

# NIE 2011 Milestones

SPECIAL  
FEATURE

By Ms Wendy Goh, Public, International and Alumni Relations

## January

Associate Professor Seetha Lakshmi, Asian Languages & Cultures Academic Group garners the prestigious 'Karigaalan Award' (set up by the Singapore Mustafa Tamil Trust), for authoring the Tamil Language Research Book entitled 'Standard Spoken Tamil and Pedagogy', selected as the best Tamil language book from Singapore.

## February

One of the best golfers in the world, renowned Australian sportsman, Mr Adam Scott, visited NIE to promote the Adam Scott Foundation (ASF)'s work in promoting education for young adults, marking another milestone in the close working relationship between NIE and ASF to support aspiring youths in pursuing a meaningful educational experience.

A prominent visit by His Excellency Mr Porfirio Lobo Sosa, President of the Republic of Honduras and his delegation to learn about Singapore's education system with emphasis on NIE's role in teacher training to equip teachers with values, skills and knowledge to meet the 21st century global education landscape.

## March

Thumbs up! Singapore's teaching profession received praise from the US Secretary of Education, Mr Arne Duncan that "Singapore has just done a tremendous job on teacher induction, teacher development, good mentoring, good support and thinking through better evaluation systems" during the 'First International Summit' in New York City – a two-day international summit attended by education ministers, teachers and union leaders from around the world.

The Physical Education and Sports Science (PESS) Academic Group, NIE hosted Professor Paul Schempp from the University of Georgia, USA, from 7 February to 4 March 2011 as PESS's Fifth EW Barker Professor. Prof Schempp delivered a series of public lectures focused on instructional expertise in developing the youth, sports instructors and elite athletes.

## May and June

The successful fourth international teaching conference 2011, 'Redesigning Pedagogy' was well-attended by some 1,500 scholars and practitioners from 24 countries, resulted in an initiative to start a new research centre 'Centre for Scaling, Translation and Commercialisation' to explore new teaching methods in NIE.

## June

NIE celebrated her first and largest get-together of Alumni from the 'Master in Educational Administration (MEA) programme' in Hebei, China - in celebration of the fifth anniversary of the MEA programme – a specially designed programme aimed at China educators, which had produced 344 graduates since its inception in 2005.

## July

Her Royal Highness, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand had a fruitful visit to NIE to better understand teacher education and the professional development for pre-service teachers, and special education in Singapore.

NIE's Deputy Head, Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group and Head, Malay Language and Culture Division, Associate Professor Hadijah Bte Rahmat received the Tun Seri Lanang Award – the most prestigious in the Malay literary scene.

## August

The launch of 'Physical Education and Sports Teacher Academy (PESTA)' and Inaugural PE Conference 2011, as a resource centre for professional development of Physical Education (PE) and Sports Education teachers - NIE's Head, Physical Education and Sport Science Academic Group, Dr John Wang is part of PESTA's Advisory Council.

The official opening of the NIE's Art Collection Exhibition at the NIE Art Gallery marks the first time NIE is showcasing its collection. NIE had begun acquiring art from the 1950s till 2006; with some displayed pieces dating back to the 1940s. Of the 40 exhibited artworks, 8 were highlighted in an article in *The Straits Times* as must-see items for visitors to the Art Gallery.

## September

NIE's Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group launched four new Malay Culture and Education books to provide more reading materials and nurture deeper appreciation of the Asian culture for Singapore's students and teachers. NIE's Deputy Head of the ALC Academic Group and Head of the MLC Division, Associate Professor Hadijah Bte Rahmat was Co-author and co-editor of all 4 tomes.

## October

NIE successfully hosted the 6th research meeting of the International Comparative Study to Identify Unique and Promising Practices in Mathematics and Science Teacher Preparation for APEC Economies, from October 19 to 21. The participants included over 20 teacher educators from six foreign countries, the US Department of Education and NIE, as well as two subject specialists from MOE.

## November

NIE hosted the Inaugural 'Character and Citizenship Education Conference 2011', together with the Ministry of Education. Themed 'Active & Concerned Citizens: Building Character for Community', it provided directions for Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) for Singapore schools, and offered a plethora of ideas and perspectives of CCE in both the local and overseas contexts.

## December

NIE completed the successful refurbishment of its tutorial rooms into 'Collaborative Classrooms' that used green-friendly methods such as recycling of chair and table frames, and are aimed at stimulating creativity and promoting closer engagement in learning. The transformation was completed six months ahead of its target schedule.





Dear Sing Kong,

Back in Munich I would like to thank you for the hospitality, for your precious time and first of all for all the very interesting information you and your nice colleagues gave me on NIE and education in Singapore.

I was impressed by the coherent high-quality work you are doing at NIE. You created an environment for teacher education in Singapore that can serve world-wide as a model.

The "philosophy" of your approach - especially the orientation towards problem-solving and the relevance of values - meets the recent challenges of our societies. It was a pleasure for me having the opportunity to discuss these issues with you.

So I'm looking forward to next occasions for discussing such issues, latest in Munich in 2012. Our preparations for the leadership conference in Munich started, and in short time you will get the first details. I'm very happy that you agreed to present a keynote at this conference.

Warm regards,  
Manfred

## 11 October

Professor Manfred Prenzel, Dean/ TU München School of Education, Germany met with various NIE faculty members to understand Math and Science teacher education in Singapore, and have discussions on Singapore's performance in PISA and TIMSS.



## 19 - 21 October

NIE successfully hosted the 6th research meeting of the International Comparative Study to Identify Unique and Promising Practices in Mathematics and Science Teacher Preparation for APEC Economies. This project is Singapore's participation in a proposed international comparative study to identify unique and promising practices in the training of secondary school mathematics and science (most likely to be Chemistry, depending on the final decision by the international panel) teachers from these economies.

## 25 October

NIE received a delegation of education leaders from the US that comprised US Federal and State Policy officials and leaders of education organisations and education philanthropies. They were briefed on NIE's role in Singapore's education landscape and had discussions on Math and Science teacher education, teacher education in the 21st century, and education leadership development programmes in NIE.



# Global Preludes

By Public, International and Alumni Relations



Cameras were spotted around the campus in August for three days to capture NIE's training and research endeavours for two online episodes that made their world premieres in October and November this year.

Both targeted to feature Singapore's successful education system, the camera crews were overseen by the Ministry of Education (MOE) Singapore and facilitated by PIAR. Commissioned by the world-renowned Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (or OECD) and for the popular US online HDTV programme "Dan Rather Reports"

respectively, they came well-equipped to film footage of NIE's facilities, classroom sessions and more. Through a series of interviews, NIE Director Professor Lee Sing Kong, Deans and Professors in turnkey roles also discussed NIE's mission in teacher curriculum, professional development programmes and future plans whilst student teachers and principal trainees shared their experiences and individual aspirations about the profession.



After several days of gruelling full-day schedules that took them not only around NIE's campus but island-wide, the crews collected enough interviews and film footage from the Ministry of Education of the various local education institutions to profile the important policies and practices that demonstrate Singapore's high standards for education. Upon return to their respective countries, editing work began in full force to meet their world premiere deadlines. For more details, look out for the episodes on the monitors around campus or visit the OECD and "Dan Rather Reports" websites.

# Hearts of Aidilfitri

By Ms Roszalina Bte Rawi, Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group

The NTU Malay Language and Cultural Society (MLCS), with the support of the NIE Asian Languages and Culture (ALC) held its annual Hari Raya Celebration at NIE Lecture Theatre 2 this year. Following the huge success of *Odyssey Aidilfitri 2010*, a first-ever semi-musical concept incorporated into a Hari Raya Celebration by MLCS, a sequel was in the works. Named *Hearts of Aidilfitri: A Raya Love Story*, forward to the play brings us a year after the events of the previous one. The main character Sarah is back in Singapore and in the midst of Hari Raya, was confronted with the choice between her old lover Johan and her English boyfriend John from London.



Guest of Honour, Prof Goh Kim Chuan warmly welcomed

*Hearts of Aidilfitri* main comedic element came in the form of a friendly competition between Malay neighbours in preparation for Hari Raya. Current and to-date issues were also explored. True to its name, the play tugged at the heartstrings of the audience by revealing a prequel scene which depicts Sarah breaking



The cast of *Hearts of Aidilfitri: A Raya Love Story*

up with her then-lover Johan before leaving for London. While *Odyssey Aidilfitri 2010* centres around Sarah's repentance on her impudence and thus seeking forgiveness from her parents, *Hearts of Aidilfitri 2011* revolves around the same message of forgiveness, but amongst friends.

Being a semi-musical, dance and singing items were included in the play, from MLCS's own *Beztari* Malay Dance Group and *Dewi Samudera*, our female dikir barat group. Finalists from MLCS-organised Malay Idol were also invited to perform. This Hari Raya show aims to create awareness among non-Muslim audience as well, on the colourful festivities of Hari Raya, and its powerful message of forgiveness and love. Our affable Guest-Of-Honour, Professor Goh Kim Chuan, Head, Office of Academic Quality Management, NIE, thoroughly enjoyed the celebration. It was also heart warming to see the whole crowd sing, laugh and cry with us as we brought them through the journey of *Hearts of Aidilfitri*.

## RESEARCH

# Higher Degree Award Ceremony 2011

By Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning

The NIE Higher Degree Award Ceremony 2011 was held on 2 August 2011 for the presentation of awards of gold medals and book prizes to the Master's degree by coursework candidates; and certificates to the recipients of the Dean's Commendation for Research. The awards and certificates were respectively presented by Professor Lee Sing Kong, Director, NIE and Professor Paul Teng, Dean, Graduate Studies and Professional Learning. Donors, Heads of Academic Groups, NIE faculty members, as well as family members of the award recipients witnessed the simple but significant event.

### Gold Medals and Book Prizes

Altogether six gold medals and two book prizes were awarded to graduates with outstanding performance in their respective programme or specialisation.

The list of winners is as follows:

- Ms Ho Stephanie Louise from Master of Education (English Literature) [Winner of Educational Research Association of Singapore \(ERAS\) Gold Medal, sponsored by ERAS](#)
- Miss Goh Ying Hsuan from Master of Education (Educational & Psychological Measurement & Evaluation) [Winner of Singapore Teachers' Union \(STU\) Gold Medal, sponsored by STU](#)
- Mr Tan Nguan Peng from Master of Arts (Educational Management) [Winner of Educational Management Gold Medal, sponsored by STU](#)
- Mr Lawrence Tang Kok Onn from Master of Education (Learning Sciences & Technologies) [Winner of Instructional Design & Technology Gold Medal, sponsored by STU](#)
- Ms Lim Zran Ai Lois from Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) [Winner of The Applied Psychology Award, sponsored by NIE's Psychological Studies Academic Group](#)



- Mr Tan Yi Seng from Master of Education (Curriculum & Teaching) [Winner of Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development \(ASCD\) Gold Medal, sponsored by ASCD](#)
- Ms Lim Siok Hiang, Susan from Master of Education (Curriculum & Teaching) [Winner of ASCD Book Prize for Best Dissertation, sponsored by ASCD](#)
- Ms Chiang Lee Ngang from Master of Education (Curriculum & Teaching) [Winner of ASCD Book Prize for Best Critical Inquiry Project, sponsored by ASCD](#)

### Dean's Commendation for Research

The Dean's Commendation for Research was instituted in the January 2008 semester to highlight the importance of publicising on-going or newly completed student research to a wider audience beyond NIE and Singapore. More importantly, it serves to encourage NIE's graduate students to develop the mindset of professional researchers in sharing their findings with the research community at large. Students are recognised for having excelled in their research by publishing papers with their supervisors in peer-reviewed international journals or international refereed book chapters during their period of candidature. At the same time, it is a way of helping graduate students build up a strong CV and portfolio of works by the time they graduate. A total of nineteen commendation certificates were presented, with three of the sixteen graduate students receiving two certificates each.

For more information on the winners and criteria of these awards, please visit [www.nie.edu.sg/studynie/higher-degree-programmes/awards](http://www.nie.edu.sg/studynie/higher-degree-programmes/awards)

# LATEST HIGHER DEGREE PROGRAMMES

## MA in Leadership and Educational Change

Jointly taught by NIE and Teachers College, Columbia University, the programme prepares educational leaders to go beyond organisational leadership towards embracing leadership capacities in curriculum, teaching and learning. Application for the first intake opens in June 2012!

## NIE Doctor in Education

The NIE Doctor in Education (EdD) programme received an overwhelming response for its first intake. 30 selected students from various education sectors and background will be welcomed at a special orientation programme on 13 January 2012.