



Towards an Institute of **Distinction**

NIE
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news

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Honorary Doctorate for Prof Leo Tan

By Public & International Relations

Prof Leo Tan (Director, NIE) was awarded honorary Doctor of Science by Loughborough University on 31 August 2003 for his distinguished contributions to Education and Science.

Described by the University's Vice Chancellor Prof David Wallace as one who "played a pivotal role in supporting the educational system in Singapore", Prof Tan excelled as an educator, researcher and administrator. His abilities are equally acclaimed abroad by his participation on various international committees.

As an educator, Prof Tan held various teaching positions with the University of Singapore from 1973 to 1986 and now with NIE, NTU. As a researcher, his recent publications in the prestigious journal *Nature and Science* attest to his long interest in Science and Science education. As an administrator, he was the Singapore Science Centre's Director prior to his current appointment as NIE Director in 1994.



Mdm Long Miaw Ying, Recipient of the President's Award for Teachers 2003

By Public & International Relations

One of the three President's Award for Teachers winners for this year was a graduand from the pioneer batch of NIE degree programmes in 1995. Mdm Long Miaw Ying, 31, is currently Level Head for English in Jurong West Primary School and holds a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics and a Bachelor of Science with Diploma in Education from NTU. She is pursuing an Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Life Sciences in NIE.

The annual award is the nation's highest accolade for the teaching fraternity and recognises the teaching profession's commitment to the total development of students and its contribution to nation building. The award honours recipients as exemplars who have demonstrated the passion, courage and perseverance to inspire and nurture the nation's young.

Mdm Long spares no effort in expanding her students' horizon and creates many opportunities for them to learn and excel. In 2002, she guided a class of Primary Two students to produce their own collection of story booklets. She has also encouraged the Primary Six students to produce their own revision aids for the Primary School Leaving Examinations. Recently, in the Primary Science Fair 2003, her students presented two projects on investigating the effects of mechanical stress and chemicals on plants using tissue culture techniques. The latter opportunity was made possible with guidance from Asst Prof Jean Yong (Natural Sciences), consultant to Jurong West Primary School's Science Cluster Project on cultivation of ferns and native orchids using tissue culture.



(from left) NIE Director Prof Leo Tan, Mdm Long and her husband, Mr Liang Wern Kang

Mdm Long feels that good moral and family values are essential to the development and character-building of the young. She uses her own 'grandmother stories' to teach the importance of these values and instil in her students the passion for continual learning. Mdm Long, a firm believer in lifelong learning, shares that, "Teachers have to do our homework, too. Learn as we teach so that we can be more credible teachers who understand the difficulties of processing new information and skills."

Mdm Long also believes in contributing to the growth of other teachers by sharing her strategies and guiding new colleagues. In 1998, she was seconded to NIE as a Teaching Fellow to assist in teacher training programmes in the area of English pedagogy.

By Public & International
Relations

Formation NSMen of the Year Award 2003



Our heartiest congratulations to Mr Peter Kwang (Deputy Divisional Director, Human Resource & Finance) who was conferred the Formation NSMen of the Year Award in July 2003. He holds the rank of Major, serving in the First People's Defence Force (PDF).

This special award is presented to officers who have performed extremely well in their National Service duties.

NIE News: This is a special award given to a selected few. What were your thoughts when you first heard news of the award?

Well, to be honest, I was pleasantly surprised. It is because I think it is in all of us to contribute to some community efforts, such as charity work or nature conservation, and in this instance for me, national defence beyond the normal 13 year cycle for NSMen. And we do it for the strong personal reasons that we each feel about them, and certainly not for the reason of receiving an award.

I also thought then that receiving this award from First PDF was made possible because of the teamwork and support from my fellow NSMen, and, of course, colleagues at work who have to take over some of my responsibilities. This may sound cliché-ish, but it is sincere.

And I did think also that, "Aha, this should confirm to some of my doubtful colleagues, if any, that I am not having a nice break in the camp whenever I am called up for training!"

NIE News: What do you look forward to during your in-camp training?

The welcome change in the physical environment, believe it or not! The exercises are challenging but I shall not say any more about them.

I also look forward to meeting up with and listening to the views of other fellow NSMen who come from the public and private sectors, and also their own setups. Some of the views of what their organisations are going through are useful to consider or to avoid for NIE.

I should add that after the in-camp, I feel invigorated and look forward to coming back to work in NIE. And, yes, to return to the delightful company of female colleagues!

NIE News: In your opinion, how has National Service evolved since you left active service?

I will just mention a few. There is now more emphasis on training and less on aspects such as area cleaning, well-polished boots, starched uniforms and parade drills. In the earlier days, we used to pray that we would not be caught with a single strand of 'crew-cut' hair out of place, so to speak.

Another difference is that the current recruits are of higher educational level compared to the earlier days. As a result, there is use of better technology in their present training. But I must say that the 'Hokkien' platoons of yesteryears were an interesting sub-culture and had colourful characters, literally, with their intricate tattoos.

Oh yes, an important matter to all Singaporeans, the quality and nutritional value of camp meals have definitely improved, and there is sufficient time to finish a meal! In the earlier days, our stomachs had to adjust to various 'surprises'. Of course, they are now probably stronger because of that!

National Day Awards 2003

National Day Awards are presented yearly to people who have served the nation and the community. This year, a total of 3,166 grassroots leaders, civil servants and community leaders who made outstanding contributions to the society are honoured.

The following NIE staff have been conferred these distinguished awards:

Public Administration Medal (Silver)

Mr Sim Cheng Tee
Divisional Director, Corporate Planning & Development

Public Administration Medal (Bronze)

Assoc Prof Cheah Horn Mun
Dean, Foundation Programmes

Commendation Medal

Mrs Jacklyn Ko
Head, Human Resource

Long Service Medal

Mrs Chan-Chua Lee Kiang
Senior Technical Executive, Science & Technology Education

National Innovation & Quality Circles (IQC) Carnival 2003

By Public & International Relations

The National IQC Carnival, organised by SPRING Singapore, has been an effective platform for Work Improvement Teams to showcase their projects and share their problem solving experiences. More than 900 teams from various industries presented their projects from 18 to 27 August 2003. NIE, represented by PAGES, Positive, Innovative & Receptive and Nutshell, achieved Silver Awards for their respective projects.

PAGES (Library & Information Services Centre) Project: Reducing Time Spent in Generating Book Spine Labels



(from left) Ms Selina Chan, Ms Lucy Ng, Ms Chung Siew Cheng, Ms Pauline Ang (Leader), Mr Desmond Leong, Ms Clarice Thu & Ms Eunice Lee (Absent) Ms Siti Fauziah Bte Mohd Sani (Facilitator), Mr Shawn Lee & Ms Rehana Banu

The key problems faced by the team in generating wide book spine labels were frequent breakdowns of the dot-matrix printer. Manual typing for long book spine labels was also a time consuming process. By using IT to provide a more economical and efficient way of generating these labels, the team was able to improve the quality of its services as well as foster a better relationship between staff and users.

Positive, Innovative & Receptive (Public & International Relations) Project: Streamlining the Invitational Process



(from left, seated) Mr Aaron Chong (Facilitator), Ms Lynn Chew & Ms Loi Su Min (Leader) (from left, standing) Ms Sarasvathi Suppiah, Ms Chan Bee Ai, Ms Irene Teo & Ms Kelly Lim

The project undertaken by this team attempted to shorten the time needed to complete the invitation process in the areas of guest list compilation, printing of invitation card inserts and address labels. The improved modus operandi eliminated messy and repetitive aspects of the workflow, using readily available word processing and spreadsheet software, while maintaining quality output.

Nutshell (Special Training Programme) Project: To Reduce Time Taken to Locate Staff



(from left) Ms Cecilia Chew, Mdm Lian Ai Hong, Mr Ricky Er, Ms Choo Hwee Khim, Mr Mohd Pitchay Gani Bin Mohd Abdul Aziz (Facilitator) & Mdm Michelle Quek (Leader)

Arising from a belief that efficiency meant prompt access to staff and trainee teachers without compromising on service quality, the team explored avenues to reduce the excessive time spent on locating colleagues not stationed in the same office. Capitalising on a communication software called MSN Messenger, the time saved translated to increased productivity by staff and a higher level of responsiveness in meeting the needs of customers.

The President Shield

NIE emerged for the second time winner of the NTU Staff Inter-School Games 2002/2003 for its outstanding performance in basketball, carom, netball, soccer and volleyball. Assoc Prof Quek Jin Jong (Dean, Academic) received the President Shield from NTU's Deputy President Prof Lim Mong King on 27 September 2003 at the Nanyang Auditorium, NTU. The Staff Inter-School Games was initiated by the University's former president Dr Cham Tao Soon in 1985 with the objectives of promoting a healthy lifestyle and fostering camaraderie amongst staff.

3rd Triangle Challenge

NIE Team One, captained by Mrs Jacklyn Ko (Head, Human Resource), emerged winners of the Third Triangle Challenge Staff Relay Run in a new record time of 16 minutes 45 seconds.

Eleven other teams from NTU and NIE participated in the event on 14 August 2003. Each relay team covered a distance of five kilometres.



(from left) Asst Prof Tay Eng Guan, Assoc Prof Goh Chor Boon, Mr Muhd Irfan Bin Noor Rahman, Mrs Jacklyn Ko, Asst Prof Clara Tan, Mr Chow Jia Yi, Asst Prof G Balasekaran and Asst Prof Lim Cher Ping

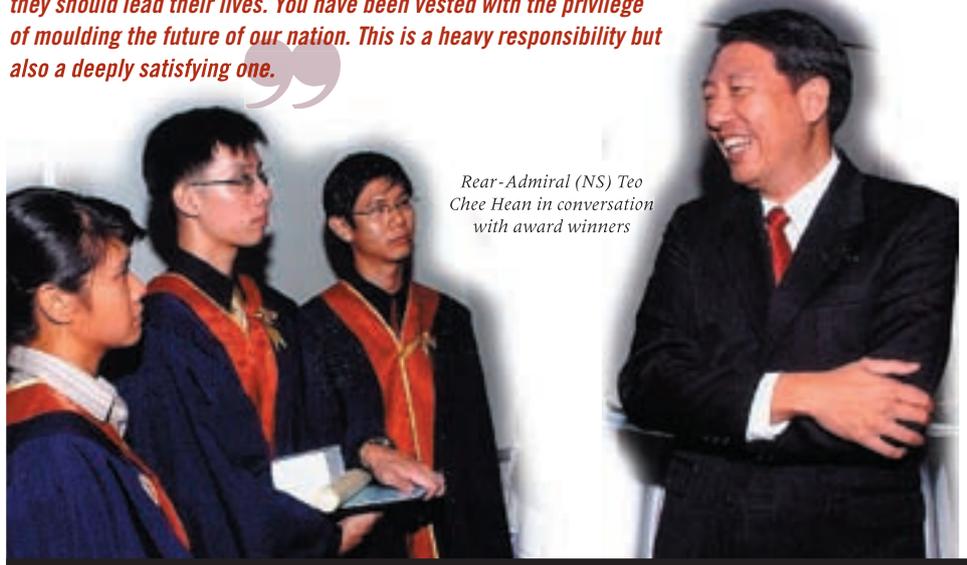
By Public & International Relations

NIE Teachers' Investiture Ceremony July 2003

A total of 2,392 newly qualified teachers received their NIE diplomas at the Teachers' Investiture Ceremony held at the Singapore Indoor Stadium on 8 and 9 July 2003. 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, then Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence.

At the ceremony, Postgraduate Diploma in Education as well as other diploma certificates were presented.

As teachers, you will hold a unique position in the lives of the many young pupils who will come under your care. Your pupils will look to you not just for guidance in their studies but as role models on how they should lead their lives. You have been vested with the privilege of moulding the future of our nation. This is a heavy responsibility but also a deeply satisfying one.



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

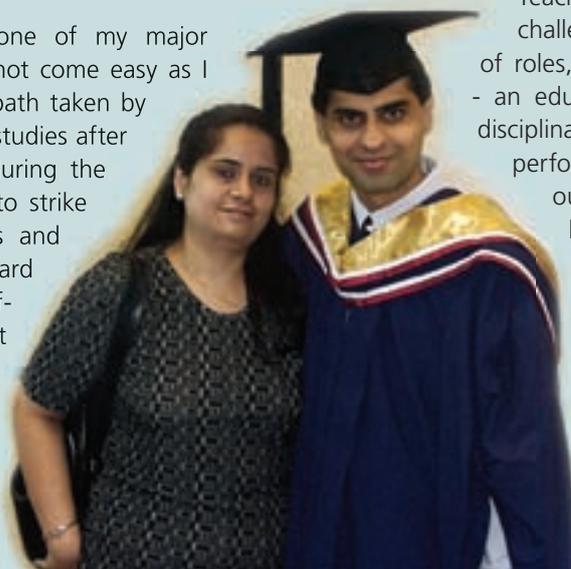
Let us hear from the award winners

Mr Mirpuri Chandru Gobindram, 34 years old, of the Bachelor of Science (Honours) programme was presented with the Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal for attaining best performance and First Class Honours in the programme. The Institute of Physics Singapore Gold Medal was also awarded to him for the best performance in Physics. He is currently teaching Additional and Elementary Mathematics at Raffles Institution.

"Winning the awards is one of my major achievements. Success did not come easy as I did not follow the normal path taken by most people. I pursued my studies after a break of 10 years and during the course of my study, I had to strike a balance between studies and family life. It was through hard work, perseverance, self-motivation and the support from my lecturers and wife that led me to believe that I was capable of doing my best and which brought out the best in me. Winning the Sng Yew Chong award last year gave me the confidence

and spurred me to strive for further success in winning these two awards," shared Mr Chandru.

Inspired by his secondary school and junior college teachers, Mr Chandru chose the teaching profession, "I can make a difference to the life of students and impart knowledge to them."



Mr & Mrs Mirpuri Chandru Gobindram

Teaching is indeed a demanding and challenging job, "Be prepared to play a variety of roles, both inside and outside the classroom - an educator, motivator, counsellor, guide and disciplinarian in the classroom; plan lessons, perform administrative tasks and mark papers outside the classroom. Besides, you will have to work closely with fellow teachers, superiors and parents. You will need to continually upgrade yourself in this fast changing world to keep abreast of new technologies and advances in education.

Teaching is also one of the most rewarding careers, especially when you have made a difference in the lives of children," enthused Mr Chandru.

Continued on page 6



Mr Benny Lee, 26 years old, of the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) programme received the Rotary International 75th Anniversary Gold Medal for achieving excellence in the NIE examinations as well as outstanding leadership and dedication to

student activities in the Institute. He was also awarded the Singapore Teachers' Union Book Prize for the best performance in the programme.

"It was a pleasant surprise as I was merely trying to do my best in learning how to be an effective teacher throughout the course. My priority for the course was to develop myself into a competent teacher so that my future students will benefit. I believe my performance in the course is the result of the correct attitude towards learning.

I would like to share the honour with NIE lecturers and tutors who have provided the guidance, teachers and staff

at my practicum school for their help and my family for their support," Mr Lee said elatedly.

Mr Lee shares his passion in teaching, "Teaching is a noble profession and I wish to play an active role in moulding the future of our nation. The young of today will be the leaders of tomorrow."

Currently a Physics teacher in Raffles Junior College, Mr Lee was a Public Service Commission and Overseas Merit Scholar. He holds a Master of Science (Distinction) in Applied Optics and Bachelor of Science (First Class Honours) in Physics. An avid volunteer during his undergraduate days when he tutored in a London community school, he has been a Tutor-cum-Befriender volunteer under the 'SEEDs Programme' in Mendaki Singapore since October 2002. The programme allows him to give personal coaching and mentoring to less privileged children.

To all aspiring teachers, "Be student-focused. Be realistic. Be passionate. Reflect frequently on why you chose teaching as a career. Only when we know the reason of our work, will we see the purpose of what we are doing," added Mr Lee.

Mr Randell Siow, 29 years old, of the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Physical Education) programme was awarded the Rotary International 75th Anniversary Gold Medal.

"Well, it was definitely a great feeling. Receiving the award on stage during the Teachers' Investiture Ceremony was a high point of my two year stint in NIE. Not so much of the award per se, but because of the cheering and support from all my peers, especially those in Physical Education. They are friends whom I have played and worked with, laughed and argued together. In the end, we have always stood strong together in the belief that we all wanted to be good teachers. The sensation of being cheered on by peers means very much to me. I credit my accomplishments to my family, friends and teachers. Without them, I do not think I will achieve that much," expressed Mr Siow jovially.

Mr Siow had never thought of being a teacher in his younger days. His former schoolmates and teachers in secondary school and junior college remembered him as a rebel. Said Mr Siow, "Maybe it is more accurate to say that teaching chose me. Growing up, I somehow felt as if I could never really fit in teaching. My varied interests in music, pop culture, martial arts and theatre works seemed to place me in a peculiar state of existence with my Eastern heritage competing with the progressive cultural influence of the West.

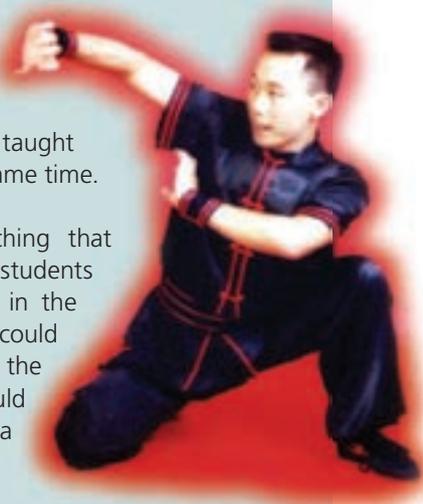
In between my postgraduate studies, I did relief teaching. And I found great satisfaction in teaching even when faced with horrendous students, problematic colleagues and ridiculous workloads. Teaching also allowed me to pursue

my love for wushu and theatre. I engaged my students in physical activities and guided them in their performances. I taught and learned new skills at the same time.

So in the end, it was teaching that called out to me. I taught my students and ended up learning more in the process. Even at its worst, I could still find hope and anticipate the new day ahead. What more could anyone ask for in choosing a vocation?"

Mr Siow is a Physical Education and Literature teacher at Victoria School. He holds a Master and Bachelor of Arts and Social Sciences (Theatre Studies) from the National University of Singapore. A martial arts lover, Mr Siow started learning wushu in 1994. By 1996, he won his first gold and silver medals at the Singapore National Wushu Championships. He is indeed a man of many talents - actor, producer in theatre, musician, qualified health and fitness instructor, traditional Chinese medicine practitioner and therapist volunteer at Kreta Ayer Senior Citizens Centre.

To all his fellow colleagues in teaching, past, present and future, Mr Siow has this to say, "Take joy in your teaching and teach others to find that joy. If you cannot do either, your calling lies elsewhere. If this is indeed your calling, than take courage and know that you hold eternity in your hands. Live by Henry Adam's maxim, *A teacher affects eternity; no one can tell where his influence stops.*"



Diploma in Departmental Management Graduation Ceremony July 2003

By Public & International Relations

A total of 129 teachers newly trained by NIE as Heads of Department (HODs) received their Diploma in Departmental Management (DDM) certificates on 10 July 2003 at the Institute of Public Administration & Management Auditorium, Civil Service College. Mr Tan Yap Kwang, Director of Examinations Division, Ministry of Education (MOE) was the Guest-of-Honour.

The DDM is a four month training programme for HODs and other school leaders in Singapore schools and designed by NIE's team of experts and professionals in consultation with MOE. Managed by NIE's Graduate Programmes & Research Office, this innovative programme prepares departmental heads to be exemplary people managers and experts in teaching and learning. Besides addressing some of the issues and technologies impacting on education, a major part of the programme focuses on team learning, curriculum innovation and dynamic learning systems.

Award Winners

Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development Book Prize

Mr Yap Chien-Yien, Kelvin

Awarded to participant who exemplifies the highest level of learning across the DDM Programme

Dr J M Nathan Memorial Prize for Creativity

Mdm Poon Chay Ching, Anne

Mr Naseer Bin Ghani

Mr Lee Hong Khim

Mrs Leong-Tan Ling Ling, Jenny

Mr Low Chee Suan

Mdm Norliza Bte A Rahim

Miss See Phek Leong, Melison

Mrs Chua Meng Hon

Awarded to team of participants who demonstrates the highest level of creativity in its multimedia presentation as part of the assessment of core module "A Dynamic Learning System" in the DDM Programme

Dr Ruth Wong Medal

Miss Tan Chor Hiang

Awarded to participant who demonstrates the best overall performance in the DDM Programme

Continued from page 6

Outstanding Youth in Education Award

Introduced in 1999, the Outstanding Youth in Education Award (OYEA) is administrated by the National Youth Council with support from the Teachers' Network of MOE. Besides honouring the achievements of deserving young educators, the 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:

- to give national recognition to the role young teachers play in moulding the future of the 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:

- **Ms Linda Yeo Sock Khoon**
Zhenghua Secondary School
- **Mr David Chan Wan Keat**
Fairfield Methodist Primary School
- **Ms Foo Sheue Feng**
Compassvale Secondary School



(from left) Ms Linda Yeo, Mr David Chan & Ms Foo Sheue Feng

Asia Pacific Conference on Edu

“In the six years since the Thinking Conference, faculty and research scholars at NIE have embarked on a wide range of research projects on topics and issues related to thinking, creativity and innovative pedagogical practices in all disciplines. These research projects involve cross-discipline team efforts within NIE as well as collaboration with scholars from overseas universities and classroom teachers in Singapore schools.”

Prof Leo Tan, NIE Director in his welcome address to Conference participants



NIE Director Prof Leo Tan (centre) with Conference co-convenors, Assoc Prof Marilyn Quah (left) & Assoc Prof Esther Tan

The Asia Pacific Conference on Education was opened by Rear-Admiral (NS) Teo Chee Hean, then Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence on 2 June 2003 at the Nanyang Auditorium, NTU.

The Conference was organised by NIE from 2 to 4 June 2003 as a follow-up to the 7th International Conference on Thinking in 1997. Themed *Re-envisioning Education: Innovation and Diversity*, the programme included more than 300 paper presentations, 20 symposia, over 30 skill-based workshops and a special one day programme for early childhood and special school educators. The following strands were incorporated at the Conference:

- Multiple Intelligences, Creativity and Thinking;
- Gifted/Talented Education;
- Classroom Innovation;
- Special Needs Education;
- Early Childhood Education;
- Arts Education;
- Science and Mathematics Education;
- Affective Education;
- IT and e-Learning; and
- Innovative Leadership.

Keynote addresses by prominent researchers and educators included:

- *How to foster good work and Developing Multiple Intelligences in the early years* via video conferencing and a videotaped programme respectively by Prof Howard Gardner. Prof Gardner is Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education and Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Harvard University and Adjunct Professor of Neurology at the Boston University School of Medicine.



Dr Louisa Stark



Prof George Watson



Prof Sheila Wolfendale

By :

- Assoc Prof Marilyn Quah May Ling, Specialised Education &
- Assoc Prof Esther Tan, Psychological Studies

Education 2 to 4 June 2003

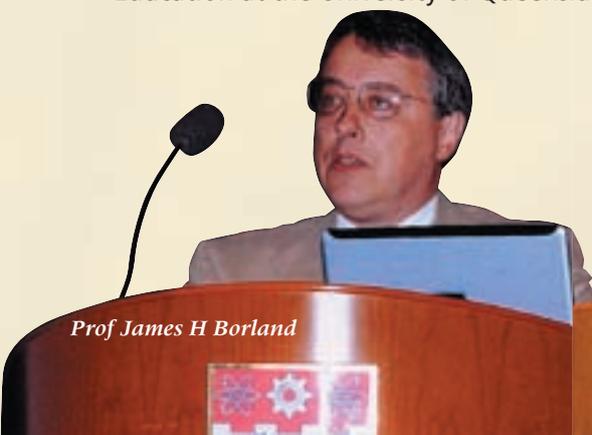
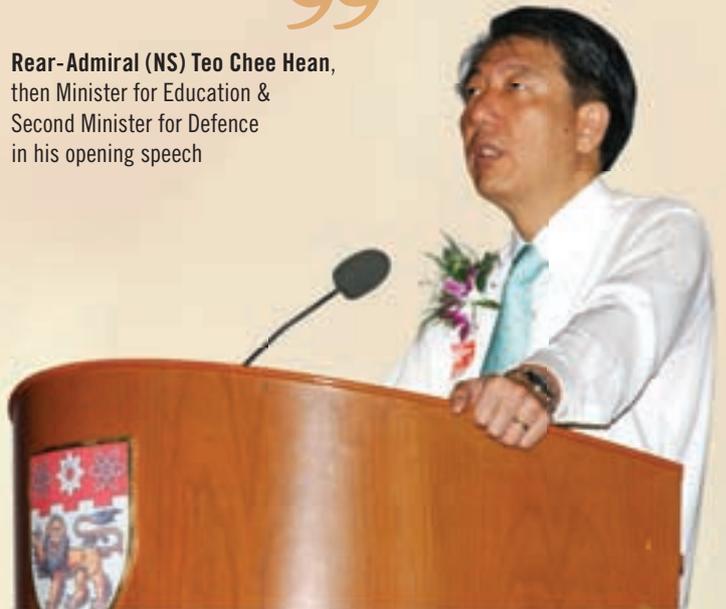
- *Life science education: Preparing today's students for tomorrow's world* by Dr Louisa Stark. She is Co-Director of the Genetic Science Learning Center, University of Utah.
- *Shifting sand: Integrating problem-based learning and technology in education* by Prof George Watson, Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Science and Unidel Professor of Physics and Astronomy, University of Delaware.
- *Encouraging the learning of children with special needs: A shared and inclusive endeavour* by Prof Sheila Wolfendale. Prof Wolfendale directs a Doctorate in Educational Psychology programme for practising educational psychologists in the School of Psychology, University of East London.
- *Re-envisioning gifted education: Challenges and opportunities for the 21st century* by Prof James H Borland, Professor of Education and Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University.
- *The role of technology in re-envisioning and education* by Prof John Hedberg, Professor of Instructional Science attached to the Centre for Research in Pedagogy & Practice, NIE. He is editor-in-chief of *Educational Media International* and was honoured in 2002 as a pioneer in educational technology by *Educational Technology Yearbook*.
- *New economies, new cultures, new students: Reworking the relationship between educational research and practice* by Prof Allan Luke, Dean of Centre for Research in Pedagogy & Practice, NIE. Prior to joining the Institute in 2003, he was Dean of Education at the University of Queensland.

“... the organisers have aptly chosen the theme of *Re-envisioning Education: Innovation and Diversity*. Innovation is key to our future competitiveness ... Educators play a fundamental role by developing useful pedagogical practices that can help nurture the spirit of innovation in our students.

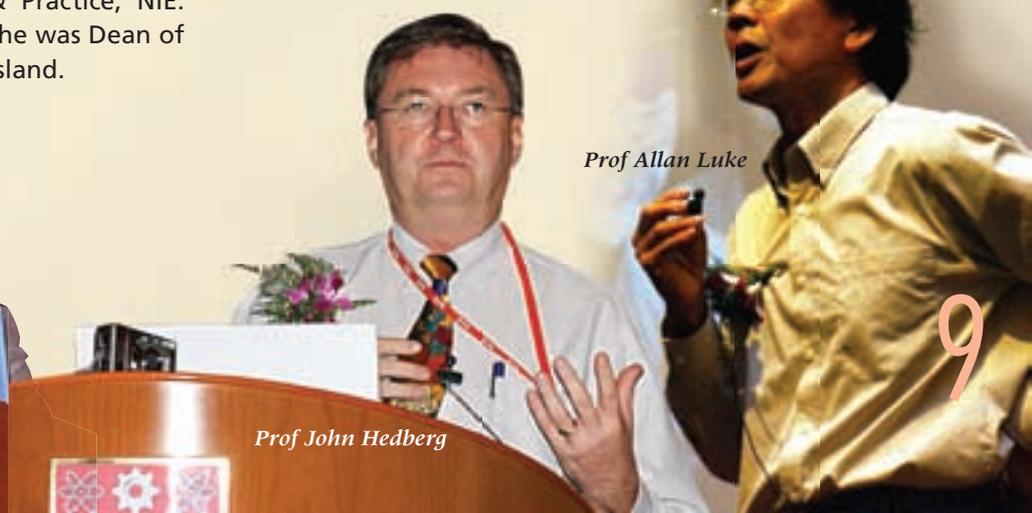
But even as we encourage our students to be more innovative, the challenge we as educators face is how we ourselves can be innovative ... The challenge for us is to be prepared to look at issues afresh and then to do away with old mindsets and methods where necessary.

As educators, our responsibility is to equip the children under our charge with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them make a mark for themselves later in life.”

Rear-Admiral (NS) Teo Chee Hean, then Minister for Education & Second Minister for Defence in his opening speech



Prof James H Borland



Prof John Hedberg

Prof Allan Luke

Launch of Singapore's 1st Biocomputational Laboratory for Education

By Public & International Relations

The NIE Biocomputational Laboratory was launched on 23 September 2003, in an effort to ramp up skills and resources in sync with Singapore's goal to develop Life Sciences as the fourth pillar of its economy. This S\$2 million education facility has been used by Biology, Engineering and Mathematics researchers and students to apply, learn and work on functional projects and programmes.

"IBM is working in partnership with NIE to advance research and discovery for Life Sciences through IT ... The Biocomputational Laboratory, the first in Singapore to integrate the wet and dry laboratories, will provide a model for other educational institutions in Singapore," said Assoc Prof Chia Tet Fatt, Director of NTU's Bioinformatics Research Centre and Deputy Head, Natural Sciences, NIE.

With IT infrastructure provided by IBM, the Laboratory can facilitate projects on Bioinformatics for schools where algorithms and simple programming are taught for both wet and dry laboratories. Researchers and students can now conduct experiments in the wet laboratory with the findings captured immediately in the dry laboratory. The automatic transfer of findings between the laboratories eliminates manual data entry into computers for analysis, thus minimising human error. Some of the projects researchers and students can look forward to include human ancestry mapping of Singaporeans through deoxyribo nucleic acid (DNA) sequencing, transcriptome data collection and

analyses of plants and animals through microarray as well as functional identification of unknown genes from genomic databases.

The Biocomputational Laboratory will be working together with schools and other institutions to establish programmes to collect and establish biological databases in the area of genomic, transcriptome, phylogenetic, population health and lifestyle databases, which will be linked to NTU's Bioinformatics Research Centre for further computational analyses.



Assoc Prof Chia Tet Fatt addressing guests & staff of NTU, NIE & IBM

Visitors NIEnews

By Public & International Relations

Visit by 2nd Permanent Secretary for Education

NIE played host to Lieutenant-General (NS) Lim Chuan Poh, Second Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education on 12 August 2003.



In addition to touring the Institute's facilities, his visit included briefings on NIE's initial teacher training and inservice programmes, research emphases and developments on information and communication technologies.

Lieutenant-General (NS) Lim assumed his current appointment on 1 July 2003.

Forging Closer Regional Ties

By Assoc Prof Lim-Teo Suat Khoh, Associate Dean, Curriculum & Foundation Programmes Planning

Dr Varaporn Saenpholpat and Miss Rungfa Janjaruporn of Thailand's Srinakharinwirot University visited the Mathematics & Mathematics Education Academic Group (MME) from 28 to 31 July 2003. Dr Varaporn specialises in graph theory while Miss Rungfa is a Mathematics educator. During the visit, they met several staff members to discuss possible links between the two departments.

Ideas were also exchanged with Prof Michio Hama of Japan's Hannan University, who is visiting MME from April 2003 to March 2004. He lectures in Mathematics and undertakes research in the relationship between mathematical ability and student grades in the Arts and Social Sciences.

"Bringing such foreign academics to visit and work with us will enhance NIE's image in the Mathematics and Mathematics education fraternity in the region," said MME's Assoc Prof Lee Peng Yee, who was instrumental in extending these invitations.

Short Story Competition & Launch of Creative Literature Reading Circle

By Asst Prof Seetha Lakshmi,
Asian Languages & Cultures



The rationale of “reading maketh a man” and creating a conducive and competitive environment for NIE trainee teachers to write what they have read inspired the Asian

Languages & Cultures Academic Group to organise the Short Story Competition, in conjunction with the launch of Creative Literature Reading Circle.

From 41 contributions, eight winning entries and two selected stories were selected for compilation into the book *Amaidhiyana Puyal (A Peaceful Cyclone)*, named after the winning story by Ms Chinnamma Devi, a second year Diploma in Education trainee teacher. The award ceremony on 25 June 2003 was graced by Mr S Muthiah, Senior Curriculum Specialist Officer, Languages and Literature (Tamil Language Unit), Curriculum Planning and Development Division, Ministry of Education.

On the same day, the Creative Literature Reading Circle was inaugurated. Asst Prof Sivakumaran s/o Ramalingam (Asian Languages & Cultures) and trainee teachers Miss Vejaya Shanti Iswati d/o G V T and Mr Mohamed Haniffa Mohd Kassali recited their literary works, followed by a session of critique from the floor.

By Mr Juneo Lee,
Visual & Performing Arts

Mickey Mouse Brush Painting - Examining Chineseness



The exhibition at NIE's Art Gallery

School of Arts, who spotted the show at a stopover in Singapore, Mr Lee brought the exhibition to Griffith University at its Gold Coast Campus.

The exhibition, consisting nine large scroll paintings each measuring 383mm by 155mm, was an attempt by the artist to address issues on identity within the construct of

This project was an extension of Mr Juneo Lee's (Visual & Performing Arts) solo exhibition originally held at NIE's Art Gallery entitled *Mickey Mouse Brush Painting - Examining Chineseness*. At the invitation of Ms Ann E Wulff, lecturer and coordinator of Contemporary Arts at Griffith University's

post-Nanyang Art in Singapore and the region. Visual & Performing Arts doctoral candidate Mr Yow Siew Kah's essay accompanied the curatorial strategy in the White Box Gallery at Griffith University.

The exhibition was organised from 12 to 26 September 2003.



Exhibition opening by Dr Patricia Wise (left), Head of School of Arts at Griffith University with the artist Juneo Lee (right) at the White Box Gallery

Different Tongues, One People

By Asst Prof Norhaida Bte Aman,
Asian Languages & Cultures



(from left) Asst Prof Steven Tan (chair), Dr Chitra Rajaram, Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed, Mr Chan Soo Sen, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Mr Goh Choon Kang & Mr Sujadi Siswo

The forum *Different Tongues, One People* was held at NIE's Lecture Theatre 1 on 25 July 2003, in conjunction with Racial Harmony Day.

Political and media personalities shared on racial issues in Singapore. The panel comprised Mr Chan Soo Sen, then Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office and Community Development & Sports, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister of State for National Development, Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed, Mayor, North East District, Mr Goh Choon Kang and Dr Chitra Rajaram, both from Singapore Press Holdings and Mr Sujadi Siswo from Mediacorp News (Suria).

As a prelude to the discussion, three imageries of multicultural Singapore were presented in the video production *The Quilt, the Alloy and the Amalgam*: the quilt depicted multiculturalism as various fabrics sewn together while retaining its distinctly separate identity; the alloy combined different metals resulting in a new metal yet exhibiting properties of its primary components; and the amalgam was a mixture of different metals with the product not having any semblance to its primary components.

While the speakers unanimously agreed that multicultural Singapore was analogous to the quilt, the nation's social fabric and harmonious living conditions should not be taken for granted but consciously infused in the lives of its citizens.

The finale was a musical performance by trainee teachers, orchestrating ethnically unique tunes into beautiful harmonious music, reflecting Singapore's multicultural community living together in harmony.



A feast for the ears & eyes

Event Highlights October 2003 to February 2004

22 October 2003

**Leaders in Education Programme
Graduation Dinner 2003**
Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel
7.30pm

4 November 2003

**Visit to Civil Defence Academy by
Trainee Teachers**
Civil Defence Academy
2.00pm

29 November 2003

Alumni Day
NIE/NTU

3 November 2003

National Education Seminar
Lecture Theatre 1, NIE
8.30am

7 November 2003

**DNA 50th Anniversary Tele-Address by
Dr James Watson**
Lecture Theatre 1, NIE
7.30pm

10 January 2004

Teachers' Investiture Ceremony
Nanyang Auditorium, NTU
10.00am

6 February 2004

e-Carnival
NIE

Tamil Grammar Workshop

By Asst Prof R Velmurugan,
Asian Languages & Cultures

A grammar workshop involving 25 primary school Tamil teachers was conducted by Asst Prof R Velmurugan (Tamil Language & Culture Division, Asian Languages & Cultures) on 23 and 24 June 2003. Its aim was to highlight various methods of teaching grammar to primary school students.

In consultation with the Ministry of Education Curriculum and Planning Division's syllabus, grammatical categories such as 'cases', 'tenses', 'infinitives', 'adjectives', 'adverbs', 'morphophonemics' and the rearrangement of words to form proper sentences were emphasised during the workshop. Different methods of teaching these components were also presented to the teachers. The use of IT to make teaching of grammar more interesting was also highlighted.

The participants provided positive feedback attesting to the stimulating nature of the workshop, which in turn may

motivate student interest in the learning of Tamil grammatical components.



Asst Prof R Velmurugan (right) interacting with workshop participants

Congress on Industrial & Applied Mathematics

By Asst Prof Ang Keng Cheng and
Asst Prof Cheang Wai Kwong,
Mathematics & Mathematics
Education

Asst Prof Ang Keng Cheng and Asst Prof Cheang Wai Kwong (Mathematics & Mathematics Education) attended the Fifth International Congress on Industrial and Applied Mathematics held in Sydney, Australia from 7 to 11 July 2003. This Congress, organised once in four years, covers the full spectrum of research topics in applied Mathematics and its industrial applications.

Asst Prof Ang presented a paper entitled *A Dengue Transmission Model with Varying Vector Population*. He

discussed a new technique of modelling the spread of dengue in Singapore incorporating environmental factors, such as the amount of rainfall. Asst Prof Cheang presented a paper entitled *Time-Series Modelling of Singapore Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Data*. This paper compared two methods of estimating time series regression model for the Singapore GDP quarterly series and examined the implications for the nature of nonstationarity exhibited by the GDP series.

Commerce Seminar

By Ms Koh Noi Keng,
Humanities & Social Studies
Education



Gift exchange between Mr Marc Leong & Ms Koh Noi Keng of NIE's Humanities & Social Studies Education

About 250 teachers and trainee teachers attended the Commerce Seminar 2003 at the York Hotel on 16 August 2003. This seminar, themed *Strategies for Growth: Innovation and Enterprise Challenge*, was jointly organised by the Singapore Society of Commerce Teachers and NIE's Humanities

& Social Studies Education Academic Group, with generous sponsorship from Maybank and Eduwealth.

Mr Marc Leong, Maybank's Head of Mobile Banking and Branch Manager, shared on the *Winds of Change* in the bank industry, from an emphasis on corporate banking to one which was more customer centric. Mr Leonard Lee, Innovation and Product Development lecturer from the Ngee Ann Polytechnic, delved into the meaning of *Innovation*. He gave an overview of the Innovation and Product Development programme that he was conducting using the Smart Car as an illustration. Senior Lecturer John Foo from Singapore Polytechnic's School of Business provided practical tips on *Promoting Entrepreneurship in Schools*.

The Seminar ended with a presentation by Mr Aleric Er, an experienced teacher from Ghim Moh Secondary School, and three trainee teachers on how *Elements of Office Administration* and *Principles of Accounts* lessons could be made more interesting through the use of games.

Mediated Learning Experience with Children: Applications across Contexts

By Assoc Prof Alice Seng Seok Hoon, Psychological Studies

This book, edited by Assoc Prof Alice Seng Seok Hoon (Psychological Studies), Dr Lucy Pou of the Center for the Enhancement of Learning Potential and Assoc Prof Tan Oon Seng (Head, Psychological Studies), is based on the theories of cognitive psychologist Dr Reuven Feuerstein, who pioneered the theory on Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) in the late 1940s through his work with orphaned children or those separated from their parents as a result of the Holocaust. The theory of MLE is based on the belief that intelligence is modifiable and not fixed, and intervention programmes can be designed to enhance the cognitive skills necessary for independent thinking.



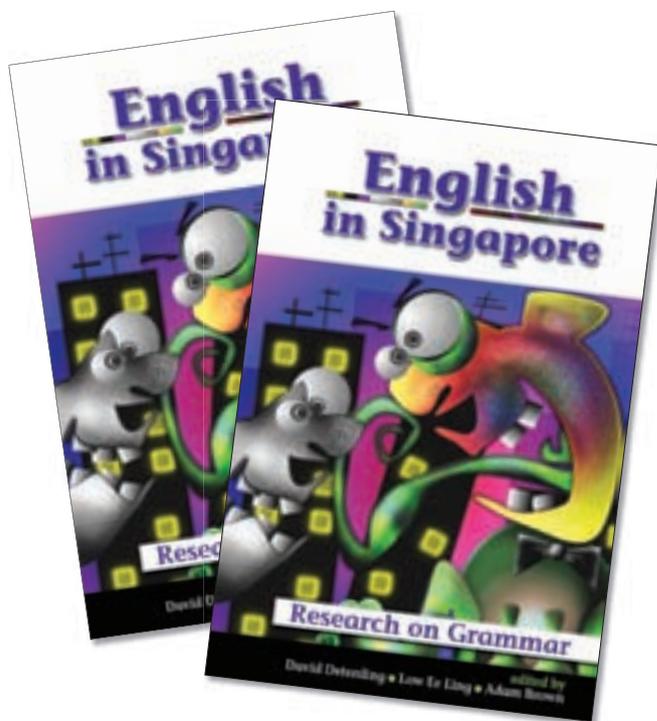
Assoc Prof Alice Seng presents *Mediated Learning Experience with Children*

In this volume, the contributors examine the impact of Feuerstein's theory on our understanding of the learning, instruction and cognitive modifiability of children from different contexts. The book begins with the theoretical frameworks of MLE presenting an updated and multi-dimensional perspective of the theory and continues with eight chapters highlighting MLE applications with children in schools and within specific learning situations. There is a good coverage of well known intervention programmes such as Bright Start and Instrumental Enrichment. Applications of dynamic assessment techniques based on MLE are also included. This book will be of interest to educational researchers, educational psychologists and graduate students specialising in school psychology, psychological assessment, special education and cognitive science.

This 240 page book, published by McGraw-Hill (Singapore), is available from the NIE campus bookstore.

English in Singapore

By Assoc Prof David Deterding,
Asst Prof Low Ee Ling &
Assoc Prof Adam Brown,
English Language & Literature



Three phoneticians, Assoc Prof David Deterding, Asst Prof Low Ee Ling and Assoc Prof Adam Brown from the English Language & Literature Academic Group, recently had an edited collection entitled *English in Singapore: Research on Grammar* published by McGraw-Hill (Singapore).

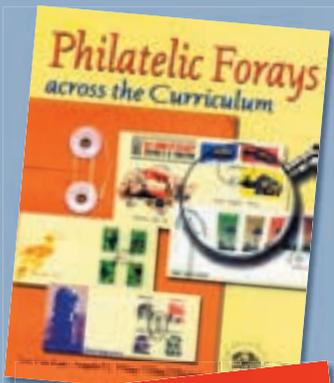
The book is the first to feature solely on Singapore English grammar and boasts a collection of new articles that address important aspects of grammar in Singapore English. It is organised into two parts: description of Singapore English grammar and topics in the teaching of grammar in Singapore.

The first nine chapters are descriptive analyses of aspects of Singapore English grammar such as missing grammatical subjects; (the absence of) past tense marking, and other aspects of Singapore English verbs; plural marking of nouns; relative clauses, passives and adverbials, peculiarly Singaporean constructions such as 'don't know' and particles such as 'la'. Other chapters deal with problems in the teaching of grammar in Singapore, in three main areas: prescriptive books of common errors, connectors such as 'however' and 'consequently' and teachers' beliefs about grammar and grammar teaching. The problems of the use of Singapore English grammatical features in creative literature are also discussed.

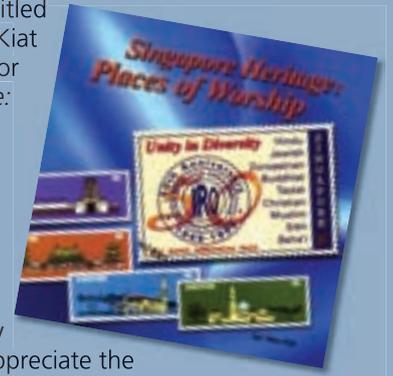
The 184 page book is priced at S\$22.95 or US\$12.95.

Stamp-based Books

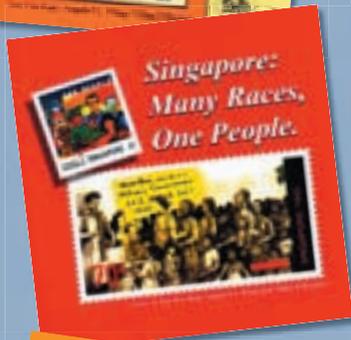
By Assoc Prof Tan Wee Kiat,
Psychological Studies



In 2002, after co-authoring a resource book for teachers entitled *Philatelic Forays across the Curriculum*, Assoc Prof Tan Wee Kiat (Psychological Studies) wrote a series of stamp-based books for Singaporean children on topics of common interest. *Singapore: Many Races, One People* describes the multiracial nature of Singapore society. Aimed at promoting racial harmony, the book includes an explanation of the symbols in the National Flag and an English translation of the national anthem *Majulah Singapura*.



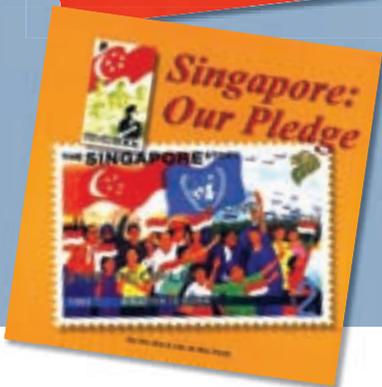
This year, he has published three more stamp-based books. He wrote *Singapore: Our Pledge* especially for children in Primary One and Two. He hopes this book will help the youngsters appreciate the meaning and significance of the Pledge that they dutifully recite every school day.



In *Singapore Heritage: Places of Worship*, Assoc Prof Tan points out the interesting fact that multiracial Singapore has a multitude of places of worship, belonging to different religions, located within walking distance of each other. For example, the Mariamman Temple and Jamae Mosque are neighbours on the same street in Chinatown.



Singapore Heritage: the Raffles Pitcher Plant tells of the carnivorous Raffles Pitcher Plant. The plant was first discovered in Singapore and named after Sir Stamford Raffles. Brunei has featured the Raffles Pitcher Plant on a stamp and Malaysia has featured it on its \$20 note.



Assoc Prof Tan's next stamp-based book is on the Singapore story, documenting the events and policies that have transformed Singapore from a former British colony to the global city it is today.

More for the Dollar - Economy Drive



People are spending less. Companies are making less. Workers are earning less. The Government is collecting less in taxes, and the budgets for ministries and statutory boards are thus reduced. To provide for the same high quality of service to the public, we must get more from the dollars in our budgets. Hence the Singapore Public Service has

very recently launched the Economy Drive throughout the service.

In NIE, we have a part to play in this effort because we use public funds to provide services. All staff have therefore been requested to ask themselves the following questions before committing expenditure:

(1) Are we getting the best value for the public money we are spending?

- Can it be done cheaper?
- Is there waste?
- Is the quality too high?
- Is it sustainable?
- Is it cheap now but will cost much more later?

(2) Are there better things we can do with the money in our hands?

- Why are we doing this?
- Is it worth doing?
- Is there waste?
- Will we spend it this way if it is our own money?

Economy Drive ideas can be very simple. NIE staff have been reminded to do what they can at their respective levels, and suggest to colleagues what else can be done. Some examples include:

- defer projects;
- share use of space/rooms;
- photocopy less;
- switch off the lights and computers;
- travel less;
- recycle;
- team up to buy in bulk;
- lease or rent; and
- switch to less costly e-services.

Staff have also been asked to share their ideas through the Staff Suggestion Scheme and to change wherever necessary to get MORE FOR THE DOLLAR.

Learning Without Limits Through Wireless@NIE

By:
 • Ms Nenny Noorman,
 Academic Computing &
 Information Services &
 • Public & International Relations



Staff and trainee teachers at NIE can now enjoy a more mobile lifestyle on campus. This is made possible by the campus-wide wireless network called Wireless@NIE, which was launched on 18 July 2003 by Mr Chiang Chie Foo, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education.

At the launch, Assoc Prof Michael Williams (Instructional Science) demonstrated how wireless technology could make lectures interactive by allowing trainee teachers to participate in mass discussions and online forums as well as provide feedback to the lecturer throughout the session. This changes the traditional lecture environment where the lecturer speaks and students listen to a

two-way communication within the confines of a lecture theatre.

Wireless@NIE is one of the most advanced networks in the world using the latest wireless local area network (WLAN) and security technologies. Staff and trainee teachers can access e-learning and enterprise broadband applications from their personal digital assistants (PDAs) and notebooks, surf the internet, enjoy video and audio streaming, communicate with one another via emails, forums, chat rooms and instant messaging securely anywhere on campus.



With Wireless@NIE, (from left) trainee teachers – Ms Sharon Eng, Mr Woody Woo, Mr Parwinder Singh Grewal and Ms Rita Zamzamah – can enjoy discussions anywhere on campus



Asst Prof Shawn Lum (left) & Asst Prof Jean Yong of NIE's Natural Sciences Academic Group tapping on wireless technology at the Green House

Wireless@NIE transforms the entire campus into a single virtual classroom, taking learning to another level and out of the physical classroom anytime, anywhere.

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