



# Passion for Collaborating

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## Corrigendum

NIE News, September 2011 – The editorial team regrets that the article "Knowing Arab" should be titled as "Teaching and Learning in the Arab World", the title of the book, featured on page 10. The chapter cited should also be "Bilingual Academic Discourse Skills: A Pre-service Teacher Training Program in Bahrain" (Ellis, Pillai & Al'Rabai, 2011) which describes curricular development work done during a multi-year consultation with the Ministry of Education of Bahrain.

## Editorial Team

Assistant Professor Chow Jia Yi, Patricia Campbell, Monica Khoo, Wendy Goh, Lee Yee Han

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## Editor's Say

August to September is always a busy time for all staff at NIE since it is the beginning of a new academic year. Nevertheless, it is also important to take time to reflect and celebrate the wonderful achievements and contributions that NIE is making on a national, regional and global scale.

In this issue, we highlight how NIE focuses on the students being the heart of every teacher's work which is basically what NIE stands for – that is the passion for collaborating and the passion for learning. We also want to share with you the numerous visits to NIE over the past months by some prominent visitors such as Her Royal Highness from Thailand, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and His Excellency, Danish Education Minister, Mr Troels Lund Poulsen. In addition, international collaborations continue to flourish from the NIE UNESCO partnership in arts and music research projects to the Mathematics Teachers Conference.

September also spells the air of change with a warmly welcomed visit from newly-minted Singapore Minister for Education Mr Heng Swee Keat. We bid farewell to Associate Professor Lim-Teo Suat Khoh as Dean, Faculty Affairs and welcome Professor Michael Chia as the new Dean and to the 2,000 new alumni members of NIE who graduated at the NIE Teachers' Investiture Ceremony in July. We captured some of the highlights in two special features that reported on the vibrant events on pages 12 to 13. It also showcases the highest achievers of the ceremonies, the Valedictorians (pages 14 and 15). We would also want to share with you some amazing work undertaken by the Academic Groups, such as the English Language and Literature, Psychological Studies, Asian Languages and Cultures.

Personally, the opportunity to edit this issue of NIE news has provided me with greater insights to the good work that is on-going in NIE. I am sure that the highlights that we are showcasing in this issue is only the tip of the ice-berg and that we look forward to having more staff come forward to share their professional experiences and achievements.

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue as much as I had in editing it.

### Guest Editor

Assistant Professor Chow Jia Yi  
Physical Education & Sports Science Academic Group

## Care for Arts

### NIE continues to join hands with UNESCO on arts research in education

By Ms Joy Millan, Office of Education Research

Just four months ago, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NIE and UNESCO (Bangkok office) relating to the establishment and functioning of the UNESCO-NIE Centre for Arts Research in Education (CARE), was renewed in May.

First signed on 16 June 2008, CARE is a part of a growing network of UNESCO Arts Education observatories, including those in Melbourne, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Kazakhstan and Korea. Besides facilitating greater research in arts education, compiling, analysing and disseminating knowledge and information in arts education, these observatories also promote international information sharing and cooperation. Noting the progress that has been made in pursuance of these goals by CARE, both NIE and UNESCO have renewed the collaboration until May 2014.

Since its official establishment in April 2009, CARE has been actively initiating and managing exciting research in arts education. CARE, headed by Assistant Professor Lum Chee Hoo from NIE's Visual and Performing Arts Academic Group, has developed a strategic plan for the next three years. With provisions for gradual extension of the geographical scope of research to the Asia Pacific region, it targets meaningful collaborations with other arts education observatories in the region and expanding its online database of arts education studies to include those of South East Asian countries.

CARE is currently collaborating with the National Arts Council and the Ministry of Education (Co-Curricular Activities Branch) on a two-year study that examines exemplary arts educators' pedagogies and practices. Locally, the study is a first to bring together teachers, artists-in-schools, and co-curricular activities instructors to examine their pedagogies on a common platform. This is in the hope of leading to fruitful discussions, exchanges and collaborations to improve arts engagement, pedagogy and practice in Singapore. CARE has worked with local arts education groups (e.g. museums, foundations and service providers) to document and evaluate recent arts education programmes.

A series of studies mapping arts education research is also underway. Preliminary findings were presented at the 2011 International Redesigning Pedagogy Conference at NIE and at the 8th Asia-Pacific Symposium on Music Education Research (APSMER) in Taiwan. CARE is also hosting two international



Miss Tomiko Sim, Class 4A, Fuchun Primary School



Mr Jun Siang, Class 4A, Fuchun Primary School



Mr Zhi Teng, Class 4A, Fuchun Primary School



One of the 18 case studies in "Images of Practice":  
A reflective practice of a choir instructor  
Images: Office of Education Research

conferences in music education, the 11th Cultural Diversity in Music Education Conference in January 2012 and the Asia-Pacific Symposium on Music Education Research in 2013. In a planning meeting of the UNESCO Arts Education observatory network, Mr Tim Curtis, Chief of the Culture Unit at UNESCO (Bangkok Office), noted the significant headway that CARE has achieved since its establishment, and expressed solid support for its upcoming projects.

## Creativity Waves

### NIE focuses on getting creative with teaching literature

By Assistant Professor Loh Chin Ee, English Language and Literature Academic Group

The call for creativity is not a new one in Singapore. In fact, it has been one of the buzzwords in a city eager to remake itself as a world-class global city. In the educational context, the "Thinking Schools, Learning Nation" initiative implemented in 1997 could be said to mark the government's attention to critical thinking and creativity in the bid to produce citizens ready for a globalised 21<sup>st</sup> century. Yet, there has been hardly any discussion about how creativity is relevant in the Literature classroom, a place where it seems most pertinent. So in the first half of this year, the literature division of the English Language and Literature Academic Group (ELL) focused on a series of events to spark educators' thinking about creativity and literature.

On 13 May 2011, the Literature Division of ELL organised its second *Teachers and Writers Series, focusing on Literature and Creativity*. A panel consisting of cultural theorist Associate Professor C J Wee Wan-ling from NTU, film-maker, Ms Tan Pin Pin and educator from ACS Independent, Mr Ferdinand Quek, shared their thoughts on literature and creativity. Assoc Prof Wee gave an overview of the cultural landscape in Singapore and emphasised how literature can provide a resistance capacity to mass cultural dominance for a critical and responsible citizenry. Ms Tan emphasised the practical aspects of creativity, sharing that it is sheer hard work that makes the creative process possible. Finally, Mr Quek shared that educators need to distinguish between creative method, task and product and highlighted the need to focus on creative activities that can help students understand content. The session was well-attended by our Postgraduate Diploma and Bachelor of Arts in Education cohort as well as teachers who made time to come to NIE.



(3<sup>rd</sup> from left) Ferdinand sharing his thoughts with pre-service teachers and fellow educators



(From left) Student-researchers, Ms Sanah Akhtar, Ms Claryce Lum, Ms Nadiyah Song, Mr Russell Tan, Mr Marcus Chai and Mr Kelvin Zhong

A group of postgraduate diploma in education students embarked on a research project to discover what creativity meant in the Singapore Literature classroom. The first part involved interviewing two experienced teachers, Mr Ken Mizusawa from Dunman High School and Ms Rachel Poh from Ngee Ann Secondary School. The second part comprised of the student-researchers examining classroom conditions for creativity, including the types of resources, questioning methods and classroom delivery strategies of educators across six secondary schools and junior colleges where they took their Teaching Practicum. (More information can be found on: [www.enlight-online.com](http://www.enlight-online.com))

The findings were presented at the Creativity, Play and Imagination across the Disciplines conference at Teachers College, Columbia, USA on 26 May 2011 by Assistant Professor Loh Chin Ee, Ms Sanah Akhtar, Ms Claryce Lum and Mr Kelvin Zhong. The presentation was well-attended by researchers and educators from around the world who were interested to hear about creativity in the Singapore context.



(From left) Asst Prof Loh Chin Ee, Ms Sanah Akhtar, Ms Claryce Lum and Mr Kelvin Zhong at the conference

## Orwell Teachings

By Assistant Professor Angelia Poon, English Language and Literature Academic Group

The English Language and Literature (ELL) Academic Group hosted a lively lecture by Dr John Rodden, currently a Research Fellow at the Harry Ransom Centre at the University of Texas, Austin, on George Orwell's famous novel, *Animal Farm* on 26 May 2011.

Widely known as a George Orwell scholar, he addressed an audience of NIE students, ELL faculty and Literature teachers from schools. The title of Dr Rodden's talk was "*But some are more equal than others: George Orwell's Animal Farm, the Most Difficult Classic to Teach*". He emphasised the importance of teaching Orwell's novel as a social satire and political allegory. He also shared on the challenges of teaching the novel in context given the fact that young students in schools will probably feel so removed from the historical political events referred to in the novel.

Dr Rodden has written and edited more than twenty books on Orwell as well as other subjects. Some of his works include "*Every Intellectual's Big Brother: George Orwell's Literary Siblings*" (University of Texas Press, 2007); "*The Cambridge Companion to George Orwell*" (Cambridge University Press, 2007); "*Performing the Literary Interview: How Writers Craft Their Public Images*" (University of Nebraska Press, 2001); and "*Understanding Animal Farm: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents*" (Greenwood Press, 1999).



Dr John Rodden sharing his vast experience

Image: Mr Ricky Er, English Language and Literature Academic Group



# Teaching Mathematics

NIE hosts the Mathematics Teachers Conference 2011 with much success

By Assistant Professor Toh Tin Lam, President of Association of Mathematics Educators and Professor Berinderjeet Kaur, Mathematics and Mathematics Education Academic Group



Participants at the Conference



Prof Lee Hee-Chan from Korea

Academic Group at NIE. The inaugural conference was held in 2005. The MTC has a unique one-day programme which comprises of keynote lectures, invited lectures and workshops. Every effort is made on the part of the organising committee to make the conference a relevant, enriching and enjoyable one.

The opening of the conference was graced by Professor Lee Sing Kong, Director of NIE and the opening lecture was delivered by Professor David Hogan from NIE's Centre for Research in Pedagogy and Practice. As Principal Research Scientist, Prof Hogan discussed the topic of "Research and Classroom Practice".

Almost 950 teachers attended the conference. There were 6 keynote lectures, 6 invited lectures and 11 workshops conducted by international scholars and professors from NIE. The programme for the conference covered content on pedagogies for primary, secondary and junior college teachers.



Prof David Hogan delivers Opening Lecture

On 2 June 2011, the National Institute of Education (NIE) saw a large crowd of math teachers and educators convened to talk, plan and discover "Communication, Reasoning and Connections" in mathematics teaching and learning at schools. As the theme denotes, the Mathematics Teachers Conference 2011 endeavoured to answer the tactical questions that teaching professionals often encounter.

The Mathematics Teachers Conference (MTC) is a conference jointly organised by the Association of Mathematics Educators (AME) and the Mathematics and Mathematics Education



Prof Denise Thompson from the US

Prof Berinderjeet Kaur from NIE



Asst Prof Leong Yew Hoong giving a lecture

## National Day Awards 2011

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

Dear Members of the NIE Family,

As a family, we celebrate the success of family members together. We share in the joy of every recipient of the National Day Awards listed below.

I have received many warm wishes from many of you. I wish to thank all of you for your kind words. Though I am a recipient of this honour, the fact is, it is a recognition of the hardwork and contributions of members of the NIE family. It is a recognition of the achievements of NIE and the impact that it has made. As I have constantly emphasised, the whole NIE picture (impact) can only be realised when every 'jigsaw' piece is in place. This award that I receive, is a testimony of that. The NIE family have worked tirelessly to educate our student teachers so that they can go forth to nurture the future of our Nation. Each one of you can rejoice in this award because it is a recognition of your contributions! Well done.

Let us continue this good work so that Singapore as a Nation can be blessed through your contributions. Majulah!

**Professor Lee Sing Kong**  
NIE Director

"When someone asks me how I lasted 35 years this is what I say: "Time is relative. When you're engaged, time simply disappears!"

**Phyllis Chew Ghim Lian**  
Associate Professor, English Language and Literature Academic Group

I have enjoyed these 25 years of involvement in sport with PE students in Singapore. Life has never been dull with many worthwhile projects to complete and many caring people to meet. While some say the life-span of a PE teacher is short, there's plenty of fuel left in this particular tank – and hopefully more years ahead!

**Nicholas Aplin**  
Associate Professor,  
Physical Education and Sports Science Academic Group

I am honoured to receive this award, have always stood by the philosophy that when there's work to be done, just do it to the best of my ability.

**Mdm Chua Ka Ai**  
Officer, Office of Teacher Education

I feel very honoured to receive the Long Service Award, and I would like to thank NIE for making it such a pleasant place to work in. The 25 years seem to have just flown by! I have made lifelong friends here and I am grateful to my library colleagues for all their support. May I also say a special thanks to my supervisors for their very patient mentoring!

**Ms Yvonne Yin Yee Ying**  
Assistant Manager, Catalogue, NIE Library

I would like to share this award with all my colleagues in NIE, for the teamwork.

**Mrs Mak Lek Cher**  
Assistant Head, Examinations and Academic Matters,  
Office of Teacher Education

I am happy to receive this award as it exemplifies NIE's recognition of my many years of service to the institute. Thank you everyone at NIE for making my journey such a worthwhile endeavour.

**Angela Wong Foong Lin**  
Associate Professor Learning Sciences and Technologies Academic Group

I am flattered and honoured to receive this award. It means a lot to me. All this while I have enjoyed working in NIE. I have grown in my intellectual capacity, and in my pursuits for knowledge. NIE has provided an excellent climate for nurturing academics like myself to do our best at all times.

**Kamsiah Abdullah**  
Associate Professor  
Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group

I see my work in NIE as a calling. It is a privilege to be a teacher educator and work closely with schools and teachers. I do know I am making a difference and an impact as a teacher educator and that knowledge has made all the time and energies I spent doing this work over the years worthwhile and meaningful.

**Christine Lee Kim Eng**  
Associate Professor, Head, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

**Public Administration Medal (Gold)**

**Professor Lee Sing Kong**  
Director, NIE

**Public Administration Medal (Silver)**

**Mr Selvarajan Selvaratnam**  
Head, Development & Estate Department

**Public Administration Medal (Bronze)**

**Associate Professor Tan Kwang San, Steven**  
Associate Dean, Professional Development Office of Graduate Studies & Professional Learning

**Commendation Medal**

**Mrs Mak Lek Cher**  
Assistant Head, Examinations & Academic Matters, Office of Teacher Education

**Efficiency Medal**

**Mdm Chua Ka Ai**  
Officer, Office of Teacher Education

**Long Service Medal**

**Mr Chee Ted Shing**  
Senior Media Engineer, Centre for e-Learning

**Associate Professor Chew Ghim Lian, Phyllis**  
English Language & Literature Academic Group

**Associate Professor Chia Wei Khuan**  
Head, Visual & Performing Arts Academic Group

**Associate Professor Diong Cheong Hoong**  
Natural Sciences & Science Education Academic Group

**Associate Professor Goh Chor Boon**  
General Manager, NIE International

**Associate Professor**

**Kamsiah Abdullah**  
Asian Languages & Cultures Academic Group

**Miss Lim Soo Huang**

Technical Officer, Development & Estate Department

**Mr Low Ngee Ang**

Senior Technical Executive, Development & Estate Department

**Mrs Mak Lek Cher**

Assistant Head, Examinations & Academic Matters, Office of Teacher Education

**Associate Professor**

**Nicholas Giles Aplin**  
Physical Education & Sports Science Academic Group

**Associate Professor**

**Quek Jin Jong**  
Principal Officer, NIE

**Mr Razak Bin Abdul Hamid**  
Officer, Payroll & Projects Unit, Finance Department

**Mrs Tok-Tan Kok Mui**

Assistant Head, Admissions & Records, Office of Teacher Education

**Associate Professor**

**Vilma Ann D'Rozario**  
Sub-Dean, Student Counselling & Liaison, Office of Teacher Education

**Associate Professor**

**Wong Foong Lin, Angela**  
Learning Sciences & Technologies Academic Group

**Associate Professor**

**Wong Siew Koon, Philip**  
Associate Dean, Pedagogical Development & Innovations, Office of Teacher Education

**Associate Professor**

**Wong Yeang Lam, Ruth**  
English Language & Literature Academic Group

**Miss Yin Yee Ying, Yvonne**

Assistant Manager, Cataloguing, Library & Information Services Centre

## Welcome, Professor Michael Chia, Dean for Faculty Affairs



NIE welcomes Professor Michael Chia as Dean for Faculty Affairs. In his new appointment, he works collaboratively with the Senior Management, Heads of Academic Groups and the Human Resource Department and has an over-arching mission to nurture, galvanise and energise staff to make significant contributions in daily effort for teaching, research and service excellence. As a team, he is committed to providing a nurturing environment that allows faculty members to realise their full potential as a professor, a lecturer or a research staff, within the governing policies of the university.

His office oversees academic staff affirmation, recruitment, appointment and re-appointment, annual faculty performance evaluation, promotion and tenure, and the development of the next generation of leaders and supports institutional initiatives to enhance communication, mentoring, career development, and faculty policy changes.

## Thank You, Associate Professor Lim-Teo Suat Khoh

NIE would like to express her appreciation to Assoc Prof Lim-Teo Suat Khoh for her dedication and significant contributions to NIE since 1994. Assoc Prof Lim-Teo Suat Khoh stepped down from her role as Dean for Faculty Affairs on 1 July 2011. During her appointment, she had worked relentlessly with Heads and academic staff of the 12 Academic Groups in NIE, to support and deliver NIE's teaching and research programmes. She also oversaw human resource matters concerning academic staff, on matters of faculty appointment, re-appointment, promotion and tenure.

Assoc Prof Lim-Teo had served NIE with distinction in her other roles; Vice-Dean, School of Science, Head, Division of Mathematics, Head, Mathematics and Mathematics Education (MME) Academic Group, Associate Dean, Foundation Programmes Office (now known as Office of Teacher Education) and Dean, Academic Groups.



## Inventive Chinese

CEO of Creative Tech shares his ideas with Chinese language teachers

By Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group

NIE's new batch of 300 Chinese Language teachers were treated to an interesting induction seminar jointly organised by the Asian Languages and Cultures (ALC) Academic Group and the Chinese Language Education and Research (CLEAR) Club on 20 May 2011, at NIE.

Guest Speaker, Mr Sim Wong Hoo, CEO of Creative Technology Ltd, shared his ideas on how multimedia technology can be integrated into Chinese Language learning to newly appointed Chinese Language teachers. Mr Sim said, "Chinese is going to be the next global language. Decades ago, Chinese didn't really go well with technology — Chinese inputs were difficult with the early computers when English used to be the sole influential global language. We invented the first Chinese PC in the world, which was primitive. Now everything has changed — we have touch screen, pen input and tablet technology, which work well with the Chinese language. Moreover, China's economy is booming. I see a lot of potential in the learning of Chinese language and development of Chinese education in a future multimedia classroom."



(From left) Mr Sim Wong Hoo with Prof Goh Yeng Seng

Mr Sim equated the mindset of mastering the Chinese language with entrepreneurship. He related that there must be an element of "PLAY" and "FUN" for effective learning of the language to take place. He cited many of his experiences as a student from an English-speaking background and suggested that for their future classes, they can consider

infusing an element of "fun" into learning, reiterating that "learning of Chinese is easy".

The iflashbook, a Chinese interactive e-textbook was launched during the talk. The device contains the same syllabus and textbooks of the current Primary One to Six Ministry of Education Chinese instructional package. This was made in collaboration with ALC's academics who provided the expertise in Chinese pedagogy, especially in the bilingual approach, and Creative Technology Ltd, which managed the technical aspects. Also introduced was Creative's seven-inch ZiiO Android and Magic Pen tablet which supports touch screen Chinese input and many Chinese educational games and applications.

The two-hour exchange was aimed at inviting entrepreneurs onto campus for closer active collaboration; much like how industry-leaders and universities in US work together as partners. Conceptualised by Head of ALC, Professor Goh Yeng Seng, the session was aimed at facilitating greater understanding between student teachers and prevailing industry trends.



(Both) The excited Mr Sim Wong Hoo sharing his dreams of amalgamating technology with Chinese education

## NTU President: Professor Bertil Andersson

Professor Bertil Andersson was installed as NTU's third President on 1 July 2011. He was formerly President of Linköping University, Sweden, from 1999 to 2003, the Chief Executive of the European Science Foundation from 2004 to 2007, and the Chairman of the Nobel Committee for Chemistry in 2007. A world-renowned plant biochemist with a longstanding association with the Nobel Foundation, he is part of a big league of scientists, joining 15 Nobel Prize winners among others since 1921 who have been awarded the Wilhelm Exner Medal for shaping the world through research. Prof Andersson first became NTU's Provost in 2007, where he strengthened the university's profile as one of the fastest-growing research-intensive universities in the world. Today, NTU is the youngest university ranked among the world's top 100 universities, with a track record of winning competitive grants for socially-relevant research and attracting world-acclaimed scientists who are leading lights in their respective fields.



(From left) Prof Bertil Andersson with former Singapore President and NTU Chancellor S R Nathan

Photo: Nanyang Technological University

## Prominent Visitors

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

### 7 June

Minister for Education, Ministry of Education, Mr Heng Swee Keat; and Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Manpower, Mr Hawazi Daipi met students, academics and staff and toured the campus facilities at NIE.



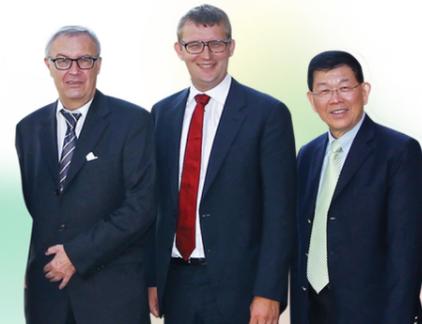
### 9 June

His Excellency, Ambassador of the Republic of Costa Rica, Mr Juan F Cordero (*far right*); and CEO of National Institute of Learning of Costa Rica, Mr Olman Segura (*far left*) learned more about Singapore's teacher education.



### 1 July

His Excellencies, Danish Education Minister, Mr Troels Lund Poulsen (*centre*); and Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark, Mr Ole Harald Lisborg (*left*); and their delegation found out more about NIE's Collaborative Classrooms and education strategies.



### 18 July

Her Royal Highness, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand visited NIE to better understand teacher education and the professional development for pre-service teachers, and special education in Singapore. Her Royal Highness also toured the Collaborative Classrooms and NIE's library during her visit.



### 20 July

Vice-Minister for Education, People's Republic of China, Mr Liu Limin, and delegation visited NIE to gain greater knowledge on Initial Teacher Preparation and School Leadership programmes.

## Fundamental Measurement

NIE hosts the Pacific Rim Objective Measurement Symposium 2011 Conference

By Associate Professor Lee Ong Kim, Head of Policy and Leadership Studies Academic Group cum Associate Dean for Research, Office of Educational Research

Held in NIE from 13 to 15 July 2011, with a series of pre-conference workshops on 12 July 2011, the Pacific Rim Objective Measurement Symposium (PROMS) is a conference on the theory and applications of Rasch Measurement in research in the Social Sciences, specifically in Education, as well as in Medical and Health Sciences, Psychiatry and Psychology. Guest-of-Honour, NIE Director, Professor Lee Sing Kong, emphasised in his address the importance of measurement in research because valid research findings are important for decision makers to design policies.

Co-Chairs of PROMS 2011 were Dr Chew Lee Chin from the Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning; and Associate Professor Lee Ong Kim, Head of Policy and Leadership Studies Academic Group cum Associate Dean for Research at the Office of Educational Research, together with their team members Associate Professor Jonathan Goh, Assistant Professor Hairon Salleh, Dr Koh Kim Hong, Dr Lee Yim Ping, Dr Lee Chai Hong, Iris, and Ms Jaiton Ibrahim.

The five keynote speakers, all Rasch Measurement experts, were Professor Magdalena Mok from Hong Kong Institute of



(From left) Keynote speakers: Prof Magdalena Mok; Prof Trevor Bond; Dr Jack Stenner; Dr Gage Kingsbury; and Prof George Engelhard

Education; Professor Trevor Bond who is an Adjunct Professor at James Cook University; Dr Jack Stenner who is the CEO and Co-Founder of MetaMetrics Inc., USA; Dr Gage Kingsbury, Senior Research Fellow at the Northwestern Evaluation Association, USA, and Senior Research Fellow at the Northwestern Evaluation Association in USA; and Professor George Engelhard from Emory University, USA. They covered topics on multi-dimensionality, the appropriate use of the Rasch Measurement – such as the fairness in the use of fixed-form tests, measurement of reading ability in lexiles – and the quest of invariant rater-mediated measurement. A specialised conference with a regular participation of up to 200, PROMS has been held twice in Malaysia (2005 and 2010), twice in Hong Kong (2006 and 2009), in Taiwan (2007) and Tokyo (2008).



(From left) Conference organisers and keynote speakers with event photographer, Mr William Oh (4th from left)



Conference participants come from all over the world



(From left) Prof Lee Sing Kong with Co-Chairs Assoc Prof Lee Ong Kim and Dr Chew Lee Chin

# Celebrating the Teachers' Investiture Ceremony July 2011

By Ms Wendy Goh, Public, International and Alumni Relations



The Teachers' Investiture Ceremony saw the graduation of 1,961 newly-qualified teachers. NIE also celebrated the outstanding achievements of 34 award recipients from 6 to 8 July 2011. Speaking at his first NIE investiture, Guest-of-Honour, Minister for Education, Mr Heng Swee Keat, urged teachers to be "role models of life-long learning". He added that he is confident that "over the years, NIE has evolved its model of preparing teachers for the challenges of teaching" and that graduates learning at NIE will be provided with a good foundation.

NIE Director, Professor Lee Sing Kong echoed Mr Heng's hopes that graduates will pass the flame and be great teachers who ignite the love for learning, and model values such as tolerance, service to the community, global awareness, and sensitivity to the local and global environment. He added that "quality begets quality" and that "NIE has been blessed to have a committed team of high calibre teacher educators who are truly passionate about their work, and who do not hesitate to walk the extra mile to ensure that every student teacher succeeds".



# Valedictorians: The Sweet Taste of Success

## Ceremony 1

The tone was certainly set by the first ceremony Valedictorian, Mr Jonathan Leo Ng. For this 29-year-old, the Teacher's Pledge signifies a personal triumph. Failing to qualify for a degree programme some two years back, he persevered for the love of teaching and graduated on 6 July 2011 with a Bachelor of Science in Education (First Class Honours) and is the only recipient of four book prizes and awards.

*Believe in your dreams, but more importantly believe in yourself for it is you who can turn your dreams into reality.*



(From left) Ceremony 1 Guest-of-Honour, Education Minister, Mr Heng Swee Keat presenting Jonathan his award

## Ceremony 2

Nearly missing his very first class at NIE, Mr Muhammad Sadiq still recalls vividly his first day "like it was yesterday". This Valedictorian added that such examples are fond memories he will cherish as a student here. Sadiq also said that through the various challenges he has faced, his passion for becoming a teacher has kept him going and also credited his peers and NIE for his successes. He graduated on 6 July 2011 with a Diploma in Education (General) and the Dr Shila Fernandez Prize.

*Today, I am what I am partly because of that belief, that simple belief that I have the potential to excel. Keep believing, keep achieving and keep inspiring!*



(6th from left) Ceremony 2 Guest-of-Honour, Mr Lawrence Wong, Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Education and Sadiq (1st from left) with award recipients

## Ceremony 3

Her dedication and enthusiasm was evident as Ms Pamela Tham Xin-Yi shared several amusing stories about her students. She happily quipped that helping her students build their telescope – the lens through which they explore the world around them was how she likened her teaching approach and the important part that a teacher takes on after graduation. She received her Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Primary) and was also the recipient of the Singapore Teachers' Union Book Prize and the Association of Mathematics Educators Book Prize on 7 July 2011.

*Let us keep our focus on who we are here to be - Teachers, in every sense of the word. We (teachers) are the ones helping our students build their telescopes – the lens through which they explore the world around them... helping them develop the tools to acquire knowledge - curiosity, creativity, a desire to learn.*



(5th from left) Ceremony 3 Guest-of-Honour, Mr Hawazi Daipi, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Manpower, NIE Director, Prof Lee Sing Kong with Pamela (2nd from right) and award recipients

## Ceremony 4

The last Valedictorian to deliver her speech, Ms Tan Liang Si echoed the sentiments shared by all her fellow Valedictorians, who credited NIE's Professors as "inspirations in and of themselves". Now teaching French at the MOE Language Centre with History as her official second curriculum subject, she received her Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) and was awarded the Justice Choor Singh Book Prize.

*Teach, go MAD. Make a Difference... there's no denying that everyday we already do make a difference... When the ocean of work in school seems infinite, just keep swimming, swimming and swimming.*



(2nd from left) Ceremony 4 Guest-of-Honour, Ms Sim Ann, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Law with Liang Si and her family

# Dinosaur Walks

Learning Sciences Lab team integrates gaming principles with geographical know-how

By Assistant Professor Beaumie Kim, Learning Sciences and Technologies Academic Group

Two local secondary schools experienced an interactive digital media twist to their Geography classes, thanks to a particular Learning Sciences Lab (LSL) research team at NIE.

Focused on the design and development of an educational game titled, "Voyage to the Age of Dinosaurs" (VAD for short), it was aimed at finding alternative ways of perceiving and understanding the Earth's processes, how to immerse learners into the Earth's dynamics, and how knowledge and activities in informal settings can be extended to schools in the Singapore context.

This project started out as a game design project, which uniquely involved secondary school students and teachers as design partners. The NIE team, which was led by Principal Investigator, Assistant Professor Beaumie Kim of NIE's Learning Sciences Lab and Learning Sciences and Technologies Academic Group, positioned learners as experts in what they are excited about for the design of an Interactive Digital Media (IDM).



(Above and below) Teachers sharing their classroom experience



Since the start of the project collaboration in 2007, they have collated information that included videos, artefacts, interviews, and so forth, which will help the LSL team better support the designs of VAD and classroom lessons. In the recent NIE's Redesigning Pedagogy Conference, the NIE team and teachers shared their experiences and findings together at a special session. In the session, the NIE's research team presented their findings and interacted with the teachers while playing with VAD game.



(Above) Participants trying their hand at the VAD game

Six design workshops were conducted with students and teachers in order to reflect upon their current status of teaching and learning practices, to be introduced to emerging possibilities, and to tease out their creative ideas to lead teaching and learning innovations. In the process of developing and conducting the design workshops, the researchers and teachers were able to create various hands-on activities that would help immerse students into ideas of Earth's processes and dynamics; and at the same time they helped the VAD team to see what might work better with computer technology and other means.

# Tamil Facebook-ing

NIE takes the future of sharing customs and language online

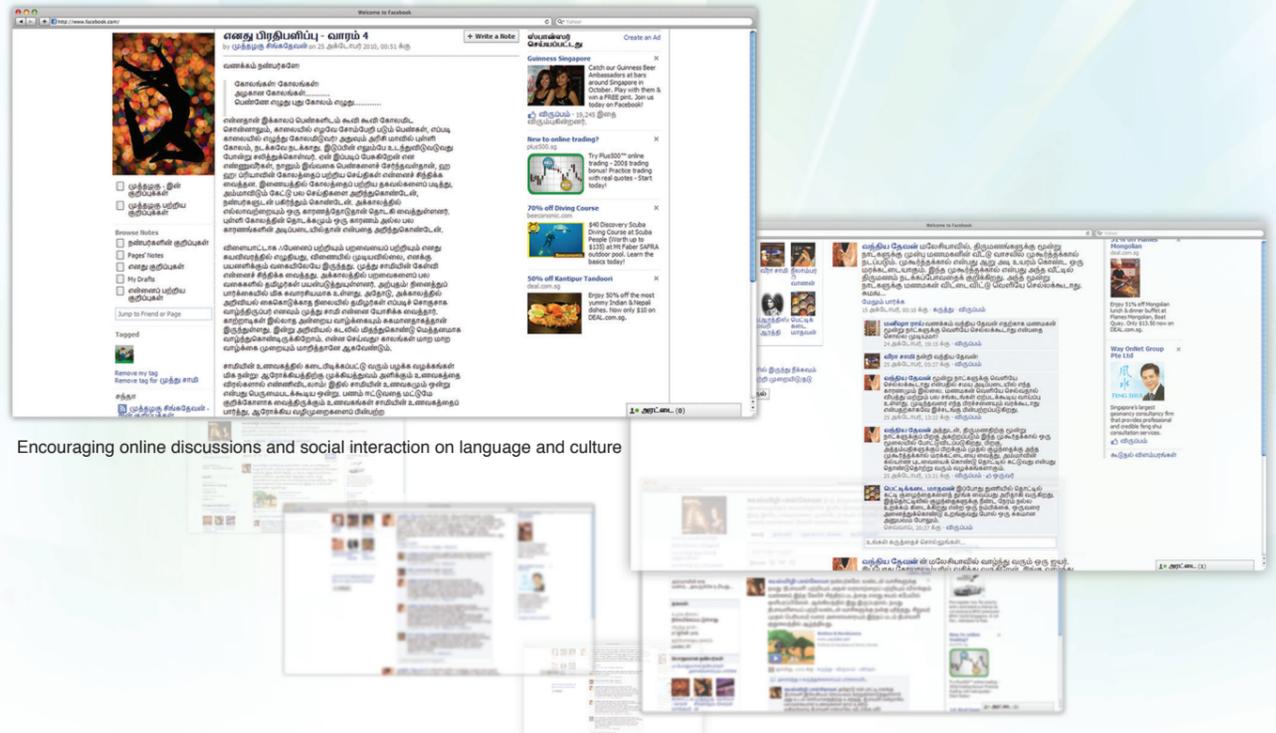
By Associate Professor Seetha Lakshmi, Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group

NIE Associate Professor Seetha Lakshmi and Centre for e-Learning's Instructional Designer, Ms Shamini Thilarajah, have joined hands to take NIE's teaching classes on Tamil language to the online social networking arena. Assoc Prof Lakshmi, from the Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group, and Ms Thilarajah intend to culminate the teachings from two classes, Teaching of Tamil Language 1 and Teaching of Tamil Language 3, onto Facebook®.

Started about a year ago, the objectives are mainly on promoting greater communication and exchange of facts about Indian customs and traditions; comparing and constructing knowledge

on differences in practices by Indians from various parts of the world; and building online communities, connecting and critiquing creative knowledge creation through social interaction. Both also felt that this could provide assistance to their students to speak well in Tamil, make Tamil a living language in Singapore and possibly make Singapore a hub for teaching Tamil as a second language.

The two experts have also discovered that through this Facebook® initiative, Tamil trainees can better engage their students and make teaching an interesting feature while providing opportunities to their students to speak Spoken Standard Tamil through everyday expressions and the sharing of information.



Encouraging online discussions and social interaction on language and culture

## Inspiring Writing

Researching on a literary legacy brings an NIE academic to two continents

By Associate Professor Hadijah Bte Rahmat, Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group

After about an eight-month hiatus overseas, Associate Professor Hadijah Bte Rahmat, Deputy Head of Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group, returned from her academic leave armed with new discoveries, great experiences to share and a possible book in the works.

From 15 September to 15 December 2010, Assoc Prof Hadijah was appointed as Affiliated Fellow at the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) at the Leiden University, in the Netherlands, and from January to March this year, as Visiting Scholar at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in the University of London.

At these prestigious universities, she conducted extensive research on the literary works and legacies of Mr Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi (1797-1854 AD), a prominent nineteenth-century thinker and writer in the Malay world. She also unearthed Munsyi Abdullah's surviving legacy in Europe, his contacts and relationship with Europeans and how the human dynamics influence the development of modern Malay-Indonesian literature and Southeast Asia's colonial history.



Assoc Prof Hadijah sharing her preliminary findings at the public lecture at IIAS, Leiden University

Most of her research was done at Leiden University Library where it holds thousands of old Malay-Indonesian manuscripts under collections of Legatum Wameranum. She also conducted numerous interviews and consulted several Dutch scholars in Leiden and discovered some interesting findings in a short period of time. Based on her preliminary research findings, she delivered a public lecture at IIAS on 6 December 2010 where it was well-received and also attended by Dutch scholars, such as Dr W. van der Molen, and Professor Teuku Iskandar, expert in Indonesian and Malay manuscripts, masters students in Indonesian Studies, visiting researchers from Indonesia and IIAS fellows.

Whilst in London, Assoc Prof Hadijah focused on rich archival materials of London Missionary Society (1764-1977) and Councils of World Mission located at SOAS. Her search for Munsyi



(From left) Assoc Prof Hadijah presenting gifts to Dr Phillippe Peycam, Director, International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden University

Abdullah's legacies also led a her to a visit to Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, Jakarta, from 26 April to 5 May 2011. Finally, Assoc Prof Hadijah came back to continue her research at the National Library Board's Lee Kong Chian Research Library here.

Assoc Prof Hadijah has gathered substantial research materials within the past months and is set to write a book based on the findings of her current study and her previous research as a Fulbright Visiting Scholar in 2002 to 2003.

*These scholars were active agents in the process of preserving, circulating and determining the sphere of influence for Abdullah's works and played complementary role with British, American and other Europeans in knowledge construction about Abdullah. Therefore, the Dutch contribution to knowledge about Munsyi Abdullah and the Malay-Indonesian literary development has been very significant and indeed a force to be reckoned with.*

NIE congratulates Associate Professor Hadijah Bte Rahmat, who received the Tun Seri Lanang Award on 30 July 2011. The highest degree of award that can be accorded to an individual, Assoc Prof Hadijah had received her award from Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts, who was Guest-of-Honour at the 2011 Literature Awards Ceremony.

## Studying Games

By Associate Professor Angeline Khoo Cheok Eng, Psychological Studies Academic Group

Recently, Associate Professor Angeline Khoo Cheok Eng from NIE's Psychological Studies Academic Group and her co-authors received a silver award from Annals, Academy of Medicine, Singapore, for their paper based on a three-year longitudinal study funded by the Ministry of Education and the Media Development Authority. Their paper was chosen from among 400 articles.

What started out as a sabbatical some seven years ago when she visited two academics at Iowa State University, culminated in a research project for Assoc Prof Khoo and her team.

Assoc Prof Khoo and her team of researchers surveyed about 3,000 youths in six primary and six secondary schools in Singapore over a period of 3 years. The youths responded to a survey on their socio-demographic characteristics, video-gaming habits, school performance, somatic symptoms, various psychological traits, social functioning and pathological symptoms of video-gaming.

The data was weighted and analysed to determine the prevalence of video-gaming addiction among Singapore's youth. What they found was that of all the study participants who were gamers, 8.7 per cent were classified as pathological players. In fact, it inferred that more boys (12.6 per cent) reported pathological symptoms than girls (4.7 per cent). These addicts spend about 37.5 hours a week gaming – that is, double the 18.8 hours spent by non-addicted youths. The prevalence of pathological video-gaming among Singaporean youth is comparable with that from other countries, although such longitudinal data is rare internationally.

The research also revealed that certain behaviours were significantly associated with pathological status; these include an impulse control problem, reduced social competence, increased hostility, poor academic performance, and damage to social functioning. The finding also pointed that actual addiction is not really about how many hours a day a gamer plays games but about how the game-playing impacts other aspects of the gamer's life.



(3<sup>rd</sup> from left) Assoc Prof Angeline Khoo and some of her team members at work.

Image: Ms Lin Ai-Leen, Office of Education Research

## Outstanding Paper

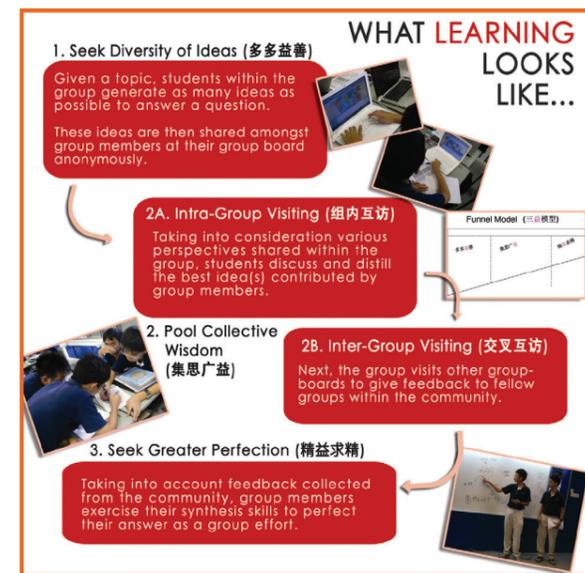
LSL Researchers Win Outstanding Paper Award

By Ms Wen Yun, Learning Sciences Laboratory

A group of researchers from the Learning Sciences Laboratory (LSL) won the Outstanding Paper Award at the Global Chinese Conference on Computer in Education 2011 held at Hangzhou, China. The paper, entitled "Designing Rapid Collaborative Knowledge Improvement for Second Language Learning", is co-authored by Assistant Professor Chen Wenli and Professor Looi Chee Kit both from Learning Sciences and Technologies Academic Group, Ms Wen Yun, and a teacher from the School of Science and Technology, Ms Ooi Chingya.

The paper proposed a pedagogical model called Funnel Model to help students learn comprehension and writing skills in the Chinese language. This model has been implemented in the School of Science and Technology (SST) as part of its FutureSchool programme.

The research team working with the SST teachers investigates how effective language use and understanding can be fostered through communication and collaboration over the Group Scribbles technology, and how effective collaboration activities and patterns can be designed to support language learning.



(Above) A depiction of the Funnel Model

## A Teacher's Heart

An insight on NIE Director

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

On Wednesday, 1 June 2011 edition of *The Straits Times*, readers were introduced to a feature on the National Institute of Education (NIE) Director, Professor Lee Sing Kong, and the institute's vision of how it is geared to be a trainer of 21st century teachers in the newspaper's Prime People section.

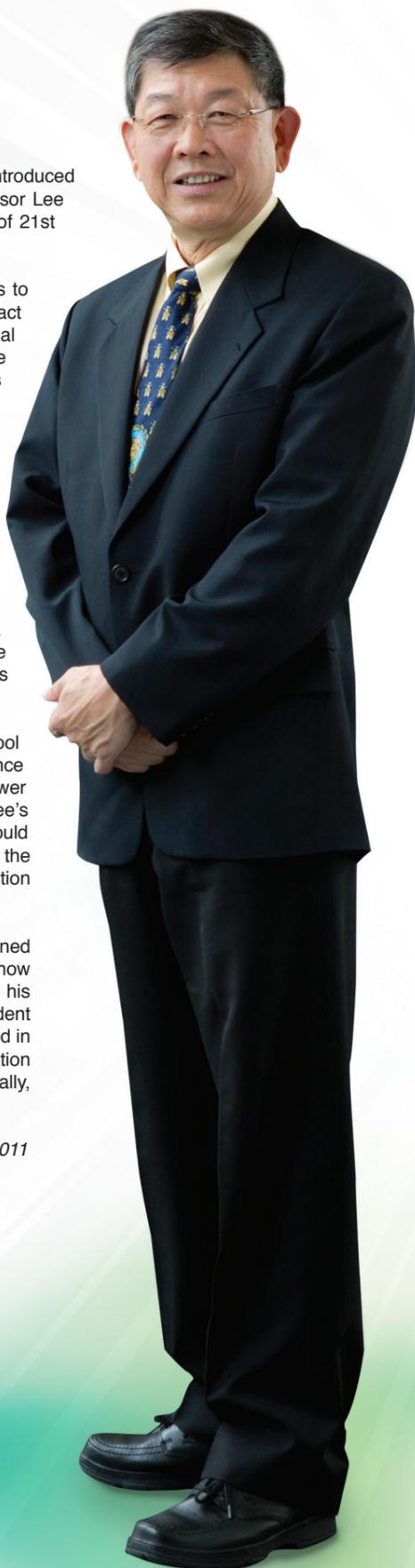
The one-page feature carried Prof Lee's comments about what it means to be a 21<sup>st</sup>-century teacher. Noting that there is no running away from the fact that teachers have to be digitally literate, he discussed that the individual must be able to facilitate learning, stimulate students and control, moderate and manage communication and collaboration. He added that "teachers must be able to use technology in ways that enhance their teaching and 'speak' to students". The article further highlighted how NIE's collaborative classroom design has state-of-the-art features that reflects an environment conducive for nurturing this new generation of teachers.

Titled as "Secrets of a good teacher" (Prime people, Pg A16), the newspaper's Senior Writer, Ms Sandra Davie, also highlighted Prof Lee's academic background and that he was first a horticulturist by training and a Professor of biological sciences at Nanyang Technological University. It was noted that Prof Lee has witnessed huge changes in education, and has been at the forefront of many of them. He joined NIE in 1991 after a career in the civil service. Prof Lee also made his breakthrough discovery while engaged in research and some five years ago, took over as Head at NIE.

The feature also included Prof Lee's experiences back in his primary school days and how he was inspired by a teacher to love science and experience the joy of learning as well. There was an additional Question-and-Answer section titled "Good teachers are born – and made" that cited Prof Lee's answers to questions such as: Are good teachers born or made; should teacher appraisal be tied to performance; when selecting teachers, what is the one quality you would look for, that is essential; and why do you think action research is important.

Whilst Prof Lee noted that advances in information technology have redefined the traditional nature of teaching and learning, it was also apparent how one can inspire teaching and what it means to be an inspiring teacher in his interview. He emphasised that at the heart of a teacher's work is the student and that every teacher must equip his students well to survive and succeed in the new global landscape. He elaborated that the new landscape of education demands that teachers develop the 'whole child', not only intellectually, physically and aesthetically.

To read the full article, visit: [www.nie.edu.sg/newsroom/media-coverage/2011](http://www.nie.edu.sg/newsroom/media-coverage/2011)



## Inspired Teachings

This Teachers' Day, we highlight a few contributions from well-wishers

### Mr Low Min Chye

A student of the NIE Professional Development Continuum Model (PDCM) programme, Mr Low Min Chye expresses his appreciation for Associate Professor Jonathan Goh, Assistant Head at the Policy and Leadership Studies (PLS) Academic Group. Min Chye says:

*"I commend Dr Jonathan Goh for his diligence and thoroughness in preparing for the Contemporary Issues in School Marketing module he conducted while making it engaging for us. Knowing that we usually arrive for class tired after a day's work, his job in keeping us engaged was definitely not an easy one. In particular, this module was also academically rigorous. My classmates and I have benefited much from the readings prescribed and Dr Goh's comments on our written assignments."*

*Thanks Dr Goh, for the assistance rendered to me all these years as the course coordinator. Owing to work commitments, I had to defer some modules but Dr Goh, with the other staff at the Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning, was ever-patient and helpful in guiding me through this. More importantly, he was always encouraging me to complete my Master's degree and I would say that I would not have come so far without him 'pacing' me and marking my progress through the course.*

*I am proud to call myself an alumnus of NIE. With staff like Dr Goh, NIE will definitely fulfil its vision of being an institute of distinction and its mission in creating a world-class institute renowned for its excellence in teacher education and educational research."*



(Above) Benjamin Lim with Vanessa Hew at school  
Image: Ms Vanessa Hew

### Ms Vanessa Hew

At the Ministry of Education's Teaching Scholarship Presentation Ceremony 2011 on 5 August 2011, one of the recipients this year, Miss Hew Kai Ling Vanessa, gave Mr Benjamin Lim Yi, NIE Class of 2008 graduate, a great pre-National Day gift. To be exact, it was a nomination that recognised Benjamin as the teacher who made the most significant impact on Vanessa in school and had inspired her to now take on teaching as a career as well. Vanessa says:

*"Mr. Benjamin Lim has been an inspiration to me. His selfless sacrifice for my cohort has deeply touched me and his passion for teaching has inspired me to follow in his footsteps to become a teacher."*

*Apart from having a brilliant and dedicated teacher, Anglo-Chinese School (Independent)'s music programme has also helped to bring out the best in me. It has provided me with many opportunities to shine and develop myself through the emphasis of values such as perseverance and patience.*

*Thank you Sir, for going the extra mile not only for me, but for my whole cohort... I really appreciate all that you have done for us and I wish you all the best in your future endeavours."*

### Ms Merle Angela Sargento Nagrampa

A graduate of the Class of 2010 Customised Training Programme, Ms Merle Angela Sargento Nagrampa, firmly believes that during her time at NIE, it is not only the knowledge that she has gained from her teachers but also the inspiration found in their attitudes and passion in teaching and education. Angela sends her deep appreciation from the Philippines to NIE:

*"A great teacher really makes a difference in the life of the students. My NIE lecturers have all left an indelible impression and inspired me to be a better educator! Special thanks to:*

- ▶ *Dr Philip Wong who patiently taught us about infocomm technology and some strategies in motivating pupils to perform well in class. "Don't stress yourself" and "Just Google it!" are some reminders from him that really works;*

- ▶ *Dr Yeap Ban Har (former NIE lecturer) for teaching us the pedagogical knowledge in teaching Mathematics;*
- ▶ *Mr Mazlan Hasan and his magnificent Infocomm Technology (ICT) tool;*
- ▶ *Dr Sylvia Chong for sharing with us the different approaches to handling students with differing intellectual capabilities; and*
- ▶ *Dr Augustine Tan Tuck Lee, the most generous and fun-loving teacher. Our happy moments in his class will remain in our memory forever. The activities, experiments, explanations and demonstrations help us to fully understand the concepts of teaching Science.*

*My dear professors, thank you for everything that you have shared with me!"*

## Leadership Graduates

THE NIE Management and Leadership in Schools Programme Graduation July 2011

By Public, International and Alumni Relations



(From left) Mr Wong Siew Hoong, Director of Schools, Ministry of Education, presenting Mdm Lim Minn Dayna with the Dr Ruth Wong Medal

NIE celebrated the graduation of participants from the Management and Leadership in Schools (MLS) Programme on 22 July 2011. Having completed their Head of Department (HOD) training, the graduands received their certificates and awards during the graduation ceremony from Guest-of-Honour, Director of Schools, Mr Wong Siew Hoong from the Ministry of Education.

The 17-week-long programme has produced Singapore's latest batch of middle-level leaders in schools to be exemplary leaders, people managers, and experts in teaching and learning. At the colourful ceremony, participants also celebrated the outstanding achievements of the recipient of the Dr Ruth Wong Medal award, Madam Lim Minn Dayna from Dunman High School who was Valedictorian of the ceremony as well.

The event also recognised the outstanding achievements of four recipients who received the prestigious Dr J.M. Nathan Memorial Prize for Curriculum Project. They were: Mr Lim Hock Seong Kelvin from Pei Hwa Secondary School, Madam Jacqueline Tan Lin Yin from Jurong Secondary School, Mr Yeo Nai Ju Terence from Queensway Secondary School, and Mr Yu Yang Ming Ernest from Anderson Secondary School.



(From left) Mr Lim Hock Seong Kelvin; Mr Yeo Nai Ju Terence; Mr Yu Yang Ming Ernest; NIE Director, Prof Lee Sing Kong; and Mdm Jacqueline Tan Lin Yin

## China Masters

NIE celebrates first and largest get-together for Master in Educational Administration Alumni in China

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

NIE International recently organised the National Institute of Education's largest alumni gathering in celebration of the fifth anniversary of the Master in Educational Administration (MEA) programme on 25 June 2011. The MEA programme is a specially designed programme aimed at China educators. Held at the Grand Hotel Qinhuang, in Qinhuangdao, Hebei, People's Republic of China, this was the first time all graduates of the programme were brought together.

Alumni members made their way to the celebrations from all parts of China – the cities of Beijing, Wuhan, Shanghai, Chongqing and the provinces of Hebei, Hunan, and Hubei, to name a few. The

Guests-of-Honour for the celebration were NIE Director, Professor Lee Sing Kong, and Deputy Director-General, Hebei Education Bureau, Mr Zhai Hai Hun.

It was a joyous occasion that proved to be a great networking opportunity for MEA alumni of various cohorts. The celebrations commenced with a morning forum followed by a half-day city tour and concluded with a gala dinner. To date, the MEA programme has produced 344 graduates from the 11 programme intakes since its inception in 2005. The graduates have all progressed very well in their positions in the Ministries, Universities and Schools after they completed their studies.



(7th from left) Deputy Director-General, Hebei Education Bureau, Mr Zhai Hai Hun; NIE Director, Prof Lee Sing Kong; and NIE's 5th Anniversary MEA alumni group  
Image: NIE International

## Calendar of Events

Event	Date	Venue	Contact
Service Learning Day	21 September	NIE, Singapore	Ms Jann Tan, OTE Email: huiling.tan@nie.edu.sg
Leaders in Education Programme (2011 Intake) Graduation	13 October	The Regent Hotel	Miss Rosnizawati Bte Sani, GPL Email: rosnizawati.sani@nie.edu.sg
Commerce Seminar 2011	2 November	M Hotel	Dr Koh Noi Keng, HSSE Email: noikeng.koh@nie.edu.sg
Citi-NIE Financial Literacy Conference 2011	3 November	M Hotel	Dr Koh Noi Keng, HSSE Email: noikeng.koh@nie.edu.sg
C J Koh Professorial Lecture	3 November	Civil Service College	Mr Aaron Chong, OER Email: aaron.chong@nie.edu.sg
Character and Citizenship Education Conference 2011	8 - 9 November	NIE, Singapore	Ms Stephane Cheung, OTE Email: stephane.cheung@nie.edu.sg

For more information, visit: [www.nie.edu.sg](http://www.nie.edu.sg)



# FORGING AHEAD WITH NIE ALUMNI

Graduation is only the beginning. As part of NIE Alumni family, you will be kept abreast of the latest courses and conferences for your professional development. What's more, you can catch up with fellow alumni and expand your network through the many networking events organised with you in mind.

#### Keep Abreast with

the latest developments in education and education research

#### Develop your career

through latest courses and conferences at NIE Singapore

#### Build bonds of friendship

with your former classmates and lecturers that will last you a lifetime

#### Expand Your Network

by tapping on NIE's associations with well-known educational institutes and international alumni across the globe. We can help you pave the way for international collaborations and knowledge exchange

Email your contact details to us at [alumni@nie.edu.sg](mailto:alumni@nie.edu.sg) and we will keep you updated on the latest courses, news and events. Keep in touch!