



np

news

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NP's Got Talent

Featuring some of NP's Brightest

A Solution to the World's
Water Woes?

China Calling!



NGEE ANN
POLYTECHNIC

A Hollywood Boost for Aspiring Filmmakers

Under the Ministry of Education's (MOE) Polytechnic-Foreign Specialised Institution (Poly-FSI) collaboration framework, NP has partnered Chapman University in offering a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Producing.

The two-year, full-time degree is the first of its kind to be offered in Singapore. Customised for NP's Film, Sound & Video and Mass Communication graduates, the collaboration allows them to acquire a reputable US degree locally, with tuition fees subsidised by the MOE.

Mr Chia Mia Chiang, the Principal of NP, said: "The degree will address the demand for business-savvy media entrepreneurs who can spot, create and market compelling content to the world. Local industry leaders have strongly endorsed this degree and we believe it will revolutionise the market."

Giving a thumbs-up for the programme, Mr Jason Lai, Director of Content of the home-grown production company, Oak3 Films, added: "There is a gaping lack of good TV and film producers in our industry. This programme will certainly help a great deal in filling this space."

Conducted on NP's campus, the programme is taught by full-time professors and lecturers from Chapman University and NP. Its curriculum is designed by a team of

George Lucas, Steven Spielberg and Jerry Bruckheimer – these Hollywood luminaries have all made their mark as creative producers in film and TV. And now, with Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) latest degree tie-up, Singapore will be able to train its own talents in creative producing.



Mr Chia and Dean Bassett signed the Memorandum of Understanding at NP on 23 June. The signing was witnessed by Guest of Honour RAdm (NS) Lui Tuck Yew, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts.

professors led by Professor and Dean Robert Bassett.

Located in Southern California, Chapman University boasts an illustrious faculty, including Oscar-winning writer and director David Ward, director John Badham of Saturday Night Fever fame, and production designer and Academy Award nominee Lawrence Paull.

Having welcomed its first intake of 29 students in August 2008, the programme

will offer them possible internships in Hollywood as well as an immersion programme at Chapman University's Orange County campus.

This is NP's third degree tie-up under the Poly-FSI collaboration framework. Its first two degree tie-ups were with Wheelock College for the Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Educational Studies and Leadership, and Newcastle University for the Bachelor of Engineering in Naval Architecture. **np**



contents

newsroom

A Hollywood Boost for Aspiring Filmmakers	2
A Springboard for New Environmental Technologies	3
A Solution to the World's Water Woes?	3
A Healthy Dose of Practical Training	4
How To: Be An Entrepreneur	4
NP to Tap Emerging High-Growth Sectors	5
LIVE, WORK & SERVE China	6
NP's Got Talent!	7

feature special

Shining On: Our Scholars After NP	8
-----------------------------------	---

high + notes

NP's First-ever F1 "Night" Race	10
Be Green & Stay Cool	10
Paving the Path for Parkinson's Patients	11
Special Mentions	11

scene it + on campus

Arts and Sports to get a Boost	12
True-blue Entrepreneurs	13
A Friendly Effort for Charity	13
Make the First Move	14

people

A Catalyst for Change	15
-----------------------	----



Mr Png Cheong Boon, Chief Executive of SPRING; Mr S Iswaran, Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry; and NP Principal Chia Mia Chiang at the launch of the EWT COI.

A SPRINGBOARD for New Environmental Technologies

expertise to small and medium sized local enterprises to develop commercially viable solutions and products.

In fact, since it began operations in 2006, the COI has already undertaken more than 35 projects and has 20 more in the pipeline. A company which has successfully tapped on it is Resorts World at Sentosa (RWS). The collaboration gave birth to a unique eco-friendly cooling device which will cool RWS' outdoor attractions whilst using less energy than conventional air-conditioning units.

Backing the centre in projects such as these is a team of staff from the School of Engineering and School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology, who boast professional expertise in a wide scope of environment technology-related topics. NP's principal Mr Chia Mia Chiang believes that the centre will also "offer NP students another learning platform to pick up critical skills and gain exposure through collaborative work, research and industry attachments." **np**

By Joyce Peh

As Singapore positions itself to be a global hydro-hub and regional leader in waste management, the collaboration between NP and SPRING will play a key role in providing expertise and infrastructure to support the industry. Marking the partnership's main thrust is the setting up of the Environmental and Water Technology Centre of Innovation (EWT COI). The \$7.6 million applied research facility was officially launched on 1 July 2008 by Guest of Honour, Mr S Iswaran, Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry.

Focusing on key areas such as water and wastewater technology, waste management, clean energy and pollution control, the centre provides technology as well as research and development (R&D)

A Solution to the WORLD'S WATER WOES?

Well, that's what the winners of the inaugural Singapore Junior Water Prize (SJWP) competition are hoping for, with their award-winning water purifier.

The winning team comprising Rajarshi Roy, 17, Koh Shao Yang, 17, and Wang Cheng Xu, 19, presented their nature-inspired purifier at the finals of SJWP, a national competition organised by Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) in collaboration with the Lien Foundation.

Resembling a Portuguese man-of-war, their project is a water desalination device that is able to distil water using heat from the sun. They hope that it will be a cheap and simple way of providing drinking water to poor communities. The competition also attracted water-related projects from 23 other educational institutions including secondary schools, junior colleges and polytechnics.

The SJWP is supported by PUB, the national water agency, and is aimed at encouraging youths to develop an interest in issues concerning water and the environment.



Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, Dr Amy Khor with SJWP winners Rajarshi Roy and Koh Shao Yang from NUS High School.

The winning team from NUS High School won \$5,000 cash plus the chance to represent Singapore at the Stockholm Junior Water Prize competition, an annual international contest held every August in Stockholm, Sweden.

Mr Lee Poh Wah, Lien Foundation's Programme Director, said: "Through this competition, we hope to cultivate an interest in water science among our young researchers, motivating them to take bold steps in coming up with innovative water solutions."

Mr Khoo Teng Chye, the Chief Executive of PUB and Executive Director of the Environment & Water Industry Development Council, added: "The opportunity for them to participate in the World Water Week in Stockholm will give them wider global exposure and mould them into future water technopreneurs."

The SJWP is part of a larger initiative by Ngee Ann and the Lien Foundation to advance social and environmental causes, and cultivate regional goodwill by helping educational institutions in ASEAN. **np**



A Healthy Dose of Practical Training

Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) partners the National University Hospital (NUH) to offer NP's Diploma in Pharmacy Science students a year-long clinical attachment.

Starting April 2008, NP and NUH came together in a collaboration to groom health professionals who are competent in pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical sciences, and who are ready to contribute effectively to the industry upon graduation.

Under the partnership, third-year students from the Diploma in Pharmacy Science will undergo a year-long clinical attachment in a hospital setting at NUH. This is the first time that a hospital pharmacy in Singapore has taken over the provision of the course's practical training and the curriculum has been jointly developed by NUH's Pharmacy Department and NP's School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology.

The students will be put through the paces with rigorous well-rounded training and have the opportunity to be exposed to frontline patient care. The students will draw on the expertise and experience of NUH pharmacists through lectures, on-the-job training and supervision.

Mr Chua Song Khim, Chief Executive Officer, NUH, said: "As a university hospital, excellence in education is a key focus and we are happy to partner Ngee Ann Polytechnic to raise the standards of allied health professionals. The exposure to industry practice... will allow these future pharmacy technicians to be ready for the challenges and opportunities in healthcare."

Mr Wu Tuck Seng, Senior Manager, Department of Pharmacy, NUH added that "students can expect a comprehensive exposure to the different aspects of a hospital pharmacy."

Thanking NUH, Mr Chia Mia Chiang, the Principal of NP, concluded by saying: "It is very exciting for our students to be trained in a university hospital which is well-known for the high quality of its services and state-of-the-art facilities. The partnership will certainly enhance the value of our diploma." **np**



How To: Be An Entrepreneur!

Giving over 200 would-be entrepreneurs from local tertiary institutions the chance to toss questions at people who had "been there and done that" on 19 July, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) opened its doors to a distinguished panel of businesspeople at the annual Youth Entrepreneurship Forum.

The questions posed to the panel – which included Mr Inderjit Singh, founder of Infiniti Solutions Ltd, Ms Elaine Teh, Executive Director of Octopus Holdings Pte Ltd, Ms Anisa Hassan, Managing Director of It's Just Lunch Singapore and Mr Max Ng, Managing Director of Gateway-Law Corporation – ranged from what the daily life of an entrepreneur is like to the technical and legal aspects of setting up a business. Taking the questions with ease,

the panel inspired the audience with an unmistakable passion for entrepreneurship.

Noor Azilah Bte Noor Mohamed, an ITE College East student and student volunteer of 4PM said, "The topics discussed today are very useful and have really motivated me to start a business of my own."

Jointly organized by Entrepreneurs-Connect@NP, the National Youth Achievement Award Gold Award Holders' Alumni and the Malay Youth Literary Association, the event was graced by Mr Hawazi Daipi, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Manpower and Ministry of Health and Member of Parliament for Sembawang GRC. **np**

By Joyce Peh



NP to Tap Emerging High-Growth Sectors

With six new full-time diplomas, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) is set to offer its 2009 cohort more options to join some of the most lucrative, fastest growing industries.

Diploma in Advertising & Public Relations (APR)

School of Film & Media Studies

The first diploma in Singapore to bring together both Advertising and Public Relations, APR seeks to groom a creative talent pool, grounded in areas such as visual communication, media design, creative development, broadcast media production as well as advertising and brand management. Trained to thrive in the competitive business and media environment, graduates will make sought-after candidates for positions in advertising, public relations, corporate communications, marketing communications and marketing.

Diploma in Clean Energy Management (CEM)

School of Engineering

It's a chance to enjoy excellent job prospects in the burgeoning clean energy and energy conservation sectors! NP's CEM diploma trains students beyond understanding the various sources and supplies of renewable energy. It also looks into the issues of energy management, which focuses on energy conservation, as well as the promotion of economic, political and environmental sustainability. The course also features relevant hands-on training and on-site learning at NP's new Solar Technology Centre.

Diploma in Chinese Media & Communication (CMC)

School of Humanities

The Chinese print, broadcast and interactive media is booming – and CMC is designed to train bilingual and bicultural media practitioners for this sector! It covers a range of exciting and creative media and Chinese studies modules. Students will also enjoy an Overseas Immersion Programme to increase their cultural awareness and attend classes at a Chinese media university. Graduates will be able to work as a print, broadcast or online journalist, producer, translator/interpreter, or in advertising, PR and marketing communications.



Diploma in Child Psychology & Early Education (CPEE)

School of Humanities

Geared towards students who want to help children with special needs or enjoy writing for children's books, CPEE provides a firm foundation in developmental psychology and the early education of young children. In their second year, students will get to choose from specialisations in either Early Intervention (Special Needs) or Writing & Publishing. Upon graduation, they will be able to pursue a career as a special needs or early childhood educator, or a writer of children's literature.

Diploma in International Business (IBZ)

School of Business & Accountancy

Developed by a premier business school, IBZ is set to train young professionals with a global and entrepreneurial mindset. They will be poised to manage complexities in a multicultural landscape. They will have the opportunity to live, work and study overseas as well as the chance to learn a foreign language for that extra edge. Graduates will be able to secure employment with multinational companies in various industries and in areas such as business development, sales and marketing, human resource management, operations management and logistics.

Diploma in Optometry (OPT)

School of Health Sciences

Job prospects in this sector are excellent with high average monthly salaries. OPT students will benefit from a strong emphasis on hands-on practice with its 15-week attachment programme. Endorsed by the Optometrists and Opticians Board, OPT will teach students to diagnose eye diseases, in addition to prescribing and dispensing treatment and visual aids. Students will cover unique modules such as Paediatric Vision, Geriatric Vision, and Low Vision. **np**



LIVE, WORK & SERVE CHINA

With overseas immersion programmes, internships, community and study trips, students of Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) have always enjoyed ample opportunities for overseas exposure. To build on this foundation, NP has recently signed agreements with top Chinese educational institutions such as the Beijing Film Academy to tap growing opportunities in China. What's more, starting this year, Ngee Ann will partner one of the top universities in Wuhan to take its brand of education overseas!

Exporting the NP Brand

With its three-year Diploma in Logistics Management programme making inroads into China this year, NP will become the first Singapore tertiary institution to teach its own course in a branch campus overseas. The diploma will be taught at its partner institution, the Wuhan University of Science and Technology (WUST), one of the top universities in China.

Mr Chia Mia Chiang, NP's principal, had this to say about the exciting new initiative: "Our partnership with the prestigious university will catapult our brand of education into the international arena. This is consistent with our aim of expanding our global presence."

The Reel Deal

In April this year, NP's School of Film & Media Studies inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Beijing Film Academy (BFA). This will set the stage for higher-level collaborations as well as facilitate expertise sharing and learning opportunities through staff and student exchanges. Asia's largest film school, the BFA has produced an award-winning alumnus that includes filmmakers such as Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige.

Live & See China

As part of NP's continuing efforts to give its students international exposure, the poly will be sending 240 students each year for two-month immersion programmes to institutions such as WUST, the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, the Sichuan Aerospace College of Vocational Technology and the Wuhan Institute of Technology.

These programmes benefit second- and third-year students from the School of Engineering and School of InfoComm Technology. During the programmes, they will gain a deeper understanding of China's economy, culture and history by taking modules taught by the partner institutions, visiting cultural and historical sites, and going on industrial visits.



The Wuhan University of Science & Technology

Another immersion programme has also been tied up for third year students of NP's Diploma in Chinese Studies. They will spend an entire semester in either Central China Normal University in Wuhan or Zhejiang University City College, attending classes and visiting key cities in the country.

A Heart For China

Venturing out of their comfort zones, NP students have also headed to areas such as Yunnan, Xiamen and Qingdao on community service trips. There, they have embarked on tasks including building infrastructure such as new school compounds. **np**



NP's Got Talent!

Record number of students awarded scholarships and welcomed into the Talent Development Programme (TDP) at this year's Scholarship Presentation Ceremony.

On 27 June 2008, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) awarded its largest ever number of scholarships, with 200 students receiving recognition for their academic excellence and achievements in co-curricular activities.

These 200 NP scholars will get the chance to be part of the poly's TDP. The programme, which NP pioneered about seven years ago, aims to nurture critical thinking and groom leaders amongst NP's brightest scholars.

One such scholar is Jeremy Toh, a second-year Mass Communication student, who said that the TDP "made him realise that there are more ways to learning than simply memorising everything straight off a textbook."

"From attending events such as international conferences held overseas, I know that the opportunities to learn will always be boundless. Learning should never be confined within campus grounds, and that is what the TDP has given me so far," he added.

The TDP's activities begin with a three-day residential leadership training camp. Over their time in NP, students like Jeremy will also

be exposed to modules on community and world issues as well as innovation and enterprise. They will also be given opportunities to participate in dialogues with political leaders and engage in current affairs roundtables.

Jeremy isn't the only one who has already been reaping the benefits of the TDP. Dinah Shaik, a first-year Business Studies student who has also attended the TDP induction camp, said that she found it to be "thoroughly insightful and enjoyable."

"Furthermore, the scholarship will be a constant reminder to me to be consistent in my work," she said.

Over the years, the TDP has produced several success stories such as Ron Ng and Soon Jun Wei from the School of Life Sciences of Chemical Technology, who made history by being the first polytechnic students accepted into the NUS School of Medicine last year. Marvin Kang, another TDP scholar from the School of Business & Accountancy, clinched the prestigious Public Service Commission Scholarship this July. **np**

By Joyce Peh

Challenge: CALIFORNIA

Starting 2009, at least 20 TDP scholars will head for a three-week challenge with a liberal arts twist in the United States every year.

The first of its kind among local polytechnics and a brand-new initiative of the TDP, the California Challenge aims to expose TDP students to a cross-boundary approach in examining leadership, policy-making, social and economic issues, as well as an attachment with a social or community organisation.

"Ngee Ann has built a broad-based approach to education through the Ngee Ann Learning Model which exposes all students to

multidisciplinary learning. It is not unlike a liberal arts approach, albeit on a very modest scale. The Liberal Arts Challenge will build on this foundation," explained Mr Chia Mia Chiang, the Principal of NP.

"The challenge will expand [students'] perspectives, take their awareness of current affairs and global issues to the next level, and encourage them to probe deeper. All these will add up to a valuable experience for the potential leaders we are grooming," he concluded. **np**

Shining On:

OUR SCHOLARS AFTER NP

From Public Service Commission (PSC) scholars to the first poly students to gain direct admission into the National University of Singapore's medical school, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) has been producing students who have gone on to see more, do more and achieve more under NP's Talent Development Programme (TDP). Two such TDP Scholars are Marvin Kang and Dionne Liew. Not content with sitting and watching the world go by, they have scaled the heights of academic success after setbacks and slow starts. Now, these newly-minted scholars are ready to take on the world – and NP News was there to find out what drives them.



Kang Ping Song, Marvin

- Diploma in Business Studies Graduate
- LKY Step Award 2008
- Public Service Commission Scholarship 2008
- NP Gold Medal, Class of 2008

Eight years ago, this former Raffles Junior College student did so badly for his A-levels he was unable to continue on to the university course of his choice. Lacking direction, Marvin Kang spent the next five years drifting from helping out in the family business to taking on a variety of temporary jobs.

It was during one of these temporary job stints as Customer Service Officer with the Ministry of Education that he managed to rediscover his focus. "I had to take calls from students who did badly in their exams and didn't know what to do next," Marvin shared. "It was really ironic as they were in a similar situation as me."

The experience persuaded him to break free of the rut he had been living in, and at the ripe old age of 24, Marvin enrolled into NP's School of Business & Accountancy. Three years later, he's become the second NP graduate to win the Public Service Commission scholarship as well as a winner of the prestigious LKY-STEP Award. The objective of the latter award is to encourage upgrading and

lifelong learning and is awarded to outstanding poly students pursuing full-time undergraduate programmes at local universities.

"I didn't do well in junior college because I didn't know what I really wanted then, but it was different at NP, especially when I started doing more youth-centric work," said Marvin, a leader of the Ngee Ann Ambassadors, a student organisation that supports NP's marketing arm on outreach activities such as the annual Open House.

"If not for the TDP, I wouldn't have known how far I could stretch myself, let alone doing something as far-fetched as applying for a PSC Scholarship. Many poly students don't think about applying for scholarships, as they think it's something for those in junior colleges. But winning the PSC really happened for me and I'm glad that the TDP helped me dream big."

Marvin Kang

Marvin is currently undertaking a double-degree programme in Business Administration, and Communication and New Media at the National University of Singapore, and hopes to pursue Masters in Public Administration at Harvard University.



Liew Anni, Dionne

- Diploma in Nursing Graduate
- MOH Health Science Scholarship 2008
- NP Silver Medal, Class of 2008

She's one of NP's Silver Medallists and is also the winner of the prestigious Health Science Scholarship offered by the Ministry of Health (MOH). But Dionne wasn't always the hardworking figure she is today. "I was once a 15-year-old with no goal in life," she claimed.

"I'd always wanted to care for others and make a difference in people's lives," she continued, "but I didn't think about entering the nursing profession because I thought it was too noble a career for me. Then in 2005, I stumbled across NP's website and was convinced by the structure of the course's curriculum," she said.

When Dionne first announced her plan to enrol into NP's School of Health Sciences, she faced another setback as her parents voiced

their misgivings on her career choice. "They were supportive of my decision...but they knew it wouldn't be a bed of roses," she said.

Despite that, Dionne persisted and single-mindedly worked towards achieving her dream of becoming a nurse. Now, she's more than halfway there and will be heading to the United States in 2009 to pursue her nursing degree. She credits NP's well-planned curriculum for her success – in addition to a strong foundation and an edge in clinical settings. "NP also provided exposure in the form of overseas community projects and more," she said.

Last year, Dionne served an one-month internship at the plastic surgery ward of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney as well as spent time at a Leprosy Village in Kunming, China.

"The hardest part [of working at a hospital] is the emotional baggage when handling death and grief," she said.

So what drives her through these tough times? "The belief that I am not just studying for myself, but rather, for the hundreds of patients who will cross my path one day," she said.

Dionne Liew

Other Ngee Ann graduates have also made their mark upon graduation. Congratulations to our latest batch of scholarship and award winners!



From left: Joanne Tan, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Ron Ng and Marvin Kang at the LKY-STEP Awards Ceremony.

Ron Ng Chong Sheng

- LKY-STEP Award 2008
- NUS Undergraduate Scholarship
- NP Silver Medal, Class of 2007
- One of the first two poly students accepted into NUS School of Medicine in 2007

Joanne Tan Li Yuan

- LKY-STEP Award 2008
- Nanyang Scholarship 2008
- NP Silver Medal, Class of 2008

Priscilla Ng Liu Yi

- Nanyang Scholarship 2008
- Lee Kuan Yew Award
- NP Gold Medal, Class of 2008

Yu Changquan

- Nanyang Scholarship 2008
- NP Gold Medal, Class of 2008

Ivan Lim Wei

- Nanyang Scholarship 2008
- NP Silver Medal, Class of 2008

Agnes Tan Wei Lin

- Nanyang Scholarship 2008

Tan Yu Pin

- ASEAN Undergraduate Scholarship 2008
- NP Silver Medal, Class of 2008

Michelle Hoang Khanh Chau

- SMU Scholarship 2008

NP's First-ever F1 "Night" Race



"Team Rocket" from Nanyang Girls High

Flagged off by NP Principal, Mr Chia Mia Chiang, on 23 July 2008, the finals of the popular F1 In Schools competition featured miniature model cars put together by students from 20 secondary schools. Powered by compressed carbon dioxide, these cars could reach speeds up to 120 kilometres per hour and whizzed around a 24-metre track during NP's first "night" race!

Jointly organised by NP's Mechanical Engineering Division and the People's Association Youth Movement (PAYM), the competition saw 20 teams competing for various titles; including Fastest Car, Best Engineered Car and Best Cheerleading. It was graced by Ms Grace Fu Hai Yien, Senior Minister of State for National Development and Education, member of the People's Association Board of Management and Guest of Honour for the event.

And who said the racetrack was a place for boys? Team Rocket, an all-girls team from Nanyang Girls' High, bagged the overall championship title with the highest total score. Jessica Choo Qian Hui, a secondary three student and leader of Team Rocket, was thrilled about her team's win: "It's our first year taking part in this competition and we are very excited about representing Singapore overseas."

As winners of the competition, Team Rocket will represent Singapore at the International F1 In Schools competition, to be held in England next year. **np**

By Joyce Peh

BE GREEN & Stay Cool

Tasked with the challenge of transforming Yew Tee Community Club into an environmentally friendly building, more than 100 students from 14 secondary schools rose to the challenge at the 2nd Green Building Competition.

Organised by Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), the competition aimed to inculcate a green spirit amongst Singaporean youths and its message couldn't get any clearer. Having set a theme of "Be Green & Stay Cool", the students were asked to design a rooftop garden and other features to reduce the energy consumption of Yew Tee Community Club (CC).

And their ideas came fast and furious, amazing even the judges. Mrs Grace Quah, the Director of NP's Building & Environment Division, commented that the students "were clearly very enthusiastic about the competition" right from the start, evident from the intelligent questions they asked during the preparatory workshop.

Conducted by specialists from NP, the Building and Construction Authority, the National Parks Board and the Landscape Industry



Posing with their winning model: Hillgrove students Ng Kar Wee, Chee Chuan Bin, Chee Chuan Bo, and Maybelle Chung Hui-shi (from left to right).

Association, the workshop helped the students grasp the objectives and aims of green design.

The students were then given approximately two months before they came together with their proposed models of Yew Tee CC at the finals on 16 July 2008.

Points were awarded for originality, creativity, feasibility and attractiveness, and four students from Hillgrove Secondary School bagged the top prize. Their winning model featured cooling units made from Jelutong, a type of wood that is readily available in South East Asia. **np**

By Joyce Peh

Paving the Path for Parkinson's patients



Helping Parkinson's sufferers move again (from left): Peh Khian Huat, NP lecturer and the students' supervisor Lim Chye Seng, Siti Fatimah and Edmund Yeo.

With an ingenious mobility aid, four Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students helped Parkinson's sufferers get back on their feet – and picked up a Gold Award at the 2nd International Convention on Rehabilitative Engineering & Assistive Technology (i-CREAtE) at the same time!

Developed in collaboration with physiotherapists from Singapore General Hospital (SGH), the Parkinson's Patient Mobility Aid is a portable battery-operated device that provides visual, aural and sensory cues to help Parkinson's patients regain their walking rhythm.

This is because Parkinson's, a neurodegenerative disease, robs sufferers of steady movement and leads to episodes where they "freeze" in confined spaces like doorways and tight corners. Episodes like these only pass when the patient receives a prompt or cue to continue walking.

The new device, created by a team of final-year mechanical engineering students, does just that by projecting a laser beam, emitting a rhythmic tone or providing a vibrating signal. The brainchild of Peh Khian Huat, 20, Edmund Teo, 20, and Siti Fatimah, 19, the simple yet ingenious solution saw

off competition from more than 20 teams from Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan and Hong Kong to win the Gold Award at i-CREAtE.

The project also won the Gold award at the 7th Institute of Engineers Singapore (IES) Competition, held in February 2008.

The students said they were driven by a desire to help sufferers of Parkinson's – the second most deadly disease after Cancer.

In fact, successful trials on patients from SGH showed that using the device improved their walking speed and stride length as well as reduced the number of freezing episodes.

Dr Celia Tan, Deputy Director of Allied Health and Senior Principal Physiotherapist at SGH, added that she was impressed with the device. "I would definitely like to add it to the tools at our rehab centre," she said. **np**

SPECIAL MENTIONS

- In April 2008, eight Diploma in Civil & Environmental Engineering and Environmental & Water Technology students became the **first poly students** to receive the prestigious **Sembcorp Scholarship!**
- Congratulations to our **School of Health Sciences** alumni Nicole Marie Mateo Gamboa and current Nursing students Choo Lay Hwee and Gayathiri d/o Dhavadas for winning the **Hamidah Honour Prize!** Offered by the National Healthcare Group, the book prize is named after Mdm Hamidah Bte Ismail, a Nursing Officer who passed away from SARS, contracted in the course of duty.
- Winning the prestigious Chairman's Award is 3rd year Biotechnology student and triathlete **Amanda Lee** at the **Student Excellence Awards 2007/2008**. These awards recognise student achievements in categories spanning sports, the arts and social activism, and the Chairman's Award recognises the most outstanding student from these categories.
- Proving that you don't need flowery language to get ahead, a 3rd year Information Technology student, **Ramaswamy Balasubramaniam**, won Silver in the Honour Roll category at the **2008 Plain English Speaking Awards (PESA)**. He was the only poly student amidst strong competition from other tertiary institutions at the competition organised by the YMCA and the Ministry of Education.
- Testament to the entrepreneurial spirit are Business Studies graduates Casper Peh, Vincent Wang and Alvin Yap. They emerged winners of the **Youth Category of Startup@Singapore 2008**, a business plan competition organised by the National University of Singapore. Their winning business plan is **TheMobileGamer**, a gaming portal that provides users with mobile gaming entertainment on the go.
- "Home Is Where The Heart Is" was the theme and the entries came pouring in for NP's inaugural story-writing competition, **Write Away**. Organised by the School of Humanities, it was co-sponsored by the Media Development Authority of Singapore. **Lam Yuen Wai from National Junior College** and **Ng Huei Ling from CHIJ St Nicholas Girls' Secondary School** topped the English Division Secondary Category and the Chinese Division Secondary Category, respectively, with their stories for young children.
- Playing board games takes more than chance – it takes plenty of intellect as well! Just ask the seven NP students who picked up **top prize** at the **Boardgame Annuals 2008**, a competition jointly organised by **MENSA Singapore**. **np**

ARTS and SPORTS to get a boost

Both clusters expected to be ready by 2011; students excited by a \$40m campus upgrading plan.

Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) will soon be bidding goodbye to the Teo Hang Sam Building (Block 73) and Canteen One, two of the oldest buildings on campus. They will be replaced by the highly-anticipated Arts Cluster, which will house dance and music studios, club rooms and a new staff hub.

It is all part of a game plan to renew the campus, said Principal Chia Mia Chiang, and the planning team hopes to see this new building make a seamless integration with the existing Student Plaza and boost the frontage the poly occupies along Clementi Road.

According to Mr Mui Cheng Hock, Director of the polytechnic's Estate Management Office, architects are being shortlisted for

the project. This is part of a competition to select the best proposal and the winning architect will be appointed in November 2008. Construction work will begin in 2009.

The master-plan also includes an extensive revamp of the Sports Complex that covers Blocks 16 and 18, as well as the building of a new indoor sports hall in place of the nearby Lecture Theatre 20. This multi-purpose sports hall will host sports like badminton, basketball, table tennis and sepak takraw.

The rejuvenation of the whole area will also see Block 18 holding the administration offices of the Student Development & Alumni Relations (SDAR) department as well as the club rooms of special interest student groups. The existing facilities at Block 15 and 16 in the existing sports complex will be refreshed to include a dedicated space for student leadership training. **np**



Soon to come: A brand new air-conditioned canteen at Block 51, to replace Canteen One.

A Page in History: The Teo Hang Sam Building

More commonly known as Block 73, the Teo Hang Sam Building was the first building to be erected on Ngee Ann College's (as the poly was known then) Clementi campus in 1966. It was named after the then-President of the Ngee Ann Kongsi, Dato Teo Hang Sam, whose family had made generous donations to the building fund.

A grand one and a half million dollars was spent for the building to house the Department of Technology and one laboratory each for Industrial Chemistry and Telecommunications. Upon completion, the College's Administrative Offices, library, classrooms, laboratories and the Department of Home Economics were also relocated to Block 73 from the college's

previous location at the Teochew Building at Tank Road.

Since then, the building has housed a variety of faculties from the School of Film & Media Studies in the early 90s and the School of Business & Accountancy till present. **np**



True-blue Entrepreneurs

Proving that they've got the mettle to make it as entrepreneurs, three students from Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) put together their hearts and brains to combat the rising number of youth smokers. Their brainchild? The Blue Ribbon – First Step Carnival.

Turning down other less challenging options for their Business Planning and Innovation Product Development module, the three final year Business & Accountancy (BA) students undertook the biggest challenge of their polytechnic education yet: organising a large-scale event to raise awareness among youth about the harmful effects of smoking.

For their efforts, Huang Seling, Jasmine Lin and Lua Sze Ting bagged the prestigious Young ChangeMakers Award and received



funding worth \$3,000. The award is a grant scheme offered by the National Youth Council to provide funding to young people who wish to make a meaningful difference to the community.

With additional funding from the Youth Advolution grant scheme offered by the Health Promotion Board, the students organised the Blue Ribbon – First Step Carnival. With a theme of "Smoke Free, Life

Should Be Colourful", the carnival was held at the open field next to the Woodlands Civic Plaza and was supported by the Singapore Anti-Tuberculosis Association (SATA) and Woodlands Constituency.

Packed with performances and activities to promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage community bonding, the event attracted more than 2,000 participants from the public and was graced by Guest of Honour, Ms Ellen Lee Geck Hoon, Member of Parliament for Sembawang GRC and Advisor to Woodlands Grassroots Organisation.

Commending the trio for the success of the event, Mr Philip Lau, Director of BA, commented that "they have been able to engage the youth community through adopting a peer-to-peer approach in spreading the anti-smoking message." np

By Joyce Peh

A Friendly Effort for Charity

Entitled "Nigel & Friends", the charity campaign culminated on 21 June at the Ngee Ann Convention Centre with a highly-publicised variety show and the news that they had managed to raise a staggering \$30,500 for the Spastic Children's Association School (SCAS).

In the lead-up to the variety night, an array of fringe events was also organised by NPICS to raise funds and to create awareness about cerebral palsy. These included a movie marathon, island and campus-wide donation drives as well as a futsal tournament.

The students from NPICS also organised a visit to the SCAS on 11 April 2008. "We made it a point from the start that Nigel & Friends campaign wouldn't be just about raising funds. There was a sense of duty to spend quality time caring and sharing with the children," said the producer of Nigel & Friends, Mr S Gobinath. A Mechatronic Engineering graduate from the Class of 1998,

In the spirit of friendship, current and past members of Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Indian Cultural Society (NPICS) got together on the 25th Anniversary of the club to raise over \$30,000 for charity.



From left to right: Mr S Gobinath, Producer of Nigel & Friends, Mr Leong Fook Seng, Deputy Director of the Community Chest, Ms Kayathiri, President of NPICS and NP's Principal Chia Mia Chiang with children and Ms Monaliza U Guce from the SCAS.

Gobi described the afternoon they spent with the children as "unforgettable" as the NPICS members sang, performed magic tricks and gave out balloon sculptures to the delight of the kids. np

Make the FIRST MOVE

When disaster struck, some exceptional Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students didn't wait for someone else to initiate relief efforts. Instead, they spearheaded the successful NP 4 Myanmar and China Earthquake Appeal fundraisers and raised almost \$100,000!



Students volunteering their free time to collect donations.

NP 4 Myanmar

When news of Cyclone Nargis broke, many students from the School of Humanities (HMS) students approached their lecturers who, within a day, gathered other like-minded students together for a brainstorming session.

"I felt that I should try and do my part for the cyclone victims," explained Yong Chuan, one of the students tasked with overlooking the logistical matters for the fundraising event, NP 4 Myanmar.

On 15 and 16 May, the students got together at the Atrium, where they set up a booth detailing the plight of the victims and tended to donation cans. Their effort paid off as a total of \$26,484.88 was raised – far surpassing the students' target of \$14,000! The money was channelled to The Salvation Army in Myanmar to provide rescue and relief efforts to the survivors of Cyclone Nargis.

Helpless. That was what second-year students Lim Yong Chuan from the School of Humanities and Rosanna Koh from the School of Business & Accountancy felt, when they heard of the destruction from Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar and the earthquake in Sichuan, China. Feeling compelled to actively help with relief efforts, they took the plunge. Through their sheer desire to help, they made a difference.



HMS Student Organisers pictured with Deputy Principal Mr Foo See Meng.

"It just goes to show that the school's concerted effort to raise funds did not go to waste, and that NP is made up of people with hearts of gold," said Yong Chuan.

China Earthquake Appeal

Within weeks of Cyclone Nargis, an earthquake struck Sichuan and yet another group of students rallied together to raise funds for victims. Leading the cry to help was Rosanna Koh who echoed the sentiments of many others in an appeal email. She said: "We all belong to a tiny world. Even if we cannot be there, we can still contribute in some ways."

Joining Rosanna in the organising committee of the China Earthquake Appeal was second-year Electrical Engineering student, Huang Yilong, a Sichuan native himself. Upon receiving news of the earthquake, he spent six frantic hours trying to contact his family and friends back home. When he finally managed to get in touch with them and assure himself that they were safe, he turned his attention to helping his less fortunate countrymen.

Within a week, Yilong and other NP student volunteers had collected an overwhelming \$72,316.50 – all of which went to the Singapore Red Cross Society to be distributed to victims of the earthquake in Sichuan.

Mr Mun Kwok On, Director of Student Development and Alumni Relations, said: "The students' deep compassion is commendable. They took most of the preparation and execution work into their own hands and needed only advice and support from the staff."

NP's Principal, Mr Chia Mia Chiang expressed his hopes of having NP students sent to Sichuan to help rebuild schools. At the launch of the China Earthquake Appeal effort, Mr Chia also sent his regards to the Chinese students: "I hope our students' relatives in Sichuan are safe." **np**

Text by Joyce Peh
Photos by Timothy Sim

A CATALYST for Change

From a C5-average student in secondary school to becoming Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) third student to gain direct admission into the NUS School of Medicine, Darren Chua is definitely a changed man. NP News talks to this aspiring medical professional and find out just what prompted the metamorphosis.



Chua Wei-quan, Darren
Diploma in Biomedical Science Graduate
NP Gold Medallist, Class of 2008
3rd NP student to gain admission into NUS Medical School

Not every top graduate sails through academic life with a string of distinctions and Darren has no qualms talking about his "poor C5-average results" in secondary school.

"I was hugely disinterested with my studies...and it was only during secondary three that I noticed my poor grades and thought to myself, 'Can I survive in the future with such mediocre grades?'" he recounts.

On top of that, he had his dreams to think about: "I wanted to be a doctor all along; it was sort of a childhood dream actually."

Determined to pull his socks up, Darren put in the study hours and along the way, developed a passion for Biology. One thing led to another, and his love for the life sciences propelled him to enrol for NP's Diploma in Biomedical Science.

"Initially, NP's modular-based education system gave me a culture shock – it was very different from the subject-based education offered in both secondary schools and junior colleges. But as time passed, not only did I get used to it, I actually appreciated the [modular] approach, which I found a great deal more robust," Darren comments.

According to Darren, this all-rounded approach also played an important role in his success; from his volunteer experience as a member of NP Soleil (a club dedicated to helping residents of the Red Cross Home for the Disabled) to his overseas internship in the United States, where he was posted to the US Department of Agriculture to conduct food safety-related research.

"I was hugely disinterested with my studies and it was only during secondary three that I noticed my poor grades and thought to myself, 'Can I survive in the future with such mediocre grades?'"

Darren Chua

Retrospectively, the spunky graduate concluded that he "really enjoyed every bit of the enriching learning experience at NP. While it may be constantly riddled with obstacles and hard work, the time spent with both lecturers and classmates sure made it all the more worthwhile."

Now the third NP student to secure direct admission into the NUS School of Medicine, Darren had one last thing to say: "There is no secret to success. All it takes is passion to constantly drive you forward." **np**

By Joyce Peh

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