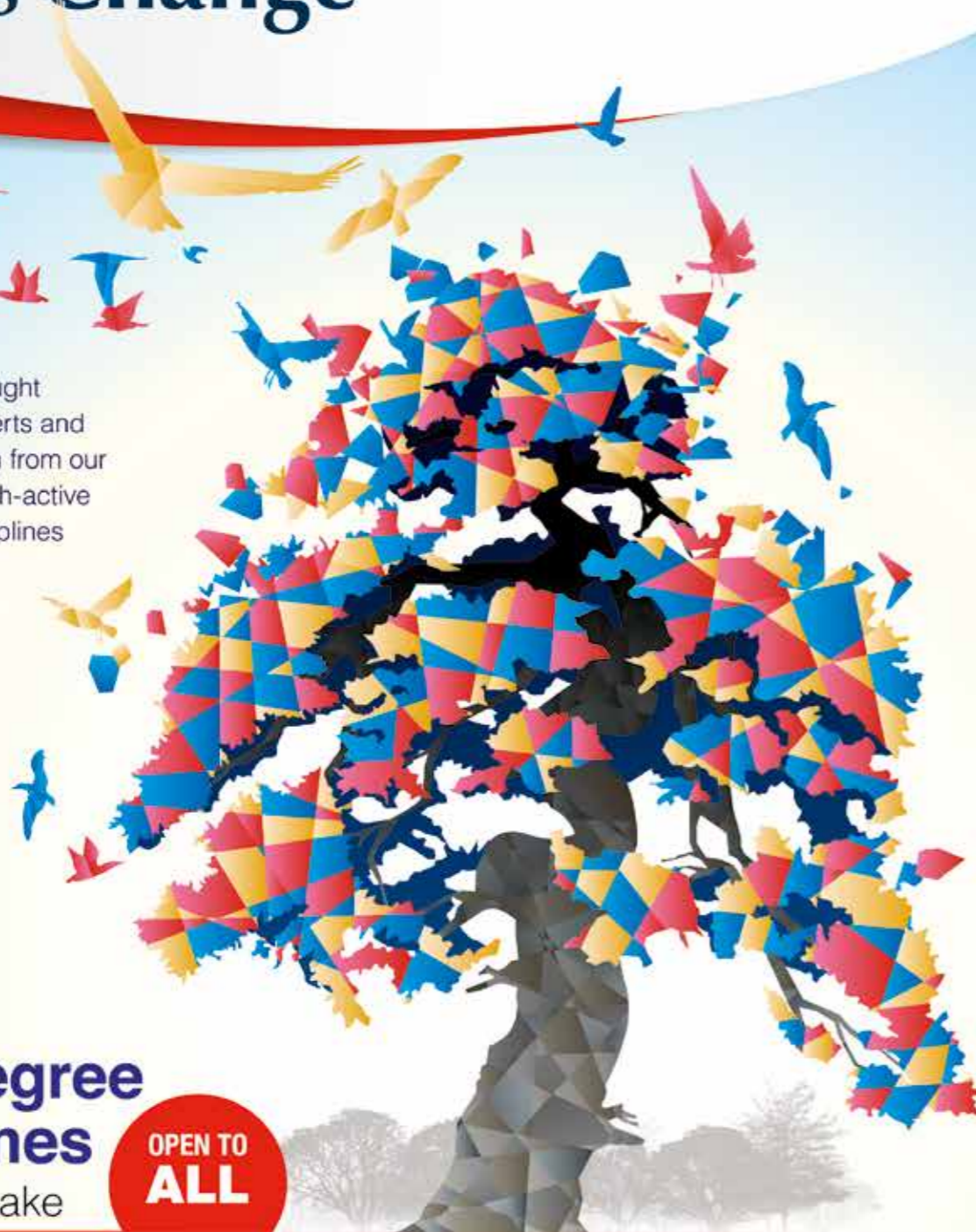


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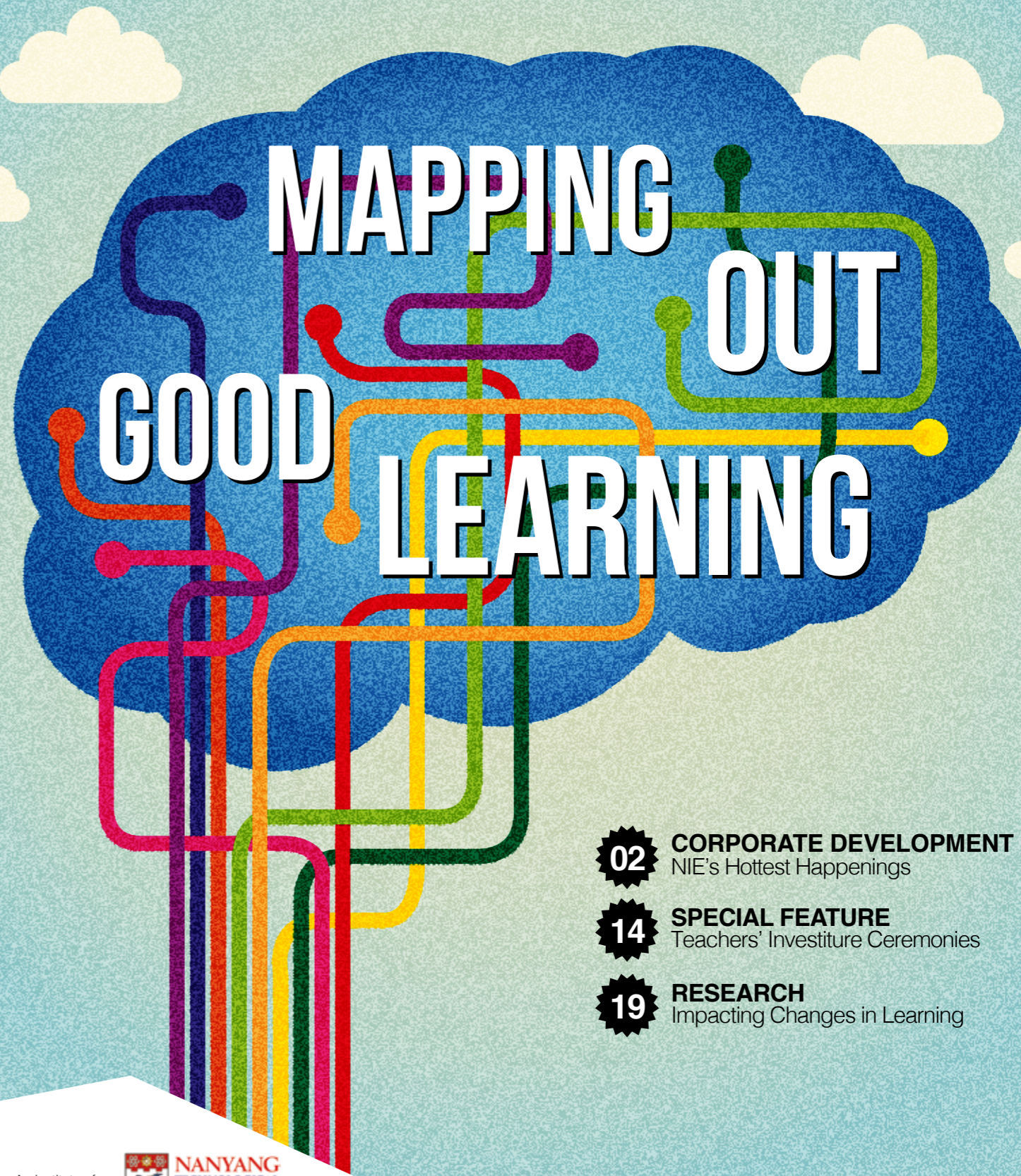
An Institute Of Distinction

news

September 2014 No. 89

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MAPPING OUT GOOD LEARNING



- 02** CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT
NIE's Hottest Happenings
- 14** SPECIAL FEATURE
Teachers' Investiture Ceremonies
- 19** RESEARCH
Impacting Changes in Learning



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Special Feature

Research

EDITOR'S SAY



I totally agree with Mr William Butler Yeats, an Irish poet and Nobel Laureate for Literature, who said that "education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire". This aptly coins NIE's aim to flame the passion for learning

and rings true to every effort we expense. Theming this issue "Mapping out Good Learning", we begin with congratulations to all National Day award winners at NIE on page 3. The new semester also starts after the crescendo of celebrations brought by NIE Teachers' Investiture Ceremonies and NTU Convocation ceremonies (read the Special Feature on pages 14, 16 and 17). Features run the gamut with many noteworthy mentions in our Corporate Development section including two sharing sessions with government Ministers on page 10, prominent visits by overseas dignitaries on page 7, the iconic Freshmen Orientation Camp and NIE Dean of Teacher Education welcome address on page 6.

Staying on a high note is NIE's academic excellence in our Research section. We hope we have captured what are some of the latest contributions to the frontier of education innovation from pages 19 to 23. A sure sign we hope that we are providing strong support toward making Singapore education significant.

Another telling of course is through our happy alumni reflections we received from recent graduates showcased in the Alumni section – see pages 24 to 31. Their hearty sharing of insight and

positive experiences say volumes about our academic commitment to meaningful teaching. We can think of no better way than to include this as a Teachers' Day special message to all our peers and fellow colleagues who walk beside us daily in mapping out greater classroom adventures to come. We will leave you to explore.

Have a very happy Teachers' Day and let the journey of good learning continue...

Guest Editor

Associate Professor Noel Chia Kok Hwee,
Early Childhood and Special Needs Education Academic Group

Editorial Team : Associate Professor Noel Chia Kok Hwee, Patricia Campbell, Monica Khoo, Julian Low

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NIE RECEIVES NATIONAL DAY HONOURS

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

NIE congratulates colleagues who have been bestowed with the National Day Honours 2014 by the President of the Republic of Singapore in recognition of their contributions to education in Singapore and their dedicated service to the Institute, the University and the nation.

Yes it is like a long needed run and there have been some encouraging people running along with me.

Dr John Tan Cher Chay
Senior Lecturer

I feel very honoured to receive the National Day Long Service Medal. I am very appreciative towards NIE HR and Head, DED for nominating me for this award. I will continue to strive to serve NIE and the community to be best of my ability.

Mr Lim Tow Seng
Technical Executive

I'm fortunate to have understanding bosses and good team members all these years. Without them, I won't be here today to receive this award. Thank you!

Ms Anita Bte Abdul Wahab
Executive

Henry Adams once said "A teacher can never tell where his influence stops". The Long Service Award merely cautions one that he has the power to influence thousands of students in his years of teaching, some of whom will themselves become teachers. One can only hope that it was in a positive way.

Dr Dennis Yeo Kah Sin
Lecturer

I feel very privileged to receive The Commendation Medal. My special thanks and sincere appreciation to my bosses and sincere appreciation to my bosses and their support and opportunities given, their mentoring and continued faith in me. Not forgetting my entire team, without whom I will not have achieved so much. Thanks fellas!!

Mr Chan Wai Mun
Data Centre and Operations Manager

I am honored and grateful to have been selected as a recipient of The Efficiency Medal. This award would not have been possible without the support and contributions from my mentors and colleagues, and it serves as an encouragement for me to continue striving for excellence.

Ms Cecilia Wong Sock Yee
Manager, Programme Administration

THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MEDAL (GOLD)

Professor Tan Eng Chye
Member
NIE Council

Mdm Low Khah Gek
Member
NIE Council

THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MEDAL (SILVER)

Professor Tan Oon Seng
Director
National Institute of Education

Associate Professor Shirley Lim Siew-Lee
Associate Dean,
Research Degrees and Grants
Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning

Mr Clarence Tang Kok Heng
Member
NIE Council

THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MEDAL (BRONZE)

Professor Christine Goh Chuen Meng
Dean
Graduate Studies and Professional Learning
Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning

Mr Chan Wai Mun
Data Centre and Operations Manager
Computer Services Centre

THE COMMENDATION MEDAL

Miss Cecilia Wong Sock Yee
Manager, Programme Administration
Office of Teacher Education

THE EFFICIENCY MEDAL

Professor Berinderjeet Kaur
Professor
Mathematics and Mathematics
Education Academic Group

Dr John Tan Cher Chay
Senior Lecturer
Physical Education and
Sports Science Academic Group

Ms Anita Bte Abdul Wahab
Executive
Office of Academic Administration and Services

Mr Lim Tow Seng
Technical Executive
Development and Estate Department

Dr Dennis Yeo Kah Sin
Lecturer
English Language and
Literature Academic Group

Dr Tan Chee Soon
(seconded from MOE)
Teaching Fellow
Office of Education Research

Mdm Thamarai Selvi d/o Chelliah
(seconded from MOE)
Teaching Fellow
English Language and
Literature Academic Group

THE PUBLIC SERVICE MEDAL

Mr Edward D'Silva
Member
NIE Council

PROFESSOR BERTIL ANDERSSON TO FURTHER CONSOLIDATE NTU'S STRENGTHS AS PRESIDENT

The Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Board of Trustees has extended Professor Bertil Andersson's term as NTU President.

Under Prof Andersson's leadership, NTU has grown from strength to strength, as evident by its ranking as one of the top 50 universities in the world. NIE will continue to support the initiatives that will bring NTU to greater heights in the coming years.

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 ranked 41st in the world and also placed second globally among young elite universities under 50 years old. Ranked first among Asian universities in research citation impact, the university has a track record of winning competitive grants for socially-relevant research and attracting world-acclaimed scientists who are leading lights in their respective fields.

Prof Andersson was installed as NTU's third President on 1 July 2011. He was formerly President of Linköping University, Sweden,



Photo By: Nanyang Technological University

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 1997. As the man at the helm of the European Science Foundation in Strasbourg, France, his last post before joining NTU, Prof Andersson consolidated research efforts across 30 European countries.

NIE SIGNS MOU WITH TWO SWEDISH UNIVERSITIES

By Office of Teacher Education



With greater emphasis on international exposure in interdisciplinary training for our student teachers, NIE is constantly looking for university partnerships for our student teachers to go to for exchange programmes and international practicum.

As part of that effort, NIE is making further in-roads to the Nordic region by penning two Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) in May 2014, with the Stockholm University (SU) and Linköping University (LiU). These two renowned universities are among the top Scandinavian universities and in the world. In fact, the Nanyang Technological University (NTU)'s President, Professor Bertil Anderson, hails from Linköping University!

At SU, Professor Tan Oon Seng, Director, NIE and Associate Professor Liu Woon Chia, Dean, Office of Teacher Education signed the MOU in the presence of Professor Bengt-Olov Molander, Advisor to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Hans

Adolfsson, Pro Vice-Chancellor, and Professor Astrid Söderbergh Widding, Vice-Chancellor.

At LiU, the MOU was signed in the presence of Associate Professor Karin Mårdsjö Blume, Dean, Faculty of Educational Sciences, and Professor Peter Varbrand, Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

With these latest signings, Sweden joins the growing list of places where NIE students can go for student exchanges and international practicum. Arrangements with LiU on these exchanges have been finalised. NIE is currently in talks with SU to discuss similar exchange arrangements.

Top Left, From Left: Prof Tan Oon Seng and Assoc Prof Liu Woon Chia signed the MOU with Prof Bengt-Olov Molander, Prof Hans Adolfsson and Prof Astrid Söderbergh Widding

Top Right, From left: Assoc Prof Karin Mårdsjö Blume and Prof Peter Varbrand signed the MOU with Prof Tan Oon Seng and Assoc Prof Liu Woon Chia

About Linköping University

Linköping University is a multi-faculty university where research and education are equally important. Since the late 1960's, Linköping University has been an innovator, creating new study programmes and new ways to tackle research problems. World-class research is conducted within cutting edge domains such as new materials, IT and disability research. The LiU campuses are situated in Linköping and Norrköping in the East of Sweden. NIE student teachers stand to gain from their experience being amongst the international student population at LiU. Over 80 nationalities are represented at LiU. Many LiU students study abroad for a semester or a year. The development of an international perspective is helpful for student teachers.

About Stockholm University

1878 Stockholm University established in 1878 is a modern university with a multicultural environment. Ranked among the top 100 higher education institutes in the world, SU contributes to individual and social change through top quality education and outstanding research. Stockholm is a cultural hub and economic centre, with many green areas and surrounded by water, making it an ideal place for spending a semester abroad.

SINGAPORE CHEERS

By Public, International and Alumni Relations



Nothing can stop the bustling national spirit on-campus each year when everyone gathers for the National Institute of Education's momentous Annual National Day Observance Ceremony on the 8 August 2014.

Surrounded by a sea of red-and-white attired and ethnic-costumed students and staff, the marching contingent of 215 student representatives from all 43 GESL groups marched down the triangle with their respective group designed flags. This is followed by the ceremonial raising of the Singapore flag, singing of the national anthem and saying the pledge.

Organisers did a great job to bring a string of activities to set the mood and thanks to all, a visual feast as well.

To kick start, NIE collaborated with the National Heritage Board to host the 'Singapore Portraits' exhibition on-campus. The works and interviews with some of Singapore's most creative

personalities and culminate to tell the story of Singapore through their words and images. The paintings and photographs are presented alongside write-ups detailing the background of an artwork, social and historical contexts and artist biographies are also included.

In conjunction with the annual 'Runway NIE' national-themed fashion show, all first-year students pit their costume-making talents to good use here. To reflect the NDP 2014 theme 'Our People, Our Home', teams were tasked to design, make the garments and present these in most interesting ways on the runway. Their concepts were also captured on poster boards and displayed at the linkway between Blocks two and three.

From the loud cheers, many happy faces and a large crowd, it surely signaled another successful celebration and vibrant commemoration to Singapore's 49th birthday for the NIE Community. Special thanks to all our sponsors of prizes for Runway NIE.



PROMINENT VISITORS

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

A WARM WELCOME

By Office of Teacher Education

This year, the month of August saw the Freshmen Orientation Camp play host to the newest batch of student teachers of the July 2014 intake. The three-day camp, which was a collaboration between the Trainee Teachers' Club, the Bachelor of Arts Club, the Bachelor of Science Club and the Physical Education and Sports Science Club, was packed with exhilarating team-bonding activities and games.

The highlight of the camp was no doubt the 'Amazing Race', which saw our enthusiastic student teachers clear stations in a race around NIE, NTU, Tiong Bahru and even Sentosa! The efforts and well coordinated planning of the organising committee were not in vain, as shown on the campers' exhausted but happy faces. Funny stories were probably shared amongst them into the wee hours of the night (pictured below).

On the last night, the campers seized the chance to thank their seniors for an eventful orientation experience by putting up skits and other items. With 'selfies' and videos aplenty, we are sure that our new

student teachers forged strong bonds and formed unforgettable memories.

With all fun and games done, their orientation culminated the next day at the Nanyang Auditorium at NTU for the Dean's address. There, Associate Professor Liu Woon Chia, Dean, Office of Teacher Education, warmly welcomed them. She challenged them seize every opportunity to learn and to grow as educators. Knowing that the

journey was by no means an easy task, she also provided words of wisdom and encouragement for our budding student teachers.

Indeed, we wish all our student teachers a memorable learning experience with us at NIE!

Bottom (Clockwise): Student group Dance Fusion gave a rousing dance performance for our newcomers; and snapshots of the happy campers



Photos By: Office of Teacher Education and NIE Student Teachers camp organisers



24 Apr 2014

A delegation from the Czech Republic Parliamentary Committee for Science, Education, Youth and Sport visited NIE on 24 April 2014. Led by Mrs Jermanova Jaroslavá, Vice-Chairwoman of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament, (pictured with Professor Lee Sing Kong, former NIE Director), the delegation was briefed on NIE's Initial Teacher Preparation programmes.

9 May 2014

NIE welcomed the visit by His Serene Highness Prince Alfred of Liechtenstein, Chairman of the Advisory Board of the International Peace Foundation, on 9 May 2014. HSH Prince Alfred (fifth from left), was introduced to NIE's role in teacher education in Singapore. HSH Prince Alfred also spent time visiting the Classroom of the Future and the Collaborative Classroom.



27 May 2014

Her Excellency, Jeanine Kambanda (third from left), the High Commissioner of the Republic of Rwanda, visited NIE on 27 May 2014 to hear more about the Initial Teacher Preparation programmes. Her Excellency also visited the Classroom of the Future during her visit.

4 July 2014

Professor Sumio Kuribayashi, President, Osaka Kyoiku University (OKU), (pictured with Professor Tan Oon Seng, NIE Director) led a team to NIE on 4 July 2014 for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between NIE, Singapore and Osaka Kyoiku University, Japan. The OKU team also visited NIE facilities such as the Collaborative Classroom and the Classroom of the Future during their visit.

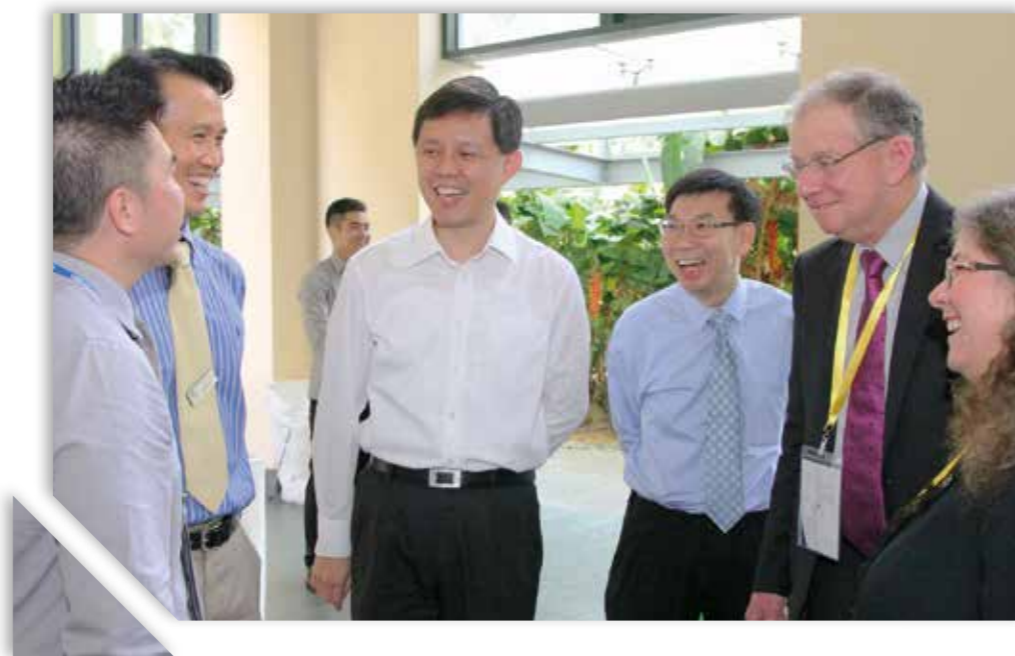
CELEBRATING TWO ENDOWMENT GIFTS

By Ms Joanna Tay-Lim and Mr Novindarjit Singh, Early Childhood and Special Needs Education Academic Group

On 19 July 2014, the Early Childhood and Special Needs Education (ECSE) Academic Group launched two endowment funds at the National Institute of Education (NIE) Singapore at its inaugural Henry David Hochstadt Early Childhood Symposium. The symposium was graced by the Guest-of-Honour, Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for Defence, Professor Tan Oon Seng, Director, NIE and a host of many other VIPs. There were about 300 participants who attended the event.

The first endowment, the Henry David Hochstadt Early Childhood Education Endowment Fund, is a gift from Mr Herman Hochstadt, the eldest son of Mr Henry David Hochstadt and a Pro Chancellor of Nanyang Technological University (NTU). The fund will be used for the development, research, and enhancement and sustainability of quality practices for early childhood education. The inaugural symposium, which was co-organised with the Association of Early Childhood Educators (Singapore), is the first of a series of developments for the field of early childhood education by the ECSE which has been made possible by the endowment fund.

The symposium served as a sharing and learning platform for academics,



practitioners, families, and all with the well-being of children at heart. For its inaugural theme, "Transitions: Building Bridges for Children", the issue of early years educational transition for preschool children (including children with special needs) was foregrounded because of the increasing recognition within the Singapore context of the importance of successful transition in supporting children's development and well-being. Two world renowned experts in the field

of early years transition, Professors Bob Perry and Sue Dockett from Charles Sturt University, Australia, gave the keynote addresses. In addition, experienced practitioners and professionals presented best-practices from their field of work in five different workshops.

The other highlight of the symposium was the award presentation by Minister Chan for the recipients of the Leading Foundation Teacher Award (LFTA) for Early Childhood and Special Education Teacher. The endowment fund for this Award is donated by Mr Lim Siong Guan and his family. The Award honours passionate practitioners who show exceptional dedication and commitments to the care and teaching of children and youths in the field of early childhood and special education.

Associate Professor Levan Lim, Head, ESCE, said: "This inaugural symposium has provided a significant boost to ECSE, NIE and the fields of early childhood and special education. It has also provided a platform for recognising teachers and allied educators (Learning and Behavioural Support) in the fields of early childhood and special education".

Top: (From left) Minister Chan (third) having a tea-break chat with Prof Michael Chia (first), Dean, Faculty Affairs, Assoc Prof Levan Lim (second), Head, ESCE, Prof Tan Oon Seng (fourth), NIE Director, Professor Bob Perry (fifth) and Professor Sue Dockett (sixth)

Bottom left: The LFTA winners together with Guest of Honour, Minister Chan Chun Sing (third from right) and Ms Joanne H Lim (first from right), Donor of the LFTA Endowment Fund



THE FOLLOWING ARE THE FIVE RECIPIENTS OF THE INAUGURAL LFTA AWARD

Ms Ling Bee Lain	St James' Church Kindergarten (Harding)
Ms Mishalani Jayaraj	Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Kindergarten
Mr Yow Jit Sin	Concord Primary School
Mrs Sulekha Suresh Nair	Chao Yang School
Ms Caroline Tan Swee Ping	St Andrew's Autism School

Here are the profiles of two winners for the inaugural 2014 LFTA:



Ms Mishalani Jayaraj – Early Childhood Educator, Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Kindergarten

Mishalani's passion for young children was evident from the day she started as a preschool teacher. In particular, her care and love for children who need additional support became her trade mark. She works with them patiently, often exploring innovative ways to help them in their development. Her dedication and achievements were laudable, and the teachers in her kindergarten soon conferred her with the endearing title, 'Special Needs Teacher with a HEART'. Mishalani also takes on the role of a 'consultant' for the other teachers who approach her for ideas, and she has successfully empowered them in their work with the children in their classes as well.

Her dedication to give of her best to children often means going the extra mile to ensure that they are wholeheartedly cared for. A good example was the SINDA (Singapore Indian Development Association) Bridging Programme to prepare children who either have not attended or have been irregularly attending preschool for Primary One. When SINDA approached Sarada Kindergarten to run the Bridging Programme, Mishalani came forward on her own accord to champion this project by volunteering her expertise and dedicating her many weekends to design and co-ordinate it.

Mishalani takes every challenge as an opportunity to learn and serve the children. When she encountered behaviour management issues in her class for example, she researched for ideas and found "Great Choices" – a behaviour management strategy. She modified it to suit her class and implemented it. Over time, the children learned to self-regulate and to help their peers self-regulate as well. The success of "Great Choices" in her class has now permeated most of the classrooms in Sarada.



Mr Yow Jit Sin – Allied Educator (Learning and Behavioral Support) Concord Primary School

Jit Sin is an outstanding officer in Concord Primary School. He cares deeply for the children with special needs, and has fervently advocated for their rights to receive quality education and care which recognizes their unique needs. The school affirms his instrumental role in shaping the school special needs landscape to be more inclusive, and commends his efforts in leading the Special Education Needs (SEN) school team in enhancing the SEN support structure through the establishment of the SEN framework, guidelines and new initiatives.

To better support the children with special needs in his school, Jit Sin implemented many innovative programs. One of these is introducing an in-house disability awareness workshop for selected peers of children with special needs in order to strengthen the typical peers' awareness of, and empower them to relate with children with special needs. As a result, these peers have been more forthcoming in providing friendship and assistance to the children with special needs. Another undertaking is spearheading the formation of a Professional Learning Community for his school's AED (LBS) team. Through this sharing platform, he has led the team to conceptualise a reading program for some Primary 2 and 3 pupils, and a weekly skill-based programs for the upper primary pupils with special needs. Both programs have reaped positive outcomes for the children with special needs. To build staff capacity, Jit Sin developed an E-newsletter with pertinent information about the various disabilities and useful strategies which teachers can employ with children with special needs in their classes.

Jit Sin's willingness to go beyond his comfort zone and scope of work to care, innovate and advocate for the children vividly portrays the essence of the Leading Foundation Teacher Award in celebrating teachers as change agents!

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

By Assistant Professor Tzuo Pei Wen, Early Childhood and Special Needs Education Academic Group

As early childhood education has become a focal movement in the nation, ECSE will continue to make contributions in the areas of research, providing the best graduate program of early childhood education in the region, and sharing our professional knowledge with the community through mainstream media in the nation.

Our faculty members' dedication to aiding preschool education in Singapore has been rewarded through various grants, awards and publications in academic journals. In addition, Asst Prof Tzuo Pei Wen has given her expert comments on preschool education in publications such

as "Family", "Mother and Baby", "The Strait Times", and on the Chinese television programme "Good Morning Singapore".

Our Masters of Education (MED) student Ms Wen-Si Yang won the Merit Scholarship Award (2013) from the Asia-Pacific Society for Computers in Education and the Bronze Award (2012) for graduate student day from NIE. We will continue to carry forward what we have contributed and achieved to make a difference in early childhood education in Singapore.

Right: Asst Prof Pei Wen Tzuo (left) with Ms Wen-Si Yang





STORIES TO LAUNCH

By Mr Muhammad 'Ammar Bin Abdul Aziz, Bachelor of Arts (Education) Year 3

Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group (ALC) celebrated a milestone with ten NIE student teachers specialising in Malay language who launched their first children's storybooks on 5 April 2014.

After more than a year, five titles were launched at The Arts House by Associate Professor Hadijah Binte Rahmat, Deputy Head of ALC and the event was attended by the writers, illustrators, lecturers and close friends and relatives of the contributors. Published by Pustaka Nasional Pte Ltd under a new Siri Guru Pelatih Singapura (GPS) or Singapore

Trainee Teachers' Series, these add to the corpus of local children literature available in Singapore. Each is produced in two languages, Malay and English, and available as e-books.

The project was carried out under the tutelage of the Series Editor, Associate Professor Mukhlis Abu Bakar. The illustrations were done by renowned artists both local and across the causeway, Mdm Raihan Ismail and Mr Azmi Mokhtar. Our budding writers are overjoyed with the achievement and are already busy working with the publisher on expanding the series. This is indeed a

milestone in the student teachers' careers and a stepping stone into the world of children's literature. Congratulations to them and NIE looks forward to the creation of more books by them.

Above (From left): Writers of the *Guru Pelatih Singapura (GPS) Series* are Ms Nurwahidah Binte Rosli, Ms Shahidah Binte Borhan, Ms Adinursuryani Binte Md Rashid, Ms Fazeelah Khan, Ms Kamilah Kamis, Mr Muhammad 'Ammar Bin Abdul Aziz, Ms Musfirah Binte Mohamed, Ms Nur Linda Halek, Ms Nur Humaira Suleman, Ms Nurulfizah Ali

Books launched under the GPS Series:

BAM!!

Writers: Ms Adinursuryani Binte Md Rashid and Ms Noor Sahida Binte Johari

Illustrator: Mr Nur Azmi Mokhtar

Budi Beruang yang Rajin / Budi The Hardworking Bear

Writers: Ms Musfirah Binte Mohamed and Mr Muhammad 'Ammar Bin Abdul Aziz

Illustrator: Mr Nur Azmi Mokhtar

BISINGNYA! / What a Noise!

Writers: Ms Nur Humaira Suleman and Ms Nur Linda Halek

Illustrator: Mr Nur Azmi Mokhtar

Berapa Hari Lagi Hari Raya? / How Many More Days to Hari Raya?

Writers: Ms Fazeelah Khan and Ms Kamilah Kamis

Illustrator: Mdm Raihan Ismail

Cef Cilik / The Little Chef

Writers: Ms Shahidah Binte Borhan and Ms Nurwahidah Binte Rosli

Illustrators: Mdm Raihan Ismail

All the stories were translated into English by Ms Huda Mukhlis, an NTU Psychology undergraduate.



Photos By: Assoc Prof Mohd Mukhlis Bin Abu Bakar and Mr Muhammad 'Ammar Bin Abdul Aziz

NIE GRADUATE STUDENT DAY

By Associate Professor Jude Chua Soo Meng, Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning

Dear Graduate Student, Please mark your calendars! On Saturday 20 September 2014, we will be having our 3rd Graduate Student Day (GSD) (<http://niegsd2014.wordpress.com/>). Please consider joining us, ideally as a participant on the 3 Minute Thesis competition (3MT), or by presenting a poster, or by giving a paper. Come, register and see what your peers are working on!

Participating in the GSD in some way needs to be welcomed as a milestone in your life as a graduate student of NIE. It is important

that you give yourself an opportunity to share your research and scholarly insights with the larger community.

I write to you, as your Sub Dean, together with Mr Heikal Yusope who chairs the organizing committee this year, to encourage you to put yourself out there and participate in this GSD.

We have a website running, where you can register to participate (<http://niegsd2014.wordpress.com/registration/>) and also submit a proposal for the 3MT, poster or paper presentation (<http://niegsd2014.wordpress.com/call-for-papers/>).

Our guest speaker this year is Professor Peter Looker.

Registration is free, and meals are provided. And there will be a lucky draw with attractive prizes for those who register and turn up. But that is surely not the real reason why we want you to join us. Scholarship needs a community to nurture it – a community constituted by scholars like you to find support and mutual encouragement. We cannot do this without you. We need your presence, and your voice. We need it now. Come and form this scholarly body, which is your own.

2014 NIE GRADUATE STUDENT DAY



Date / Time : 20 September, 8.30 am

Venue : NIE

Website : niegsd2014.wordpress.com

EMPOWERING LEARNING

EMBRACING RESEARCH

*Limited slots available – please register early at niegsd2014.wordpress.com/registration/
Submission of papers at niegsd2014.wordpress.com/submission/

REGISTRATION IS FREE!

HIGHLIGHT

*Paper Presentation
*Poster Presentation
*3MT

Lucky Draw

Awards will be given for the best 3 presentations!
Register soon!

FIGHTING FIT

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

If you frequent the NIE fitness facilities or have requested for assistance with your computer or office printer in the past, chances are, you would have met Mr Brian Chang an ICT Specialist from the Centre for Unit Support (CUS). Brian is one colleague whom we can all take a tip or two from about having a healthy life.

About two years ago, the 29-year-old was considered obese, unhealthy and weighed in at 108 kg. With his wedding around the corner, he was determined to look good as a bridegroom and so began a strict diet and exercise regime to get into shape.

The results were life-changing to say the least since the happy groom shed almost 20 kg with his healthier appearance most visible on his wedding day.

But the overwhelming compliments on his appearance were not what spurred him on then, rather his ideal to keep strong, fit and healthy. With a lot of motivation and self-discipline, Brian now weighs a leaner 82

kg. About the pluses, he shares, "To me, there are no shortcuts in getting a slim body, neither is there a fast and easy way to be fit," he adds, "Consistency is the key."

Brian quickly points out that this included adopting a regular weight-loss diet, if one is keen on looking trimmer. An unforeseen stumbling block he noted was that it was not easy to give up on one's favourite foods. In his former self, he saw several unhealthy habits that led to a decline in his health such as eating deep-fried food and sweet drinks. Now he sticks to lean meat, fish and vegetables that are prepared without deep-frying and opts for water instead. Besides working out at the gym, he now enjoys playing tennis and fishing during the weekends.

With his new lease of life, Brian admits: "Keeping fit is an on-going lifestyle choice that requires work and not just a trend you take for a while," he quips, "This year, I hope to be an inspiration to everyone around me by sharing my life story with them."



GOOD MENTIONS

The National Institute of Education (NIE), Singapore acknowledges the outstanding achievements of all our award winners. In recognition of their hard work and dedication, a total of 32 awards were presented to 28 NIE graduands at the recent Teachers' Investiture Ceremonies held from 9 to 10 July 2014. At the three ceremonies, four also received multiple awards. We acknowledge the recipients who were award recipients at this year's Nanyang Technological University Convocation Ceremony held in July and August as well.

NIE Singapore extends her heartfelt congratulations to the following:

Teachers' Investiture Ceremony 1

Bachelor of Arts (Education) / Bachelor of Science (Education)

- Mr Chan Kiat Heo Samuel (2 awards)
- Ms Choy Min Cheryl
- Mr Goh Wei Ming Bryan
- Ms Ho Shuyi Grace
- Ms Elfy Lee Yi Yu
- Mr Lim Li Cheng (4 awards)
- Ms Stephanie Lim Qian Wen
- Mr Ong Hao Yu Kent
- Ms Zahidah Binte Osman
- Mr Jasper Sim Hong
- Ms Tan Yi Wei Joy
- Ms Teo Li Jun Lilian (2 awards)
- Ms Wee Shu Yun Athena
- Ms Zhang Lijuan

Teachers' Investiture Ceremony 2

Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) / Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Physical Education)

- Mr Haresh s/o Sivaram
- Ms Carolyn Lai Jia'En
- Ms Lee Seok Hui Evon
- Ms Lee Soh Cheng Bernadette
- Ms Cristy Therese Lin
- Mr Taranpal Singh

Teachers' Investiture Ceremony 3

Diploma in Education / Diploma in Art Education / Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Junior College)

- Ms Cheak Yen Hui
- Ms Hong Yi Ni Vionna
- Ms Dian Farhana Binte Zulkifli Kaspari
- Mr Lee Teck Hiang
- Ms Lim Wenting Janell
- Ms Ong Poh Yee Dororin
- Mr Seetaram Panday s/o Ramanand Panday (3 awards)
- Ms Emelyne Quek Jiang Li

NTU Convocation

Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal

- Mr Lim Li Cheng, *Bachelor of Science (Education)*
- Mr Jasper Sim Hong, *Bachelor of Arts (Education)*

Koh Boon Hwee Scholars Award

- Mr Shahdon Bin Mohammed Jamil, *Bachelor of Arts (Education)*
- Mr Jasper Sim Hong, *Bachelor of Arts (Education)*

In addition, NIE saw the inaugural recipients of the Dr Quek Jin Jong Book Prizes

Dr Quek Jin Jong Book Prize in Sport Management

Ms Bernice Low Xiao Ting, *Bachelor of Science (Sport Science and Management)*

Dr Quek Jin Jong Book Prize in Sport Science

Mr Mok Zhen Yong Alexander, *Bachelor of Science (Sport Science and Management)*

SINGAPORE HONoured AT CYFI 2014

By Mr Rene Cuartero, Child and Youth Finance International and Citi-NIE Financial Literacy Hub



On 22 May 2014, Child and Youth Finance International (CYFI) hosted the 2014 International CYFI Awards at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel in New York, USA. The annual awards ceremony recognizes and honours those who demonstrate innovation and commitment to promoting "financial inclusion and financial, social and livelihoods education" for children and youth at the national, regional and international level.

Singapore won the 2014 CYFI Country Award for the Asia and the Pacific region, the most coveted award for a country at the regional level. It hallmarks Singapore's status as a role model for innovative financial education programmes and practices. Singapore was recognized with the award for its excellence, creativity, outreach and impact. The National Institute of Education (NIE), Singapore has established strategic alliances and formed initiatives to launch the Citi-NIE Financial Literacy Hub for Teachers — a pioneering program aimed to advance financial and economic literacy of children and youth in Singapore.

Dr Koh Noi Keng, Chair of the Citi-NIE Financial Literacy Hub for Teachers,

received the award on behalf of Singapore, having received the official invitation from the organisers. Her work at the National Institute of Education (NIE), Singapore is recognised not only in her country, but beyond the shores.

The award ceremony was held in the midst of 3 days of intensive meetings and workshops from 21 to 23 May 2014. Dr Koh was invited to be involved in the Research Working Group and the Financial Education Working Group. This meeting was attended by 342 participants from 90 countries including ambassadors and representatives of 43 permanent missions to the UN, and representatives from the World Bank and commercial banks. There was heavy emphasis, during the discussion, on enhancing economic citizenship for children and youth to support their financial capabilities, as well as on the implementation of this concept in various national strategies.

Left (Top): Dr Koh Noi Keng with the CYFI Award and financial economist Prof Lewis Mandell

Left (Bottom): Dr Michael Gondwe, the Governor of the Bank of Zambia, with Dr Koh Noi Keng at the United Nations meeting

A LESSON ON FINANCIAL PLANNING

By Mr K R Jefferson, Citi-NIE Financial Literacy Hub

On 11 June 2014, 637 graduating PGDE student teachers turned up for registration at the Lee Kong Chian Lecture Theatre, NTU, where they were treated to breakfast refreshments and a Citi-NIE goodie-bag. The Chair of Citi-NIE, Dr Koh Noi Keng, opened the seminar with her address. She introduced Financial Literacy to the participants and explained how it is being infused into MOE's core subjects and curriculum. She also illustrated the multifaceted aspects of financial literacy, like the role of values, which extend beyond monetary interests. Dr Koh enamored her audience with her bubbly expressions and anecdotes. She concluded her presentation by showcasing events Citi-NIE has conducted and encouraged the teachers to reach out and collaborate with us in the near future.

Guest-speakers from the Citigroup, Mr Semed Tony and Ms Vicki Lua, educated our teachers on effective personal finance

management. They explained the need for financial planning and introduced the four basic principles of planning: budgeting, credit control, insurance coverage and smart investments.

After the informative talk for everyone, the participants had concurrent breakout sessions for pedagogy workshops on the use of immersive digital storybooks in classroom teaching as well as using learning trails as a pedagogical tool. The student teachers were also introduced to the popular 'Agent Penny' comic books and how these comics and online games could be infused into their curriculum to inculcate financial literacy values in their students.

Some of the secondary school teachers were selected to participate in the interactive workshop. To help teachers in effectively engaging their students when teaching financial literacy, two highly interactive platforms were introduced to them — the Interactive E-publications and Interactive Whiteboard. Also, the teachers learned about the use of 'Learning Trails' that have been specifically designed for teaching financial literacy.

The seminar concluded promptly at lunch hour with a full spread of buffet for our student teachers. We wish them the best in their ensuing careers!



NURTURING THE NEXT GENERATION

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

The NIE Teachers' Investiture Ceremony held from 9 to 10 July 2014 at NTU's Nanyang Auditorium saw the graduation of 1,446 newly qualified teachers over three ceremonies. A total of 28 award recipients were honoured and recognised for their outstanding achievements.

Guest of Honour, Minister Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Education congratulated the new batch of educators for their hard work and shared an inspiring story of a weak student who was inspired by his teachers and went on to do well in life. He encouraged the graduands to spur themselves on to make the same impact on their students. He concluded his speech with these words of advice: "Keep learning and growing. Keep the spirit of the curious student alive in yourself."

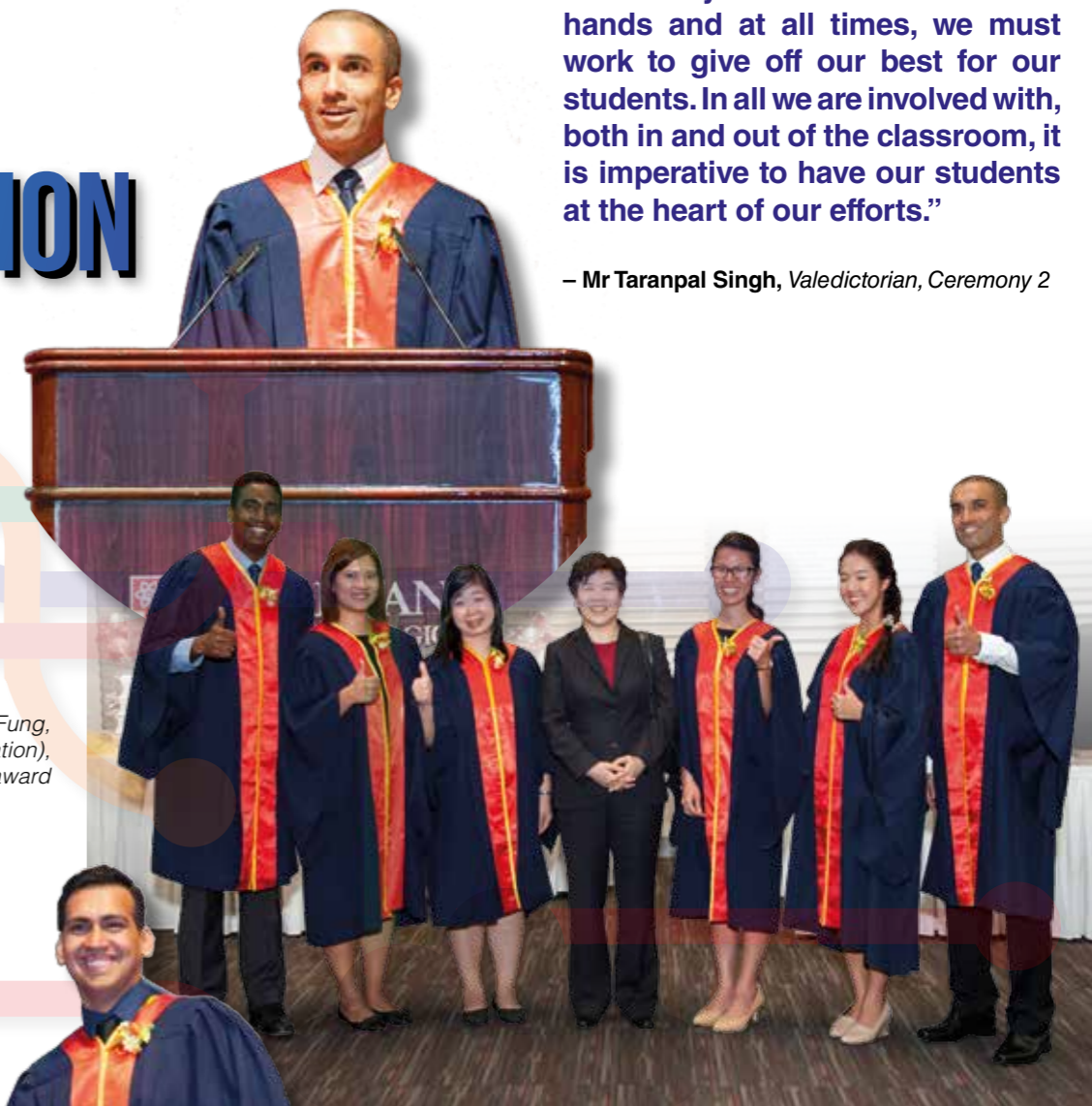
NIE Director, Professor Tan Oon Seng echoed his sentiments and challenged the graduands to be 'imperishable teachers'. He said "They are the ones who leave an indelible mark on their students, firing up their curiosity and interest in a subject, imparting life values and giving hope to their students."

One such graduand who is keen to make a lasting impression on his students is Mr Lim Li Cheng, who received his Bachelor in Science (Education) degree and four awards. Being a weak student himself, he recounted that it was through his Mathematic teacher's encouragement that ignited his passion for teaching.

Our heartiest congratulations to all our student teachers and award winners!

"Dear friends, we have a lofty and weighty task ahead of us. It's daunting, but let's not forget that it can also be incredibly fun and life-affirming when we connect with our pupils. We will undoubtedly fail at being the best versions of ourselves as educators at times, but let's not give up and persevere on, for the good of our pupils as well as for ourselves."

– Ms Grace Ho Shuyi, *Valedictorian, Ceremony 1*



Right (Centre): Ms Chan Lai Fung, Permanent Secretary (Education), Ministry of Education, with award winners from Ceremony 2

"We carry delicate lives in our hands and at all times, we must work to give off our best for our students. In all we are involved with, both in and out of the classroom, it is imperative to have our students at the heart of our efforts."

– Mr Taranpal Singh, *Valedictorian, Ceremony 2*

"It takes a village to raise a child and we can see here today that it takes a country of people to raise a teacher. None of us will be here without our NIE tutors and lecturers. They taught us and modelled what it truly means to be a teacher"

– Mr Seetaram Panday, *Valedictorian, Ceremony 3*



Inset: (Seventh from left) Mr Hawazi Daipi, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Manpower, together with award winners from Ceremony 3



Inset: (Sixth from left) Associate Professor Liu Woon Chia, Dean, Office of Teacher Education; Professor Tan Oon Seng, Director, NIE; Minister Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Education, with award winners from Ceremony 1

MAKERSPACE IN LIBRARY

By Library and Information Services Centre

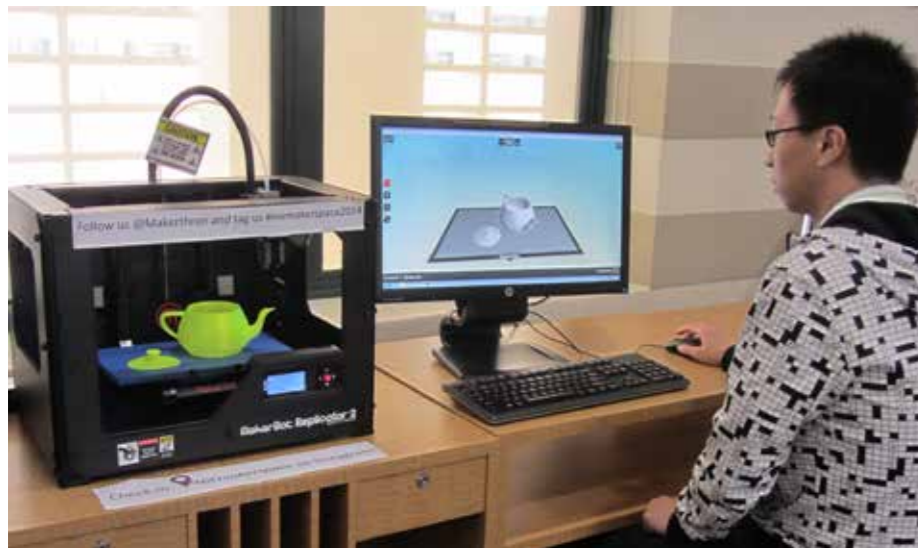
Since the end of January 2014, a new hangout called 'the Makerspace' has been added to the Library's Collaborative Space on level three. The Makerspace is a collaboration between NIE Library and the Translation and Development Unit (TDU), with the Library providing the footfall and TDU offering hands-on project ideas.

The Makerspace aspires to build a community where members share and collaborate to bring ideas to fruition. To this end, the Makerspace is equipped with a 3D printer for users to rapidly prototype their ideas (pictured below). A printed sample allows them to evaluate aspects such as aesthetics and ergonomics. Two DIY projects have been made available for users to build their own bristle bot and rubber band

aircraft and learn about electronics and aerodynamics experientially. These will perhaps inspire them to incorporate electrical and mechanical parts in their designs. There are plans to showcase projects similar to those being done in schools so that our student teachers are kept updated. Currently, TDU is working with seven secondary schools in creating Makerspace in schools as well as exploring the use of 3D modelling and printing as part of the design process in the lower secondary Design and Technology curriculum.

A key feature of 3D printing is that it is less complex to use as compared to other methods like Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machining. It requires a mere desktop computer instead of more specialised equipment in a workshop environment. In the short time since the Makerspace was set up, success has been achieved in raising awareness on how easy it is to use a 3D printer. Users have printed handphone holders, ornaments and even flutes. Library staff have also hopped on the bandwagon, printing 3D bookmarks as giveaways for the Library Mini-Fair.

Do drop by at the Makerspace and discover the maker in you!



SWAN SONG

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

Leaving the NIE community is usually a hard thing to do, especially when you have been a part of it for the last 10 years. For Dr Koh Chong Lek, the 'stage' was set for him to bid a fond farewell to friends and colleagues. In a heartfelt email, he announced that he would be saying his goodbyes in style - by singing 10 golden 'oldies' for everyone.

On 30 June 2014, a small crowd of 30 people gathered at the Recital Room. With song sheet in hand, they were brought back in time as Dr Koh belted out timeless classics such as "Over the Rainbow", "Moon River", "Bengawan Solo" and "My Way". Showing their appreciation, the audience which was made up of NIE students and staff, urged Dr Koh for one last song as an encore performance before he finished his set. Dr Koh happily obliged and invited everyone to join him in his warm rendition of "Auld Lang Syne".

Thank you Dr Koh Chong Lek for all your years of hard work and contribution. We wish you a happy retirement!

Right: Dr Koh was in his element as he serenaded his audience with heartfelt renditions



QUODLIBETAL QUESTIONS ON EDUCATION 2014

By Associate Professor Jude Chua, Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning

In 2011, we saw the inaugural colloquium "Quodlibetal Questions on Education" (or Quodlibet for short) held at the Institute of Education (IoE), University of London. It was organised by Associate Professor Jude Chua Soo Meng, from the Policy and Leadership Studies Academic Group and the Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning, programme coordinator of the Dual Award Doctorate in Education (EdD DA) programme offered in collaboration with IoE. Since then, it has been attended by post-graduate students, academic staff of both the IoE and the National Institute of Education (NIE), Singapore, as well as invited friends. The colloquium is usually parked in the June doctoral research week at the IoE.

Invited NIE academics, who are involved with the IoE-NIE EdD (Dual Award) programme as course lecturers or supervisors, spend a week at the IoE under formal appointment as "Visiting Academics" and are attached to the Doctoral School. They meet with their IoE counterparts, participate in the IoE Summer Conference or work towards their publications. According to Assoc

Prof Chua, the original intention when he pursued this Visiting Academic appointment programme for NIE staff with Dr Michael Hand (then postgraduate research director at the IOE), was "to intensify interaction and collaboration between NIE and IoE staff members."

This year's special topic of interest is "Education and the Visual (2014)". Three of our NIE colleagues - Assistant Professor Wong Meng Ee and Associate Professor Noel Chia Kok Hwee, both from the Early Childhood and Special Needs Education Academic Group and Assoc Prof Jude Chua presented their respective papers at the colloquium on 16 June and were also appointed Visiting Academics at the IoE from 16 to 20 June.

Asst Prof Wong gave the opening the keynote and spoke on the "Network of Support Services for Persons with Visual Impairments in Singapore: Blind Spots and Vantage Points of Service Delivery in Serving Students with Visual Impairments". Asst Prof Noel Chia presented a paper on "The Educological Framework of Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities in

Singapore: The V.I.S.U.A.L. Factor". Assoc Prof Jude Chua considered "What Monet's Water Lilies Can Tell Us About Educating for Critical Thinking", based on a piece co-written with Kristie Chen of the philosophy department of Raffles Institution, Singapore. Dr Karl Wall, a lecturer at the IoE, gave the closing keynote seminar, "Multi-sensory approaches to practical habilitation training curricula (mobility, orientation and independent living skills) for visually impaired children and young people: making use of all the senses!".

In addition, two of our Dean's Award 2013 winning M.Ed (Special Education) graduates, Ms Saranya Elangovan (Pathlight School) and Mr Mohamad Shaifudin bin Yusof (Ngee Ann Polytechnic), also participated at the colloquium and presented their papers: "Harnessing Visual Literacy in the 21st Century Classroom for Students with Autism" and "Constructing the visual learning environment for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder" respectively. Ms Lim Weng Fong, a PhD student at the IoE, also presented her PhD research paper on "Special Needs Education for the Visually Impaired in Malaysia".



Above (From Left): Ms Saranya Elangovan, Assoc Prof Noel Chia Kok Hwee, Asst Prof Wong Meng Ee, Assoc Prof Jude Chua and Mr Mohamad Shaifudin bin Yusof presented key findings at the IoE Colloquium 2014

PRESCHOOL IMPACT ON CHILD OUTCOMES

By Dr Rebecca Bull and Ms Juliana Koh, Educational and Cognitive Development Lab

As young children in Singapore spend more time in preschools, it has become increasingly important to determine the influence and significance of their preschool experience. In this study, we focus on the nature and impact of teacher-child interactions, a key process factor. Along with structural factors (see Figure), this will be used to arrive at an overall measure of the quality of the children's learning experiences.

Our main aim is to examine how these process and structural factors, together with factors associated with home background, influence children's developmental outcomes across the preschool period. Specifically, we will focus on their impact on the development of children's mathematical, language, cognitive, and socio-emotional skills.

We aim to recruit 1500 children from approximately 75 preschools. We plan to recruit children from centers that vary in the time spent on mother tongue tuition, with the objective of addressing policy questions regarding factors that lead to better language and literacy development in both English and Mother Tongue languages. We will be examining factors such as time spent on Mother Tongue, quality of the teacher-child interaction and home language environment.

Data collection will start in 2015 and will be spread across four time-points in K1, K2, and P1.

Factors that are found to be associated with positive outcomes for children will serve as catalysts for further improvement and will be shared with our partners in the preschool sector.

If you are interested and want to play a part in the pilot testing or the main study, please contact the Singapore Kindergarten Impact Project team at: skip@nie.edu.sg

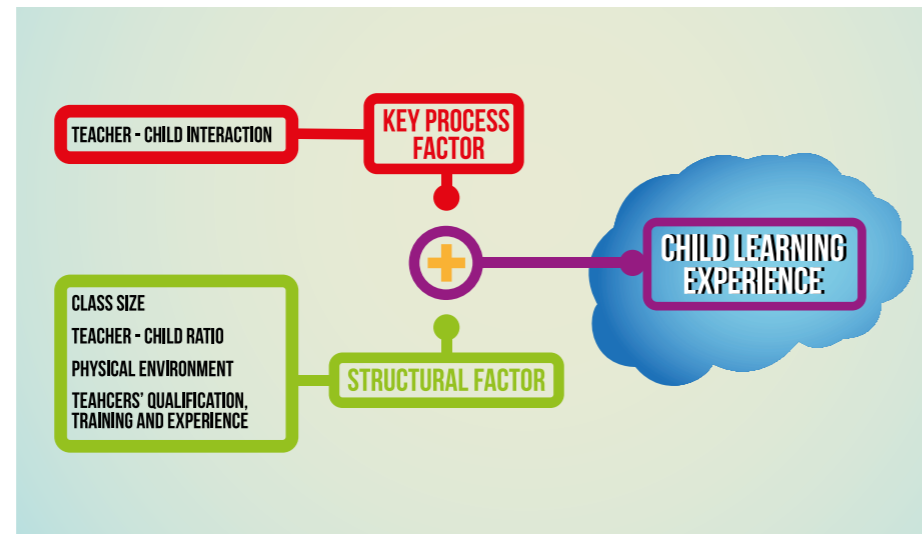


Figure 1. Main aim of the study

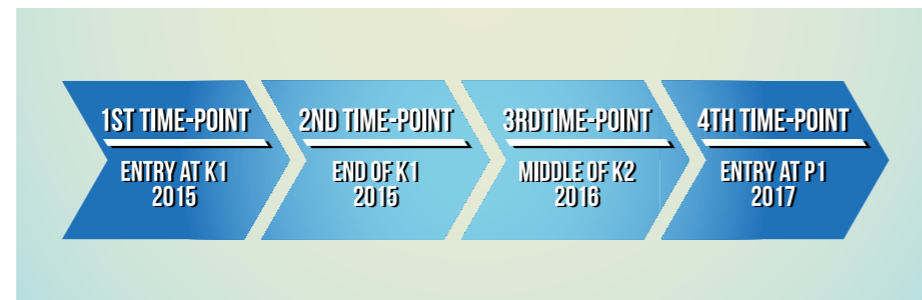


Figure 2. Time-points of the study

FROM MANDARIN TO TAMIL

By Dr Rakkappan Velmurugan, Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group



Above: Prof Goh Yeng Seng releases the book translated by Dr Velmurugan

The Tamil Language Club of the National Institute of Education, Singapore organised a memorable event on the 25 April 2014 to celebrate the launch of the book "Singappuril Chiina Mozhik

Kolkaiyum Mozhit Tittamidutalum: Sila Unmaigal" which had been translated from English to Tamil by Dr Velmurugan from the Asian Languages and Cultures (ALC) Academic Group, NIE. The original work was authored by Professor Goh Yeng Seng, Head, ALC, under the title "Hard Truths about Chinese Language Policy and Planning in Singapore".

In his special address, Prof Goh highlighted the need to have effective and realistic language policies that could benefit the Singapore society and nation as a whole. He also mentioned the contributions of the policy makers as well as the work done by researchers and academic scholars for the planning of language use and language development.

Professor K. Karunakaran, former Vice - Chancellor of the Tamil University, Tanjore (India) and Visiting Professor of the University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur had reviewed the book and pointed out the importance of translation theory and practice. Notably, he mentioned that the important works of Prof Goh needed to be implemented into society. He also congratulated Dr Velmurugan for his useful academic work and applauded the research involvement of Prof Goh and NIE.

Those involved in the publication of the book are confident that it will enlighten Tamil scholars who are keen on understanding the Chinese language policy in Singapore.

GAME-CHANGER

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

Dr Jan Mingfong is a Research Scientist from NIE's Learning Sciences Lab who is quite obsessed with games that make people think hard while having fun. In fact, he has accumulated so much time studying games that he has quickly become one of NIE's prominent researchers on how gameplay can foster learning positively.

Just last year, he and his co-researcher, Mr Tan Ek Ming even received the Best Paper Award for their paper "Characterising the Design Process of a Game-based Learning Program: A Design-based Research Approach" from the oldest professional association devoted to improving instruction through technology, the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT). His co-collaborations have also included designing more than 10 handheld augmented reality games that foster stronger social and ecological understanding in the US for school children. His partners included the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard University and the US Department of Education.

How he started studying games seriously is an interesting story. "We flew to Boston when I was a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) with my UW advisor, to observe children and their parents play a mobile augmented reality game inside the Boston Science Museum," he shared. His UW advisor then, is of course Professor Kurt D. Squire at and Director of the Games, Learning and Society Initiative, who soon convinced Dr Jan to design and study games for learning.

He also quickly realised just how much information emerged and how compelling the evidence was in game-based learning. Swiftly, Dr Jan's projects sparked a whole career path for him. He readily admits, "Since then, I viewed games – not just off the shelf games – but also social games being played out at any setting as learning mechanisms worthy of investigation."

For more than a decade now, the Taiwanese-born academic (pictured, right) still holds fast to his passion. "When I came to Singapore, I was thinking about designing games that may reproduce similar life-changing experiences for young people – games that engage youths into meaningful actions for a better society." Though

there were limitations to space for him to make similar efforts he had in the US, he took to exploring the possibility of different forms to generate sustainable impacts such as the current project he is working on with fellow NIE researcher, Dr Matthew Gaydos from the Office of Education Research.

Of the studies conducted, Dr Jan maintains that game-based learning continues to gain momentum because of today's education climate.

The Research Scientist related: "Mastering content is important but insufficient. We need more than what is introduced through textbooks and exercises because they usually present the products generated by experts only ... we need to bring more knowledge production processes to the classrooms. Students need to actively seek out answers through arguments and debates, collaborations and even in conducive communities. These are elements that make subjects like Science, History, Geography and Mathematics appealing and authentic."

So to be exact, Dr Jan's obsession does not lie squarely on gaming but rather, on how learning comes about through

playing. Something, he says he will not stop short any time soon since there is a real growing need to ensure that game-based learning does more than just providing contents and drilling answers.

"Some games help people learn deeply because good learning theories are designed into activities involving game play. In order to have a sustainable place in any learning setting, we must have good games that are inexpensive and cost effective."

No surprise why the Learning Sciences Lab continues to bring good meaning to preparing student teachers at NIE as 21st century educators such as Dr Jan's. His views certainly convinces well: "We need to ensure that the focus is on the players' learning experiences so that they play to learn. It is critical to the success of teaching the new literacies and skills set. We need experienced mentors to help provide guidance to learners with new teaching approaches. So the aim of game-based learning is like a kind of 'deep learning'. If one takes away the process of inquiry, like not learning how chickens lay eggs, they lose the greatest lesson of all... understanding where the eggs come from and how to keep the supply growing."





BOOK LAUNCH: EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICE IN SINGAPORE

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

The Tamil edition of the book "Education Policy and Practice in Singapore" was edited by Associate Professor Seetha Lakshmi, Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group. The launch was held on 27 April 2014 at the Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA) and graced by the Guest of Honour, Mr S R Nathan, who was the Former President of the Republic of Singapore.

A special book exhibition entitled Research on Tamil Education in Singapore that included archival materials from the National Archives was organised by Mr Karthickeyan Govindaraj and Mr Saad Malik. Academics from various domains, including Tamil teachers, Tamil writers, Community leaders and Tamil enthusiasts attended the book launch and the book exhibition.

The book is based on the Tamil translation of 16 research articles written by Professor S Gopinathan on Educational Policies and Practice in Singapore. At the function, Mr S R Nathan, acknowledged the contributions of the research papers and the translation into Tamil language. He also urged the community to speak Tamil and teachers to encourage students to continue to speak Tamil Language and to encourage the use of Spoken Tamil amongst their peers.

This book has been published to create more awareness and understanding of educational trends and issues in Singapore's education development among Tamil educators, nationally and internationally. Given Singapore's remarkable achievements in education, and Prof. Gopi's national and international reputation, we hope this volume will be an invaluable and unique resource, providing both description and analysis of policies and practices.

Mr Arun Mahizhnan, Senior Research Adviser of the Institute of Policy Studies, explained the special features of the book and its use in the professional development of Tamil teachers. He stated that he regarded this volume of Tamil essays on education in Singapore as a pioneering effort and that this publication will attract and inspire many a Tamil scholar to acquire a deeper understanding of their discipline and reach a higher level of scholarship.

Prof Gopi hopes that this collection in Tamil will be of interest and use to Tamil educators in Singapore, Malaysia, India and Sri Lanka, as well as the wider Tamil diaspora, to inspire more rigorous international educational scholarship in Tamil language, culture and education.



Above: Dr Vanitha Saravanan (centre) showing her appreciation to Mr Saad (left) and Mr Karthick (right) who had designed the book arrangement (pictured above)



Above: Our proud academics and tamil enthusiasts took turns to pose with the uniquely arranged books (pictured above)

Photos By: Mr Tam Chun Peng and Mr Saad Malik

BEST TECHNICAL DESIGN AWARD AT GCCCE2014

By Learning Sciences and Technologies Academic Group



Three NIE staff have won the Best Technical Design Award at the 18th Global Chinese Conference on Computers in Education (GCCCE 2014) which was held in Shanghai, China from 26 to 30 May 2014. This is an annual conference highly recognised among Chinese researchers in the field of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in education.

Associate Professor Chen Wenli (pictured left on the right), Professor Looi Chee Kit (pictured left on the left) from Learning Sciences and Technologies Academic Group and Ms Xie Wenting from the Learning Sciences Lab (LSL) and Dr Wen Yun from Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne received the

commendation for their award-winning paper, "AppleTree-supported real-Time assessments for science learning". This paper introduces the design of an innovative technology named AppleTree ("Assessing Processes and Products for Learning by Tracking and Reporting Efficacy and Effectiveness"), an automated assessment system that scaffolds and supports students' collaborative argumentation in real classrooms.

This paper came out of a research project supported by the National Research Foundation Singapore. This is the fifth time the research team won the Paper Awards in the area of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning in International Conferences.



ISEC 2014

The International Science Education Conference 2014 (ISEC 2014) brings together academics, researchers, teachers, school leaders, policy makers and industry partners from around the globe to share the latest innovative research and practices in science education.

The theme of the conference is "Pushing The Boundaries — Investing In Our Future". This theme questions the arbitrary boundaries that have shaped current practices and mindsets in science education. With the aim to develop scientifically literate global citizens, the conference examines the relevance of current science education in meeting the demands and goals of the future.

The conference is jointly organised by the Ministry of Education and the Natural Sciences and Science Education Academic Group of the National Institute of Education, Singapore.

For more information, please visit: www.isec2014.org



CONGRATULATIONS

The National Institute of Education (NIE) Singapore extends her heartfelt congratulations to Assistant Professor Lee Ngan Hoe from the Mathematics and Mathematics Education Academic Group on being the first Singaporean recipient of the Fulbright Scholar-In-Residence Award.

As a participant of the Fulbright Scholar-In-Residence programme, Asst Prof Lee spent one academic year at St Ambrose University in Iowa, USA. There, he taught mathematics courses and helped the university to develop its mathematics education curriculum.

"I see myself as an ambassador of Singapore Mathematics. So this award is a positive recognition of my role of helping others understand and appreciate Singapore Mathematics – flying the flags of both my country and the Institute. I am happy that my passion for both Mathematics and teaching has borne fruit over the years of my professional development and growth. Working at NIE has certainly helped me greatly in fulfilling the role," says Asst Prof Lee.

Well done, Dr Lee and we look forward to learning more about your achievements as an ambassador of Singapore Mathematics.

LEARNING TO REFLECT AND REFLECTING TO LEARN

By Mr Jason Goh Wai Min, NIE Alumnus

As teachers and key personnel in our schools, we are inundated with new experiences every day. From conceptualising frameworks at our workstations to implementing the curriculum and instruction in our classrooms, there are countless opportunities in school that potentially help us hone our teaching craft and sharpen our leadership nous. To fully harness the benefits of these experiences, however, it is clearly important for us to reflect to learn from them. While learning from reflection is a fairly simple idea, it hinges on our ability and willingness to learn how to reflect in the first place, which can be both cognitively and emotionally challenging.

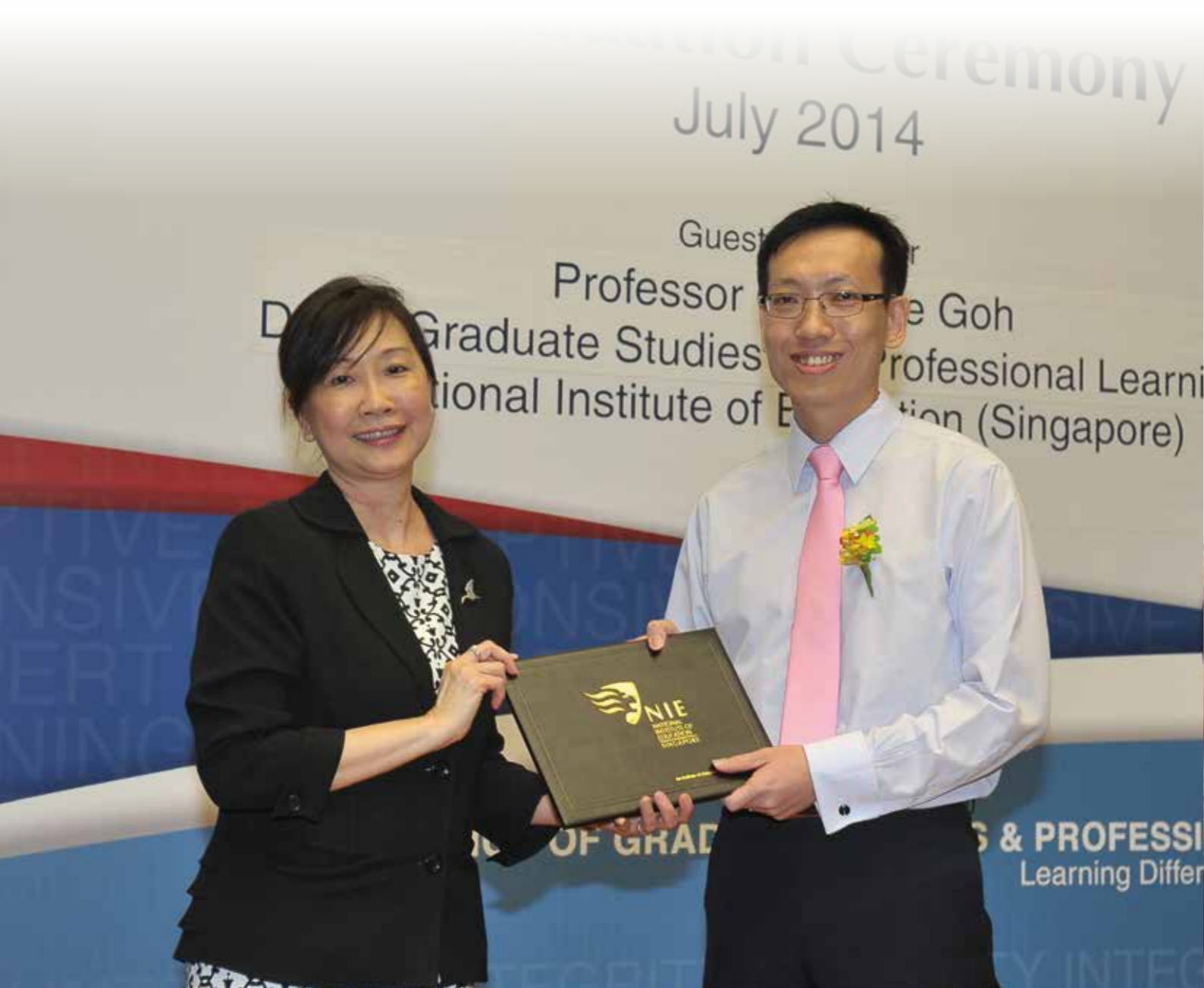
The Management and Leadership in Schools (MLS) programme leverages on the use of reflection to bring about

its intended outcomes of building our capacity in the areas of leadership, management and curriculum. While the programme provides a buffet spread of core and elective modules to engage the diverse group of participants, each of the modules entails the need for us to "soul-search" and to reflect on our own unique set of experiences, in order to apply the theories and contextualise the learning. The course also encourages the incubation and germination of new ideas through group reflection and sharing, something often alien to us in the midst of juggling the many operational demands of our work. More importantly, the opportunities to listen to others and view issues from their perspectives remind us that learning to reflect and reflecting to learn can be both a personal and shared experience. It helps us to confront our inner concerns and

fears and to truly grow as curriculum and instructional leaders.

While savouring the delectable flavours offered by the core lectures, electives, school/industry visits, curriculum projects and regional visits, I urge all MLS participants to take some time to learn how to reflect using the different reflection models and then reflect to truly learn from their multitude of experiences. The process may be time-consuming and humbling, but rest assured that the outcome will be highly rewarding as we continue to embark on our leadership journey after graduation from MLS!

Below: Valedictorian of his cohort, Mr Jason Goh (right) receiving his MLS graduation certificate from Prof Christine Goh



MY MALEC REFLECTION

By Mr Ong Ka Ming, NIE Alumnus

The Master of Arts in Leadership and Educational Change (MALEC) course was certainly a great experience for me! The course had helped me gain new perspectives and challenged some of my previous assumptions about curriculum, learning, and leadership. One of its key strengths is the development of critical thinking needed for the analysis of educational policies and practices, particularly those situated within the Singapore context. Coupled with the expertise and professional knowledge of Teacher's College (TC) and National Institute of Education (NIE) academic faculties, there was the confluence of contemporary educational theories, scholarly inquiry of educational policies, and evidence-based leadership practices in learning for the participants. Leveraging the strengths of a generalist approach, the

course advocates the development of sustainable and scalable solutions to deal with ambiguous, paradoxical, and intractable problems in education. Some of the common themes that emerged include the periodic curriculum swings due to political and societal pressures; the underlying equity issues in education impeding for social mobility; collaborative structures for teachers needed to initiate impactful innovations and sustainable changes; the responsibility of teachers and school leaders in designing effective learning environments.

The cohort-based nature of the classes meant that a trusting, safe, and collaborative environment had been built over the course of the year to facilitate deep learning and discussions during the lessons. The diversity of the class and the networking opportunities has

added an extra dimension to our learning, as our discussions would often be rich, impassioned, with diverse viewpoints to enhance our learning about educational issues. We had representatives from pre-schools, primary schools, independent schools, junior colleges, and HQ offering insights from the school leaders', middle managers', teachers', lead teachers', pre-school teachers', and curriculum planners' point of view.

The whole group will certainly remain as an avenue for support, comfort, thought-provoking conversations for years to come, as many friendships were formed through the course of the year.

Below: Mr Ong Ka Ming (seated, extreme right) shared a fruitful experience with his fellow MALEC programme mates





TOP OF THE GAME

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

Answering the call to develop educational leaders who possess the passion and aspiration to inspire, nurture and lead our next generation, the National Institute of Education (NIE) and Nanyang Technological University recently launched the new NTU-NIE Teaching Scholars Programme (TSP).

TSP aims to nurture a new generation of dynamic education professionals who are creators of knowledge, shapers of character, facilitators of learning and architects of learning environment.

Through available opportunities to explore global issues, develop unique insights and cultivate competencies that extend beyond the classrooms, these include attachments in reputable overseas education institutes, teaching experience in other high performing education systems and work attachment with leading industry partners. In addition, TSP students will have the opportunities to be mentored by eminent research scientists, to converse with Nobel laureate speakers, and to participate in cutting-edge research. Such valuable experiences are to stretch

the TSP Scholars' intellectual limits by placing them in stimulating environments that will constantly challenge their competencies. As a TSP Scholar, they will take the lead in providing the next generation of students with a holistic educational experience.

Among the pioneering TSP Scholars, Ms Lin Siyue and Mr Chua Jia Xun, share their insights as the first cohort to embark on the Teaching Scholars Programme...

Miss Lin Siyue

For Siyue, she stands by the belief that teachers do make a powerful impact on students. She admits that as early as her secondary schooldays, she was certain her calling to be a teacher was already strong.

"I was inspired by my teachers then. So my objective is to make a difference in my students' lives through showing the same mark of care they showed to me for their well-being and igniting a passion for learning in my students," Siyue related.

To her, the importance of this meant excelling well not only in her studies then but also as a TSP Scholar. She notes, "I am excited to be in the pioneer batch



because it means that I can also pave the way and help to refine the methods of training future teaching scholars after me."

One who graduated with good results from Hwa Chong Institution, she had her pick of choice undergraduate programmes but insisted that NIE is her only choice. As Siyue begins her first year of study, she notes that TSP is a track she'd recommend to other peers too. "It has been a great experience so far and I have particularly enjoyed the close-knit TSP community made up of my peers and various professors. We are still in the early stages but already I can see that we are very well taken care of and are provided with extensive resources."

Asked about what she looks forward to as a TSP Scholar, she notes: "I always feel that any experience is what you make of it – whichever programme you take can be beneficial as long as you choose to make the best of it. I look forward to the challenges that will be presented to me in this premier programme and understanding the intricacies of education pedagogies and research. Certainly, completing this course, I can see myself becoming an effective teacher with all the good training I am going to receive at NIE."

Mr Chua Jia Xun

On the other hand, Jia Xun said the desire to teach was a gradual persuasion from all the good teachers he had encountered throughout his primary, secondary and junior college education journey.

He says: "As my schooling years went by, I studied under some great teachers. Apart from helping me to understand necessary subject knowledge, more importantly, they taught me many life lessons... They helped me to grow. Slowly, I came to realise that I really want to join the teaching profession. I want to help my future students to grow. I want to inspire them."

As a tribute to them, Jia Xun says he can't think of any other career choice better than to teach. Thus begins his TSP Scholar track which he eagerly looks forward to.

"I am really excited because of the holistic experience and the opportunity to learn pedagogies with emphases on global perspectives and alongside leading industry minds. I recall being happy that I was just in time for the TSP pioneer batch. Sure, it is not the tried-and-tested path, but the Teaching Scholars Programme offers so much



Photos By: Mr. Julian Low

more than the typical university course, especially for budding educators."

As for career objectives, Jia Xun says his focus is on the end result of what he brings to the table as an educator. He confirmed: "I hope to guide Singapore children and teenagers to learn and to grow, no matter where I am in the education service."

Jia Xun also echoes Siyue's sentiment on the availability of resources and mentorship made available to them as the pioneers of the programme.

"It has been a great start and the future looks really bright with all these opportunities abound! There is so much that can be done and so much to experience. As part of TSP, we have our own personal Academic Advisor, and it is great to have a mentor to discuss things with. I immediately found that there is a lot of camaraderie and candour in our discussions. As a science student, I am also given opportunities for research attachments into graduate science research labs in NIE, right from the first month of school which provides ample opportunities that I love for more practical experiences!"

Since orientation, Jia Xun has found that TSP will provide the content mastery and pedagogy skills he seeks to fulfill his drive to attain his passion in teaching varying levels of learning and in unique ways. He also relishes the future international practicum that he will have the opportunity to experience and happily jokes: "Perhaps, there will be so much going on that I may have to schedule time for myself."

As Jia Xun embarks on his journey, he shared that he has an additional objective in being a TSP Scholar: "To not just teach but to be an effective teacher, I aim to complete with a mastery over pedagogical skills. I look forward to the many chances that being a TSP Scholar opens up to me to gain a deep understanding of the education system and more importantly, the heart to lead, care and inspire my future students. Surely, to be the best educator I can be to them."

For more information about the NTU-NIE Teaching Scholars Programme, please visit: www.nie.edu.sg/scholars/advantage



CURTAINS, LIGHTS, TEACH!

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

When the curtains are drawn, Mr Shahdon Mohammed Jamil lights up a very different kind of stage with his singing and acting talents. To be precise, he takes his performance prowess centre-stage in a classroom full of students at a local primary school.

Admitting that the ability to perform has set him in good stead to fuel the vibrancy of his lessons, Shahdon knows it is truly how he chooses to apply himself that makes the big difference.

He quips: "Why only limit my abilities to an audience group when I can motivate a generation?"

And the grit and determination he shows in honing his craft is evident. From his successful graduation ceremonies emerging as voted Valedictorian of his Diploma cohort as a triple-award recipient to receiving the prestigious Koh Boon Hwee (KBH) Scholars Award at the NTU Convocation on 29 July 2014, Shahdon has certainly built quite an impressive track record.

Looking back, he recalled an incident where he lost control of a class due to a hyper-active group of students who made his lesson a nightmare to teach but reaffirms that gone are those days since NIE has moulded his classroom

management skills in many great ways.

In particular, he credits one of the Visual and Performing Arts Academic Group (VPA) academics at NIE who taught him plenty on and off the stage. Honoured at the recent KBH Scholars Award ceremony, Shahdon named NIE VPA's Dr Jane Gilmer as an exemplary mentor.

He relates: "Dr Gilmer has contributed to my education immensely through using drama as a pedagogical tool to develop me as an artist and teacher. Her impactful and effective pedagogy is one that creates an educational culture which empowers students through levelling the teacher-student hierarchy. In our creative space, there is no fear in experimenting with ideas. She is skillful in creating psychologically safe space in the classroom for me to continuously seek knowledge through engaging in serious play and exploration. Due to her warm and nurturing disposition, my friends and I often visited her office to have long talks about anything under the sun."

To this, Dr Gilmer replies: "It was truly an honour to be nominated by Shahdon as one of his mentors for the KBH Scholars award. Education is always a two-way process between teacher and student. Shahdon is a student who took up ideas and activities beyond what I offered as

a teacher in class. He extended and developed these ideas in a critical, creative and mature way producing work of the highest calibre, both academically and practically, in drama."

Through Dr Gilmer, Shahdon also remembers one incident which most inspired him to teach. He said: "As a mentor, she guided me patiently through a challenging period. During my final year production when the pressure from other modules was high, I struggled to balance between my artistic and non-artistic works. In the end, our ensemble created a very complex and beautiful theatre piece that kept our audience spellbound. I am ever grateful to her for showing me how to encourage and nurture a student through adversity and difficulties."

The way this show-stopper sees it, his future is made to light up a child's learning journey. With no lack of meaningful experiences chalked up during his NIE student teacher days, NIE Singapore wishes Shahdon well for the next chapter of his career. We cannot wait to see when this education headliner will make another outstanding performance. *Encore!*

Top: Encouraged by his peers, Mr Shahdon Mohammed Jamil (centre) is certain to light up his classroom with energy



NIE DEGREE GRADUATE HEADS OFF TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

By Public, International and Alumni Relations

It is a little known fact about Mr Jasper Sim Hong today but he was once, one of the weakest and most unmotivated students in his secondary school class struggling with English and joined several co-curricular activities to make school life 'more bearable'. So how did he overcome his shortcomings to be one who is well on the way to a Cambridge University Masters programme in English Linguistics?

The only secret ingredient, according to Jasper, is "to teach". Something that Jasper admits was life-changing because of his curiosity to find out how teaching felt like. By crafting out worksheets and making notes for his peers in Computing class in Junior College, Jasper found that the move forever impacted him. He was even teaching classes on Sunday school and thus sealed his decision to pursue the teaching profession.

He relates: "Lessons that are more exploratory, creative and experimental always capture the attention of a student – this is what helped me find my footing."

From one who was almost failing General Paper in his JC days earlier, Jasper had found that his studies would open up the opportunity for him to graduate and fulfill his professional dream by entering the NTU-NIE BA (Education) programme. Four years on, Jasper graduated with a Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal and the prestigious Koh Boon Hwee Scholars Award at the NTU Convocation and NIE Teachers' Investiture ceremonies.

Of his learning experience at NIE, Jasper confirms that the longing to teach had grown through interactions with his peers and the academics who taught here. He sees NIE as a life-changer and says, "Thanks to NIE, I almost instantly fell in love with English linguistics," he adds, "I now find such enjoyment in the subject!"

Specialised in Education for his undergraduate studies, he derived great intellectual discourse and even found a good mentor with like-minded values. (both pictured below)

Associate Professor Low Ee Ling, one of his lecturers for a senior year module in phonetics and phonology, was thus nominated at the Koh Boon Hwee Scholars Award ceremony whom he noted as one who was "truly an inspirational figure to all her students and has left an indelible mark on me".

Jasper added: "She knew and understood my aspirations. Apart from imparting invaluable academic knowledge and skills, she also influenced us, student teachers, in positive ways, thanks to her affable and exuberant personality which was evident in her teaching. She was a patient, dedicated and sincere educator whose passion for the subject emanated in all that she did."

He also noted that Assoc Prof Low prized learning over results and ensured that the process of her students' learning was of the highest standards. To this, Jasper echoes the same. From his further achievements at Cambridge, he hopes to bring home even greater clarity to his

classroom teachings. "I hope to not give up on my students; teach them to hold on to hope and not admit defeat even if it takes years for them to change," said Jasper on his career objective.

In her address at the Ceremony, Associate Professor Low Ee Ling, Head, Office of Strategic Planning and Academic Quality, also acknowledged Jasper at the ceremony and added that he is a positive role model who has and will contribute significantly to his education. She noted: "Being a teacher is a 24/7 role because both inside and outside the classroom, we need to be role models who live out the values that we try to impart to our students."

We wish Jasper all the best as he continues his journey to realise his dream of impacting the next generation of leaders.



Photo By (Above): Assoc Prof Low Ee Ling

BECOMING MY BEST

By Mr Lim Li Cheng, NIE Alumnus

I am a firm believer that there are no hopeless cases because it just so happens, I was one of those, hanging out with “the notorious bunch” and a poor academic kid who couldn’t have made it.

But thanks to a teacher who stood by me and believed that every child can do well, I stand here today a testament that educators play a pivotal role in helping to nurture a student to enjoy learning and to excel.

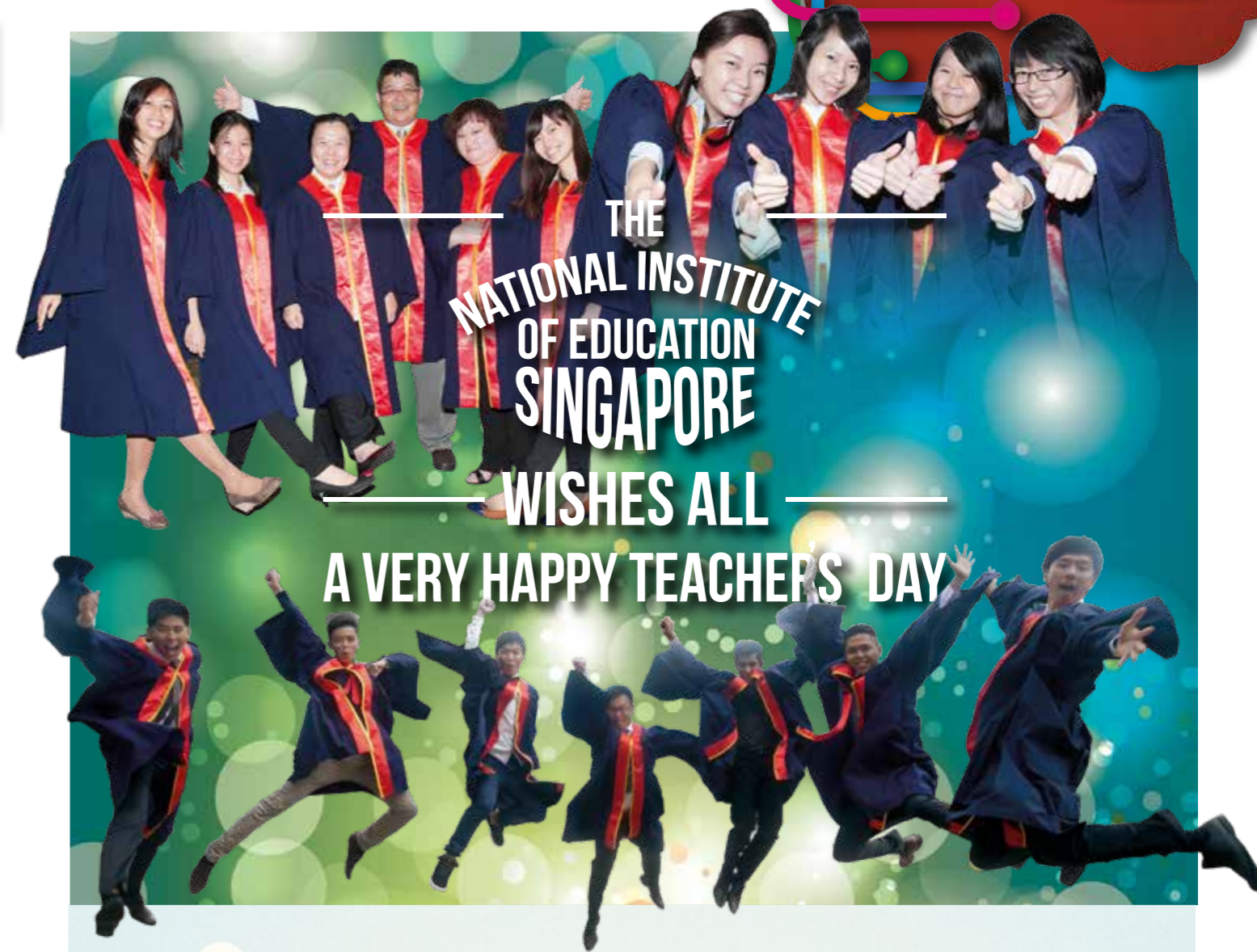
I recalled how she saw the potential in me and cleverly ‘turned the tables’ by challenging me to go tutor my friends in Math since this was the subject I enjoyed most then. In the process of struggling to help my buddies do better, I learned the most valuable lesson of all – helping others do well is a gift.

I was not only able to pull through my ‘N’ Levels but did so, well. I achieved top results in my ‘NA’ level cohort. I also did really well for my ‘O’ levels obtaining 4 A’s in ‘A’ level and today, as a graduate of a Bachelor of Science from NTU-NIE and full-fledged teacher.

When I was informed that I will receive four awards comprising of the prestigious Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal, Sng Yew Chong Award, The Mathematics Book Prize and Singapore Mathematical Society Book Prize, I felt so grateful. This is truly a memorable part in my life because I had won the most awards out of my entire cohort at NIE (pictured here, receiving a prize from Mr Heng Swee Keat, Minister For Education)

I am ever grateful that I had the privilege to experience many great mentors who taught me how to apply myself well. They have definitely shaped my personal belief for a passion for teaching, just look at me as a perfect example. I also learnt the best lesson of all and finally understood then how a teacher guides each and every student to be the best of his or her abilities.

I am most grateful to my family, friends and especially my teachers in my secondary school and junior college because without them I would not have become who I am today – they are my pillars of strength and support.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE	VENUE	CONTACT
Service Learning Day	1 Oct 2014	NIE Singapore	Ms Jann Tan Email gesl@nie.edu.sg
NIE Family Day	3 Oct 2014	NIE Singapore	Ms Johannah Soo Email johannah.soo@nie.edu.sg
Leaders in Education Programme (LEP) 2014 Graduation	24 Oct 2014	The Regent Singapore	Ms Leow Shee Yin Email sheeyin.leow@nie.edu.sg
International Science Education Conference 2014	25 – 27 Nov 2014	NIE Singapore	Assoc Prof Tan Aik Ling Email aikling.tan@nie.edu.sg Asst Prof Tang Kok Sing Email koksing.tang@nie.edu.sg
Association of Psychological and Educational Counselors of Asia Pacific (APECA) Conference	4 – 6 Dec 2014	NIE Singapore	Ms Joey Lim Email joey.lim@nie.edu.sg

MY JOURNEY SINCE GRADUATION

By Mrs Susan Teng, NIE Alumna

After graduating from NIE in the part-time BA (Education) programme, I continue to teach English Language (EL) and head the EL department in Coral Primary School. I must add that my perspectives with regard to the different issues pertaining to education have broadened significantly as I view them through different lenses. I communicate and involve more stakeholders, especially parents, in EL programmes and activities and always seek feedback from them for further improvement.

I realise too that the degree programme has enabled me to hone my writing skills more effectively. Report-writing, writing letters to stakeholders and writing key plans and listing out the processes and outcomes in the new Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS) require us to be succinct in our delivery to which I am quite comfortable with since graduating from NIE. I feel very

much in control of my writing for different purposes with a different target audience. In this aspect, credit goes to the degree programme with some pertinent lessons which are applicable in my work first as a teacher and also as the head of the EL department. My subordinates look up to me not only for EL instructional pedagogy but also in mentorship and guidance.

I would certainly recommend this degree programme to educators who have not attained a degree yet as it enriches our professional development and strengthens our role as teachers, empowering us with quality pedagogical content knowledge.

My advice for beginning teachers: Hone your craft by observing how the experienced colleagues in the school teach. Always find time to read so that you could understand the education landscape better and apply at least one takeaway from a workshop or course that you attend into your lessons.

