors. The participants were challenged to include the different intelligences in their language teaching through *Integrating Multiple Intelligences in Language*. Numerous *Language Games* were also taught. The workshop was officiated by His Excellency, Mr Im Sethy, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports. The event was also graced by His Excellency, Mr Vergheze Matthews, Singapore's Ambassador to Cambodia and Bishop Dr Robert Solomon of the Methodist Church in Singapore.



Asst Prof Jessie Ee addressing the audience at the Opening of the Education Workshop in Cambodia

Another similar workshop was conducted from 20 to 22 June 2002 in a secondary school at Dong San Village, China.

It was an enriching experience for all. The participants shared their ideas during the workshops and the trainers were given the opportunity to better understand and appreciate their culture and values.

Colours of Life® Programme

(Contributed by Ms Lim Pei Yee, Ministry of Community Development & Sports)

The *Colours of Life®* programme encourages lifelong planning. It is designed to help public officers plan early and prepare for the different transitions in life. This programme focuses on five key areas: Health, Relationship, Finance, Career and Personal Development. It comprises a series of courses that public officers can attend at various ages and different stages in their careers.

The *Colours of Life®* is a collaboration between the PS21 Functional Committee on Staff Well-Being, the Ministry of Community Development & Sports, and the Civil Service College, Institute of Public Administration & Management (IPAM).

The programme begins with a Foundation Course that aims to create an awareness of the importance of early planning in one's life in the areas of career, finance, health, personal development and relationship. There is a series of core programmes and sub-programmes for each of these five modules. The courses are segregated at divisional levels and by age groups. For more details on the course, please refer to <http://www.ipam.gov.sg>.

Individual public officers can either sign up through TR AISI, the electronic system to apply for courses at IPAM, or through application forms to your Human Resource Training department. In-house courses are available upon request.



NIE News is published quarterly by the Public & International Relations Department (PIR), National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute.

Contributions from members of the Institute and all recipients of NIE News are most welcome. You may wish to provide articles relating to NIE developments, initiatives, collaborations, events as well as staff research and accomplishments.

PIR reserves the right to accept, reject or amend any manuscript, photograph and all other written material offered for its print.

The next issue of NIE News will be published in January 2003. Submissions should reach PIR by **15 November 2002**.

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WELCOME

We welcome the following staff who joined us from June to August 2002:

Foundation Programmes

Miss Wong Sock Yee, Cecilia
Management Support Officer

Graduate Programmes & Research

Miss Chiam Ching Leen
Senior Officer

Specialised Education

Assoc Prof Lim Heng Fook, Levan
Associate Professor

Psychological Studies

Assoc Prof Russell Martin Francis
Hawkins
Associate Professor

Asst Prof Liau Kien Fie, Albert
Assistant Professor

Instructional Science

Assoc Prof Janette Ring
Associate Professor

Mr Woo Huay Lit
Lecturer

English Language & Literature

Asst Prof Heather Louisa Kay
Assistant Professor

Ms Sally Ann Jones
Lecturer

Asian Languages & Cultures

Asst Prof Zhu Xinhua
Assistant Professor

Miss Tan Ah Hong
Teaching Fellow

Mdm Lim Seok Lai
Teaching Fellow

Mr Mohd Aidil Subhan B Mohd Sulong
Teaching Fellow

Dr Mohd Mukhlis Bin Abu Bakar
Teaching Fellow

Humanities & Social Studies Education

Miss Chee Min Fui
Lecturer

Dr Michael Shayne Pucci
Teaching Fellow

Visual & Performing Arts

Ms Madonna Therese Stinson
Lecturer

Physical Education & Sports Science

Asst Prof Anthony James Rossi
Assistant Professor

Mr Chow Jia Yi
Teaching Fellow

Science & Technology Education

Mr Tan Soon Kian, Raymond
Teaching Fellow

Mathematics & Mathematics Education

Assoc Prof Eric Frederick Wood
Associate Professor

Assoc Prof Lim Keng Suan
Associate Professor

Asst Prof Ng Wee Leng
Assistant Professor

Natural Sciences

Prof Kiang Bun I, David
Visiting Professor

Dr Denysenko Igor
Research Fellow

Mr Alin Constantin Patran
Temporary Research Associate

Miss Wong Sze Leng
Management Support Officer

Finance

Miss Tan May Joo
Senior Officer

Mdm Ng Siew Hua
Corporate Support Officer

Student & Academic Services

Mdm Tan Leh Hwa
Corporate Support Officer

Computer Services Centre

Miss Chee Poh Poh, Cordelia
Senior Officer [IT]

Library & Information Services Centre

Mdm Yu Bee Lian, Joanna
Senior Officer [Lib]

E-Learning Competency Centre

Miss Lau Sze Sze
Senior Officer [ECC]

Miss Ong Peik Ying
Senior Officer [ECC]

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Ms Lee Phing Phing
(Public & International Relations)

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(Science & Technology Education)

Ms Lynn Chew
(Public & International Relations)

Miss Chiam Ching Leen
(Graduates Programmes & Research)

Mr Aaron Chong
(Public & International Relations)

Ms Chua Kwee Gek
(Mathematics & Mathematics Education)

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Mrs Julie Lim-Tay
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Asst Prof Shawn Lum
(Natural Sciences)

Asst Prof Ng Aik Kwang
(Psychological Studies)

Asst Prof Norhaida Bte Aman
(Asian Languages & Cultures)

Asst Prof Gillian Potter
(Specialised Education)

Dr Michael Pucci
(Humanities & Social Studies Education)

Asst Prof Marissa Wettasinghe
(Instructional Science)

52nd Lindau Meeting of Nobel Prize Winners for Students and Young Researchers

(Contributed by Assoc Prof Diong Cheong Hoong, Head, Natural Sciences)

Asst Prof Yan Yaw Kai (Natural Sciences) was among the 10 Singapore participants selected to attend this year's **Lindau Meeting of Nobel Prize Winners for Students and Young Researchers** held from 1 to 5 July 2002. Since 1951, Nobel laureates in science and medicine have been convening annually in Lindau, Germany, to create an environment for open and informal contact between Nobel laureates and students and young researchers. This year's meeting was dedicated to Chemistry, and attended by 17 laureates and about 500 students and young researchers of international representation. This is the first time that Singapore has been invited to participate in the meeting. The scientific programme of the meeting featured round table debates, small group discussions and lectures by the laureates on topics of current interest, ranging from theoretical chemistry to

atmospheric chemistry to biochemistry.

Reflecting on the meeting, Asst Prof Yan remarked that a common trait of the Nobel laureates was that they all showed much perseverance and courage in their work.

He added, "They question the accepted wisdom and strike out where no one has, not knowing if they could eventually achieve something to answer to their funding agency or employer. In a sense, I feel they are all entrepreneurs of scientific discovery."



The laureates are also keenly aware of the need to educate the masses in scientific knowledge and thinking. An unexpected gain from this meeting is discovering a good website for science education!"

The 4th Warwick International Conference: Sharing Research in Early Childhood

(Contributed by Asst Prof Linda Gan, Specialised Education)

In March 2002, Asst Prof Linda Gan and Asst Prof Christine Clarke (Specialised Education) presented papers at the 4th Warwick International Conference in Warwick University, United Kingdom to discuss recent research and issues related to Early Childhood Education.

Asst Prof Gan's presentation described the content of the language arts programme developed for inclusion in the new preschool curriculum which early childhood lecturers from NIE have been working on, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, Singapore. The paper presented by Asst Prof Clarke was co-written with Assoc Prof Pamela Sharpe (Specialised Education). Based on both Asst Prof Clarke's PhD study and Assoc Prof Sharpe's research, it discussed the personal experiences of children and their parents during the transition from preschool to primary school in Singapore.

The three keynote speakers succeeded in provoking interesting debates among the audience of early childhood

lecturers, educators and ministry officials. Two of the keynote speakers from Africa spoke about preschool provision across their underdeveloped continent and described two extensive research projects that had culminated in improving the overall learning environments of preschool children. Dr Winsome Gordon from UNESCO reported on a study examining the cultural responsiveness of preschool curricula in Africa, Indonesia, Egypt, Ethiopia and Jamaica. Dr Eric Atmore from the Centre for Early Childhood Development, South Africa disseminated findings from a nationwide survey that was conducted with community-based reception programmes at 3,000 preschool centers. He reported on the measures taken to upgrade

physical facilities and accommodate the general learning needs of young children in the centres, including those with HIV, who had previously been excluded from preschool education. The third keynote speaker, Dr Julia Whitburn from the National Institute of Economic and Social Research in England discussed the interesting cultural differences in preparing children for formal schooling in Japan.



Asst Prof Christine Clarke (back row: second from left) and Asst Prof Linda Gan (back row: third from left) with conference participants

National Day Awards 2002

(Contributed by Public & International Relations)

National Day Awards are presented yearly to people who have served the nation and the community. This year, nearly 3,000 grassroots leaders, civil servants and community leaders who have made outstanding contributions to the society are honoured. Our heartiest congratulations to the following staff who have been conferred with these distinguished honours.

Public Administration Medal (Bronze)

Assoc Prof Koh Thiam Seng
Science & Technology Education
(Seconded to the Ministry of Education as Deputy Director, Higher Education)

Efficiency Medal

Mr Chew Chok Hon, William
Senior Technical Executive
Academic Computing & Information Services

Long Service Medal

Mdm Jaiton Binte Ibrahim
Corporate Support Officer
Psychological Studies

Mrs Ong Pang Hui
Senior Officer
Library & Information Services Centre

Mrs Lee Mui Sin
Senior Officer
Library & Information Services Centre

Miss Soo Soo Eng
Trainer
Special Training Programme (Mother Tongue)

Mrs Low Chwee Tee nee Sze
Corporate Support Officer
Mathematics & Mathematics Education

Miss Tan Sok Hoon
Corporate Support Officer
Finance

The Diploma in Departmental Management Graduation Ceremony July 2002

(Contributed by Ms Irene Teo, Public & International Relations)

ABOUT THE DIPLOMA IN DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT

A total of 146 teachers newly trained by NIE as Heads of Department (HODs), received their Diploma in Departmental Management (DDM) certificates at a graduation ceremony on 8 July 2002 at the Institute of Public Administration & Management (IPAM) Auditorium. Ms Seah Jiak Choo, Director of Schools, Ministry of Education (MOE), was the Guest-of-Honour for the ceremony.

The graduands were the pioneer group of the new DDM course. The DDM programme underwent fundamental changes to make it a more effective force for significant change in schools. It sought to prepare HODs to think through complex problems and break new ground for their departments.

"Through the new DDM, we are confident that more HODs than ever before will be in a position to take their departments forward proactively, to improve the quality of the educational experience for students, and to assist their principals in leading their schools to new areas of excellence.

The course, I am sure, marks a significant milestone in your professional growth and journey. You would have received not just valuable information but also priceless inspiration - from your tutors, your course mates and those who shared with you. What started as just names of

course participants have now become a network and these relationships will continue to enrich your lives and sharpen your professional skills and understanding. You would also have been challenged to go beyond imitation to innovation," said Ms Seah in her address.

The DDM is a 17-week training programme for departmental heads and other school leaders in Singapore schools. It is managed by the Graduate Programmes and Research Office, NIE. In consultation with MOE, this innovative programme is designed by NIE's team of experts and professionals.

AWARD WINNERS

Dr Ruth Wong Medal

The best overall performance in DDM was awarded to **Mdm Joey Lim Wen Chye**, Head of Department for Physical Education and Aesthetics, Concord Primary School.

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Book Prize

Mr Neville John Ellis, Head of Aesthetics Department in Nanyang Girls' High School received this award for having exemplified the highest level of learning across DDM.

This year, the two prize winners are special as they had shared a teacher-

student relationship. Mdm Lim was a student of Mr Ellis' Arts Elective Programme at Nanyang Girls' High School from 1986 to 1989.

What are the important attributes of a good leader?

"The core attributes are passion for the job, strong moral values especially integrity, ability to manage change, positive attitude, proactive thinking and a strong desire to learn," expressed Mdm Lim.

"He/She must be able to develop a vision, inspire others, generate support, encourage team learning and team work, build consensus, grow and develop people, be a critical and analytical thinker and be able to question assumptions and understand the core business of education," added Mr Ellis.



Award winners: Mr Neville John Ellis (left) and Mdm Joey Lim

Overseas Conferences – Avenues for Promoting Continual Learning

(Contributed by Ms Chua Kwee Gek and Ms Dawn Ng, Mathematics & Mathematics Education)



Ms Lee Yim Ping



Asst Prof Teong Su Kwang



Asst Prof Yeap Ban Har

Three Mathematics & Mathematics Education (MME) lecturers, Ms Lee Yim Ping, Asst Prof Teong Su Kwang and Asst Prof Yeap Ban Har have travelled beyond the shores of Singapore to present papers as well as attend workshops and conferences on Mathematics Education.

Ms Lee presented a paper on *Tapping the Natural Processes of Learning to Educate for the Future* in England for the 10th International Conference on

Thinking from 15 to 19 June 2002. Her paper described how the natural processes of perceiving and processing of information interact when learning takes place in the context of Singapore schools.

Asst Prof Teong attended a workshop and conference in the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in Mathematics teaching and enrichment in the United Kingdom from 8 to 13 July

2002. The Mathematics workshop entitled *1st Residential Technology for Secondary/College* was held in Oundle School, Peterborough, United Kingdom whereas the 3rd International Conference with Mathematics Enrichment with ICT was held in the University of Cambridge.

In Kyoto, Japan, Asst Prof Yeap presented a paper on *Mathematical Problem Solving in Elementary School in Singapore* at the 3rd International Conference on Mathematics Education and Cultural History of Mathematics in the Information-Oriented Society from 23 to 27 July 2002. The research aimed to provide some insights into the culture of Mathematics teaching and learning in elementary schools in Singapore.

The spin-offs from the trio's attendance will be their sharing sessions with MME colleagues at the on-going in-house Mathematics seminars.

Asst Prof Velmurugan on Listening Skills in Teaching

(Contributed by Asst Prof Ramiah s/o Kalimuthu, Asian Languages & Cultures)

International Society for Tamil Cultural Studies, Madurai Kamaraj University organised the 13th Annual Conference - Seminar at Peelamedu Samanaidu Govindasamy College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore, India on 25 and 26 May 2002. Prof P K Ponnusamy, Vice Chancellor, Madurai Kamaraj University delivered the inaugural address. The objectives of this conference were to highlight the teaching and learning methods as well as the modern trends in Tamil literature, grammar and linguistics.

Asst Prof Rakkappan Velmurugan (Asian Languages & Cultures) presented a research paper entitled *The Role of Listening Skills in Language Learning and Teaching in the Classroom Situations* at the conference. He emphasised the need for listening

skills in teaching strategies and its advantages. He also explained the three levels of listening ie hearing, listening and audibility, focusing on how to improve listening skills and suggested various classroom teaching methods. Asst Prof Velmurugan also officiated as a chairperson in one of the sessions.

The conference was attended

by 100 reputed scholars from different universities all over India and abroad. They presented research papers, which had been compiled and published in two volumes.



Asst Prof Rakkappan Velmurugan

The NIE Teachers' Investiture Ceremony June 2002

(Contributed by Public & International Relations)

ABOUT THE CEREMONY



Graduands reciting the Teachers' Pledge

A total of 2,068 newly qualified teachers received their NIE diplomas at the Teachers' Investiture Ceremony held at the Singapore Indoor Stadium on 28 June 2002. This was the largest group of graduands in a single ceremony. It was an occasion to welcome them into the teaching profession. The Guest-of-Honour for the ceremony was Rear-Admiral (NS) Teo Chee Hean, Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence.

In the first session, 904 teachers received their Diploma in Education certificates. Rear-Admiral (NS) Teo presented the National Youth Council's (NYC) Outstanding Youth in Education Award (OYEA) 2002.

The second session saw 1,164 teachers receiving their Postgraduate Diploma in Education, Diploma in Art Education, Diploma in Home Economics Education, Diploma in Physical Education and other diplomas.

The graduands present at the ceremony also recited the Teachers' Pledge, just before the close of the ceremony.

THE AWARD WINNERS



Ms Betsy Toh

Miss Betsy Toh Pei Sze, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) with Diploma in Education received the following awards:

- **Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal** - Awarded for best performance in general proficiency throughout the course of study and for attaining First Class Honours; and

- **The Art Gold Medal** - Awarded for best performance in Art.

"I feel very happy and honoured winning the awards. I think there are many other deserving candidates among my friends and fellow graduands too. I would like to thank my family for their love and support and especially my Art lecturers for their valuable guidance and patience. The wonderful teachers who have taught me played an important role in making me who I am today. I will now endeavour to play my part in touching my students' lives by sharing my knowledge and experience with them," said Miss Toh.



Ms Tan Li Ching

Miss Tan Li Ching, Bachelor of Science (Honours) with Diploma in Education attained the following prizes:

- **Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal** - Awarded for best performance in general proficiency throughout the course of study and for attaining First Class Honours;

- **Agency for Science & Technology Research Gold Medal** - Awarded for best performance in research and academic work; and

- **The IPS Gold Medal** - Awarded for best performance in Physics.

"I feel very glad and privileged to win the prizes. Credit must go to God and my family for their support and encouragement, as well as my lecturers and friends who have helped me greatly during my five years in NIE. I will inspire the love of Physics to my



Rear-Admiral (NS) Teo Chee Hean in conversation with the award winners

students just as one of my teachers who had made Physics so simple and interesting that it became one of the reasons for me wanting to teach. I look forward to quality interaction with my students and hopefully, make a difference in their lives," expressed Miss Tan.

ABOUT OYEA



OYEA winners: Mr Kenneth Kwok (left) and Mr Rhordan Wickramasinghe

Introduced in 1999, OYEA is administrated by NYC with support from the Teachers' Network of the Ministry of Education. Besides honouring the achievements of deserving young educators, OYEA serves to inspire youths to take up a teaching career and be an excellent role model for the younger generation.

The objectives of the Award are as follows:

- To give national recognition to the role young teachers play in moulding the future of our nation; and

- To recognise outstanding young teachers for their youthful idealism, enthusiasm, energy and active involvement in the development of youth beyond the formal education curriculum.

This year, the OYEA winners are:

- Mr Kenneth Kwok Siew Loong, English Language and Literature teacher at Anderson Secondary School; and

- Mr Rhordan Wickramasinghe, English Language and Literature teacher at Loyang Secondary School.

NTU Receives S\$2.7 Million for E W Barker Professorship & Scholarship in Physical Education & Sports Science

(Contributed by Ms Tan Pik Lian, Alumni & Endowment Office, NTU)



The Barker Challenge

President S R Nathan, Chancellor of NTU and Patron-in-Chief of the NTU 21st Century Fund received the benefaction on 27 August 2002 at a dinner held at the Shangri-La Hotel.

Rear-Admiral (NS) Teo and Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, Acting Minister for Community Development & Sports also attended the dinner.

In conjunction with the fund-raising effort, the Physical Education & Sports Science (PESS) Academic Group at NIE organised the Barker Challenge 2002 on 24 August 2002. Thirty-six teams of five runners each took part in the 25 km relay around NIE campus.

The E W Barker Professorship aims to attract world-class researchers and other renowned scholars to promote collaborative research in Physical Education and Sports Science among NIE, NTU, SSC, SNOC and other universities across the globe. This will meet the emerging needs of sporting Singapore. The Professorship will help to create new, shared visions that can encompass sports for life and sports excellence.

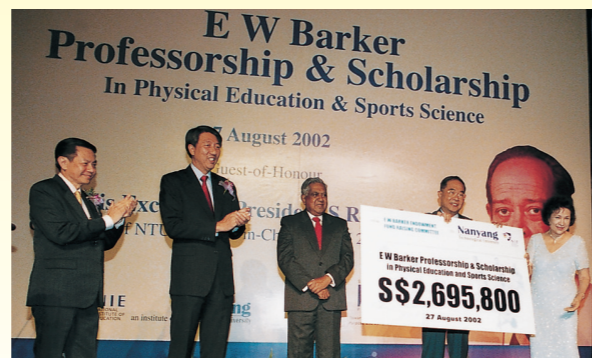
The NTU 21st Century Fund received S\$2.7 million in contributions for the establishment of the E W Barker Professorship and Scholarship in Physical Education and Sports Science at NIE, NTU.

The Professorship and Scholarship are named in honour of Mr E W Barker for his contributions as statesman, scholar, sportsman and supporter of sports. The former Minister for Law passed away on 12 April 2001.

Initiated by NIE under the chairmanship of Dr Tan Eng Liang, the Fund Raising Committee commenced its fund raising effort in February 2002. Dr Tan is a Vice President of the Singapore National Olympic Council (SNOC) and was the former Chairman of the Singapore Sports Council (SSC). Rear-Admiral (NS) Teo Chee Hean, Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence as well as President of the SNOC, is the advisor to this Committee.

The Scholarship aims to support and nurture talented individuals pursuing undergraduate or graduate programmes at PESS, NIE. The new sports information derived from physiological, biomechanical, pedagogical, psychological, and sociological research in NIE, will act as an important infusion of "life-blood" into the culture of sport in Singapore.

NIE, NTU would like to thank Singapore Pools Pte Ltd (Founding Sponsor for S\$1 million), Singapore Totalisator Board, Lee Foundation, companies, political leaders, former ministers and Members of Parliament, legal and sports fraternities, as well as individuals who have contributed to this Professorship and Scholarship.



Cheque presentation at the dinner: (from left) Prof Leo Tan (Director, NIE), Rear-Admiral (NS) Teo Chee Hean, President S R Nathan, Dr Cham Tao Soon (President, NTU) and Mrs Gloria Barker

To The Finishing Line

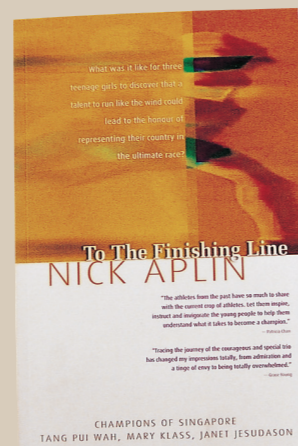
(Contributed by Public & International Relations)

Written by Dr Nick Aplin, *To The Finishing Line* is a stirring account of the personal drive and determination of Tang Pui Wah, Mary Klass and Janet Jesudason – three young athletes who became the first female Olympians from Singapore. In a predominantly migrant society, where issues of survival, peace and security were prescribed by men, these three athletes stood up to the ultimate test of sport competition and took their rightful place as heroines and role models.

Today's aspiring athletes, male and female, will draw inspiration from Dr

Aplin's well researched book on the very first women Olympians to cross the finishing line. *To The Finishing Line* was launched on 24 August 2002 at Borders Bookstore. It is now available at all leading bookstores at S\$24 per copy.

Dr Aplin is Head of Olympic Studies at the Singapore Olympic Academy, Chairman of the Research & Education Sub-Committee of the Women and Sport Working Group, and Assistant Professor of Physical Education & Sports Science, NIE.



Asia Pacific Conference on Education

(Contributed by Assoc Prof Esther Tan, Head, Psychological Studies)

Come 2 June 2003, more than 1,000 educators and researchers will gather for three days in NIE campus to exchange ideas and share expertise on diverse and innovative ways of enhancing educational practices in Singapore. The platform for their discussions will be the **Asia Pacific Conference on Education** hosted by NIE. With *Re-envisioning Education: Innovation and Diversity* as its theme, this conference will have a comprehensive and far-reaching programme covering many important strands of Education:

- Multiple Intelligences, Creativity and Thinking;
- Gifted/Talented Education;
- Classroom Innovation;
- Special Needs Education;
- Early Childhood Education;

- IT and e-Learning;
- Innovative Leadership;
- Affective Education;
- Arts Education;
- Science and Mathematics Education; and
- Teacher Education.

To date, the organising committee has assembled for the conference some of the finest scholars and researchers in the field. **Prof Howard Gardner from Harvard University**, world-renowned for his theory of Multiple Intelligences, will deliver two keynote addresses. **Prof Charles Reigeluth from Indiana University**, an expert in the field of Instructional Systems and Design, will speak on IT and e-Learning. **Prof James Borland from Columbia University** will present current trends in Gifted

Education. **Prof Christine Pascal from the United Kingdom** will address issues in Early Childhood Education. **Prof James Kauffman from the University of Virginia** will speak on Special Education. **Prof Kenneth Leithwood from the University of Toronto** will discuss issues on Educational Leadership.

This conference will certainly be a great learning opportunity. Registration fee is S\$500 for the three-day conference. Group and early bird registration is at S\$450. Those interested in presenting a paper or attending the conference can either check out the website at <http://eduweb.nie.edu.sg/apace/> or e-mail the Conference Secretariat at think@nie.edu.sg.

International Conference on Problem-Based Learning in Higher Education

(Contributed by Assoc Prof Tan Oon Seng, Psychological Studies)

The *PBL2002: A Pathway to Better Learning* conference held from 16 to 20 June 2002 at Baltimore, Maryland, USA brought together experienced Problem-based Learning (PBL) educators, researchers and practitioners to share their insights with one another. The multi-disciplinary conference also provided opportunities for academics interested in using the PBL method to network and get support through various interest groups. Sponsored by the University of Delaware, the Institute for Transforming Undergraduate Education, the Unidel Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts, the conference

attracted over 500 delegates from USA and internationally.

Assoc Prof Tan Oon Seng (Psychological Studies) gave the invited keynote address on *Cognitive Processes in PBL: Insights for PBL Facilitators*. Assoc Prof Tan shared from his experience, research and studies on the power of using problems to engage cognition and meta-cognition, and why effective PBL calls for an understanding of cognitive processes. He also argued that PBL practices should be informed by cognitive psychology. Highlights of the conference included a panel discussion moderated by Prof Mark Huddleston,

Dean of the College of Arts and Science, University of Delaware. The panelists included Dr John Cavanaugh, Provost and Chief Academic Officer, University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Dr John W Harris, Associate Provost, Samford University, Assoc Prof Tan Oon Seng and Dr Ann Ferren, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Radford University. The panel deliberated on the macro issues of PBL including the need to revamp assessment, student feedback systems as well as optimising PBL with technology.

The Pacific Circle Consortium 26th Annual Conference

(Contributed by Asst Prof Gillian Potter, Specialised Education)

The theme of the conference was *Diversity and Unity in Schooling for Future Citizens in the Pacific-Asian Region*. Held at the Academy House, Seoul, South Korea, from 1 to 3 May 2002, the sub-themes included *Educational Reform, Early Childhood Education, Citizen Education, Curriculum Innovation, Evaluation and Assessment* among others. The conference was attended by participants who represented 16 different countries from Mongolia to Mexico.

Asst Prof Gillian Potter (Specialised Education) presented a paper titled *Responding to the Literacy Skills of Preschool Children from Diverse Backgrounds: Implications for Curriculum Planning*. The paper focused on the investigations of a group of Singaporean kindergarten teachers into the discursive home literacy practices of about 200 families. The aim was to understand the home literacy of the children who attended kindergartens with a view to modifying the literacy curriculum. The paper reported on how the teachers collected their data, analysed their findings and explored the implications for early childhood literacy curriculum and pedagogy. The presentation emanated from a collaborative research project funded by NIE Academic Research Fund Grant.

The annual Pacific Circle Consortium has a specific Asia-Pacific focus to work together on themes of intercultural understanding, educational innovation and educational research. The next conference on *Schooling for the Future: Educating Citizens of the Asia-Pacific Region in an Era of Globalisation* will be in Minneapolis, USA from 16 to 18 April 2003.

Racial Harmony Day

(Contributed by Asst Prof Norhaida Aman, Asian Languages & Cultures)



Performers in traditional costumes

representative of the three main ethnic groups, highlighted the need for racial understanding and tolerance. Judging by the laughter elicited from the audience, the skit was certainly a success. Guests were then served a variety of traditional food ranging from *mee siam* to *soon kueh* to chicken curry with *putu mayam*.

food, and looking at the traditional costumes of the different ethnic groups.

The spirit of racial harmony was evident as staff and trainee teachers, regardless of race, language and religion, worked together in organising the event and mingled with each other without any reservations and donned the traditional costumes of other ethnic groups. Not everyday does one see an Indian lady in *baju kurung* nor does one see a Chinese or Malay lady in *sari*.

Racial Harmony Day was celebrated on 19 July 2002 at NIE. The Asian Languages & Cultures (ALC) Academic Group, the Trainee Teachers Club (TTC), supported by the National Education (NE) Committee of NIE, marked the day by organising a series of activities, with Prof Leo Tan (Director, NIE) gracing the event as the Guest-of-Honour.

A multicultural concert was put up by staff and trainee teachers from ALC. A short skit, interspersed with dances

Trainee teachers from the TTC also put up a cultural exhibition at the Library Arcade. All present were led on a culture-trail where they had the opportunity to participate in quizzes and get hands-on information by trying out the different traditional games, sampling traditional



Prof Leo Tan (third from left) interacting with trainee teachers

Visit by Ms Ho Ching and Mr Philip Yeo

(Contributed by Public & International Relations)

Teachers are the heart of our educational system and instrumental in moulding the future of our nation. Whether our young have the skills, drive and enthusiasm to take Singapore to greater heights are critically dependent on our teachers. NIE, being the national teacher training institute in Singapore, plays an important role in developing and equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills and values.

It is for this reason that Ms Ho Ching, Executive Director, Temasek Holdings Pte Ltd and Mr Philip Yeo, Chairman, Agency for Science, Technology & Research visited NIE on 8 August 2002 to better understand how NIE conducts its teacher training programmes and educational research, especially in the areas of Life, Biological and Physical Sciences.

NIE has a comprehensive framework and programmes for all levels of teacher training, ranging from preservice training to professional development.

Our teacher education is well embodied in the philosophy as expounded by Plutarch, a Greek philosopher, that *the mind is not an empty vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled*.

Based on this philosophy, NIE has adopted the following approaches in its training processes:

- *Inquiry-based pedagogy* - trainee teachers are asked higher order questions to encourage them to discover and rationalise; and
- *Experiential learning* - strong emphasis is placed on learning by experiencing and this aims to inspire

trainee teachers to be creative through hands-on involvement.

Ms Ho and Mr Yeo toured the science laboratories and joined in the science training sessions, whereby trainee teachers participated actively in the learning process. They also visited several research laboratories and were briefed on the research works conducted at NIE.

The visit concluded with a tea reception hosted by Prof Leo Tan (Director, NIE). Both Ms Ho and Mr Yeo were very impressed with NIE's excellence in the teacher education programmes and its state-of-the-art facilities.



Assoc Prof Lee Sing Kong briefing Mr Philip Yeo (left) and Ms Ho Ching (right) at the Greenhouse

Educational Visits

(Contributed by Ms Zuraidah bte Saidin, Diploma in Education (Malay) 2000-2002)

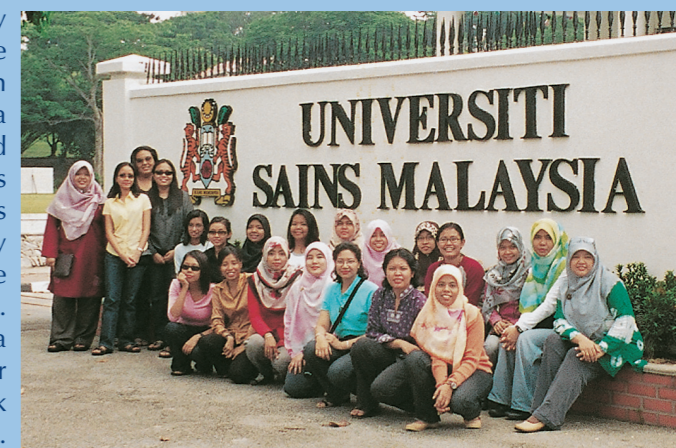
From 10 to 12 June 2002, 22 final-year Diploma in Education (Malay) trainee teachers, accompanied by two lecturers, Mdm Saeda Buang and Mr Tajul Arif from Asian Languages & Cultures (ALC) Academic Group, went on educational visits to Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) in Perak and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in Penang. Organised by ALC (Malay), the objective of the visits was to establish a working relationship between the universities and the Academic Group.

Upon arrival after an eight-hour journey, our group was whisked away to UPSI. We were given a tour of the campus that interspersed new and old structures. This was followed by the Cultural Night performance.

It was a memorable night. We were treated to a sumptuous dinner and a myriad of cultural performances put up by the trainee teachers from UPSI and Harun Aminurrashid College.

The next morning, we continued our journey to USM. In the Desasiswa Indah Kembara Hall, a group of staff and students from USM's Student Affairs Department warmly received us. We toured the campus. The day ended with a cultural-cum-dinner event at the Telok Bahang Tourist Centre.

On our way home, a sad realisation seeped in, reminding us that the journey home marked the end of our phase as trainee teachers. Soon, we would be shouldering the responsibilities of full-fledged teachers.



Keynote Address at Science Teachers Association of Singapore

(Contributed by Assoc Prof Boo Hong Kwen, Science & Technology Education)



Assoc Prof Boo Hong Kwen (centre) demonstrating why an examination question is weak with concrete examples

On 9 March 2002, Assoc Prof Boo Hong Kwen (Science & Technology Education) was invited to give the keynote address entitled *Thinking Schools, Learning Nation: Its Implications on Crafting and Marking of Primary and Secondary Science Examination Questions* at the annual meeting of the Science Teachers Association of Singapore.

In her address, Assoc Prof Boo referred to the year 1997 when Prime Minister

Goh Chok Tong launched the *Thinking Schools, Learning Nation* initiative. Since then, teachers have risen nobly and successfully to the challenge. Pupils are being taught to be more divergent, innovative, creative and deeper in thinking. However, a pertinent question was raised: "Whether our school examinations are keeping in step with this change?"

She also referred to The Straits Times article on 15 February 2002 which was

headlined *New Team to Take Singapore Beyond 5 Cs*. The article highlighted the formation of the Remaking Singapore Committee comprising a sub-committee led by Mr Cedric Foo, Minister of State (Defence) which among other things, was given the task of "How to stimulate creativity, risk-taking and tolerance of failure."

Assoc Prof Boo commented that as a nation we were striving towards the stimulation of creativity and a spirit of entrepreneurship among our people. Much good work has been done in the area of training our pupils to think more broadly and more creatively. However, more needs to be done. We need to ensure that our school assessment is in line with this development. For example, with respect to school science assessment, our methods of crafting and marking of test items have not changed to suit the new patterns of thinking that we are inculcating in our students. Specific ways of addressing the problem was suggested in her address.