FOR CLOSE TO A CENTURY, STUDENTS HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE BUKIT TIMAH CAMPUS, THEIR MEMORIES ADDING TO ITS LONG HISTORY — A STORY THAT CONTINUES TO BE WRITTEN
NUS seeks to boost the future-readiness of students and graduates with a new digital skills marketplace and networking platform.


**STUDENTS FROM THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE (NUS)** will soon be able to offer their skills and talents for hire, and receive alerts on internship opportunities at companies keen to engage them for short-term job assignments. In addition, they can look forward to greater flexibility for students, who can now embark on short-stint internships and job opportunities at companies keen to engage them for short-term job assignments.

These innovations through new digital platforms — the Internship-As-A-Service (IAAS) and conNeCTUs — are the latest offerings from the University as it seeks to boost the future-readiness of NUS students and graduates and prepare them for the fast-changing workplaces of tomorrow.

The two platforms were launched on 28 January by Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Education, at the Kent Ridge campus, where industry partners, students and alumni shared with him their experiences and features of the platforms.

NUS President Professor Tan Eng Chye (Science ‘81) said, “In today’s rapidly-evolving business landscape, it is vital that our students and graduates remain nimble and constantly reinvent themselves. These new digital platforms — the IAAS and conNeCTUs — will enhance our suite of future-ready offerings for them, which include lifelong learning, interdisciplinary learning, internship opportunities and career guidance programmes. They can get an early start in building their career journeys by tapping on the gig economy to market their talents to industry, while building global networks and opportunities with NUS alumni in Singapore and across the world.”

For a start, more than 60 industry partners — ranging from multinational corporations to small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups, including companies such as Baxter Singapore, Oracle, Grab, Invigilo and Augmentus — have come onboard the platform which went “live” in early January this year. The platform currently has over 400 projects available.

Among the key benefits of IAAS is the expansion of opportunities and flexibility for students, who can now embark on short-term internships and projects. This is in addition to the longer-term structured internship programmes that students may have through their self-market their skills and talents, such as programming, data analysis, graphic design, music composition, copywriting and more, to potential employers. The platform also connects companies which can engage this talent pool and offer internships or “gigs” (short-term jobs or freelance work) such as video-editing, translation and digital marketing projects.

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facilities and schools. Importantly, students will have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge in real-world environments. They will also get to develop soft skills such as leadership development and interdisciplinary thinking, as well as the opportunity to forge connections which will contribute towards their career portfolio and help them gain a headstart in their career journeys.

“In recent years, Baxter Singapore has partnered closely with NUS to provide internship and traineeship opportunities,” said Ms Ang Ging Yin, Senior HR Manager, Baxter Singapore. “We are very excited about the launch of the NUS IAAS, given the growing gig economy and the increasing preference of employers to engage in on-demand work. This symbolises the future of work — which Baxter is promoting — and provides a great opportunity for us to engage with students on high-impact and meaningful projects that are aligned with our commitment to develop young talents for the healthcare industry.”

Ms Stacia Tay Hui Wen, a final-year NUS Business School student, who was one of the early pilot users of IAAS, said, “NUS IAAS provides students with exciting new opportunities. Besides the usual internships, I am now able to take on projects and internships of flexible lengths, throughout my studies, to expand different skill sets. This past vacation, I secured a two-month-long internship with a family office through NUS IAAS, deepening my knowledge of the financial market.”

Connecting with alumni and building professional networks

Complementing IAAS, NUS students can also tap on the new conNectUS digital platform to set up their profiles and build up their professional networks. The efforts of a multi-departmental taskforce led by NUS CFG, which includes the Office of Alumni Relations, this online platform is designed as a professional networking space for NUS students to connect with alumni within the NUS environment. The

In today’s rapidly-evolving business landscape, it is vital that our students and graduates remain nimble and constantly reinvent themselves.

NUS President, Professor Tan Eng Chye

This article was first published on 28 January 2022 on NUS News at news.nus.edu.sg/nus-to-boost-future-readiness-of-students-and-graduates-with-new-digital-skills-marketplace-and-networking-platform.

FULL-TIME SINGAPOREAN UNDERGRADUATES FROM LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS TO HAVE NUS TUITION FEES FULLY COVERED

Students who need more help will receive additional financial support for living expenses, on-campus stay and overseas programmes.

Starting from the new academic year commencing in August 2022, full-time Singaporean undergraduates enrolled in the National University of Singapore (NUS) will have their tuition fees fully covered if they are from households with a Per Capita Income (PCI) of up to $1,000. The University will top up the existing Government Bursary to fully fund tuition fees for these students. In addition, full-time Singaporean undergraduates at NUS who are from households whose PCI does not exceed $690 will receive additional financial support for living expenses, on-campus stay and overseas exposure.

To do this, the University plans to set aside an additional funding of $15 million per year to strengthen financial assistance for Singaporean undergraduate students who are from families with a PCI not exceeding $1,000. Both incoming and existing Singaporean full-time undergraduate students who meet the PCI criteria will be eligible for the enhanced financial aid.

NUS President Prof Tan Eng Chye (Science ‘85) said, “Education is a driver of social mobility, and NUS has helped transform the lives of generations of students since our founding. It is a role we take very seriously. We are committed to providing a transformative educational experience for every NUS student, regardless of their financial background.”

He added, “While students from low-income backgrounds may already receive financial assistance from various sources, the funding they receive may not cover all of their university costs. Some students may also shy away from studying abroad as well as residential programmes due to financial constraints.

“The new Enhanced Financial Aid Scheme will fill the financial gap for students who are most in need of support. It provides additional funding to Singaporean students from low-income backgrounds on two fronts: by fully funding tuition fees and covering part of their living expenses; and enabling access to a more well-rounded and richer university experience that would include an on-campus stay and overseas exposure. We are grateful that some donors have come forward to help the University to realise this important initiative. We hope more will support us.”

About 3,300 Singaporean undergraduate students from low-income backgrounds are expected to benefit from the University’s latest enhancement of its financial assistance for students.

Ms Melanis Tai (Arts and Social Sciences ’21), a financial aid beneficiary who had recently graduated from NUS, said, “Financial aid has really helped me as an NUS student — I had more time to focus and excel in my studies, and the bursary also covered part of my expenses during my Student Exchange Programme at the University of Sydney. With more financial support, current and future batches of NUS students with a similar background as myself will not need to worry about their tuition fees. They could also enjoy studying at partner universities across the world or stay on campus to experience the vibrant NUS student life, without much financial stress.”

“Education often opens doors to opportunities and success. And college is often
We are committed to providing a transformative educational experience for every NUS student, regardless of their financial background.

NUS President, Professor Tan Eng Chye

seen as such a door of opportunity for those from a humble background. Some find it difficult to pay for tuition, much less for hostel and overseas exchange. With the Enhanced Financial Aid Scheme, more students will have equitable access to such opportunities,” said Mr Lee Yat Bun, President of the NUS Students’ Union.

The University is raising philanthropic support to build an endowment to provide sustainable funding for this new initiative. Several donors have pledged their support, including Quantedge Foundation, the philanthropic arm of a local fund management firm Quantedge Capital, as an anchor donor. Quantedge Foundation Board member Mr Suhaimi Zainul-Abidin said, “Social mobility is a key priority for our foundation. It is key to building a dynamic and cohesive society – one where our young have a fair shot at achieving their full potential and a reason to be optimistic about the future.

“We share NUS’ belief that education is a powerful social leveller and that every student who qualifies, by merit, to attend university should not pass up on the opportunity to do so due to their financial situation.

“We are excited to seed-fund NUS’ game-changing initiative to guarantee full funding of tuition fees and defray the costs of living expenses and overseas programmes for all Singaporean students with demonstrated financial need. This NUS guarantee assures prospective students of a rich, diverse and transformational university experience. This is a major step forward in our continuing push for all deserving Singaporeans to have access to a truly need-blind university education across all autonomous universities in Singapore.”

This article was first published on 8 February 2022 on NUS News at news.nus.edu.sg/enhanced-financial-aid-for-singaporean-undergraduates-from-low-income-households.

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Chinese New Year Appreciation Dinner 2022

Ringing in the Year of the Tiger with a roaring good time.

In recent years, celebrations such as the Lunar New Year — the biggest event in the Chinese calendar — have gotten more subdued due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Yet even social distancing measures could not dampen the spirits of over 100 alumni leaders who turned to Zoom on 8 February 2022 for a highly-anticipated get-together. Hosted by NUS President Professor Tan Eng Chye (Science ‘85) and the Office of Alumni Relations (OAR), the bustling affair saw guests catching up with one another online even before the official start of the event, as fortune cookies, dinner bento, customised bingo cards and individual platters of lohei were delivered to their doorsteps.

A Salute to Successes

Despite the virtual format, there was no lack of effort on OAR’s end to ensure that the attendees enjoyed the festivities from the comfort of their homes. While the celebration lasted just shy of an hour, every minute brimmed with activities. To kick off, a pre-recorded water drum performance aptly titled “Illuminate the Year of the Water Tiger” infused technology with energetic beats. Performed against the backdrop of the Shaw Foundation Alumni House, this visual stunner left the audience mesmerised with excitement as Mr Bernard Toh (Architecture ‘84), Director, Alumni Relations, gave his welcome address.

In it, he expressed his appreciation for the $80,000-strong alumni community which has stayed connected and engaged against all odds in the past few years, and urged everyone to emulate traits of the tiger such as strength, courage and boldness in their endeavours.

After a recap of OAR events in 2021, Prof Tan and Mr Toh addressed the guests.

Mr Toh, to cheers swelling in the Zoom room. Suffice to say, the Year of the Water Tiger kicked off with resounding success for the alumni community amid a flurry of “huats” and “hurrahs”.

To our alma mater — we wish that she will continue to grow from strength to strength and produce alumni who are successful, confident and compassionate.

Next, may all of us be energised by the strength, courage and vitality of a tiger, thereby bringing us closer to our dreams and aspirations. Lastly, to happiness, health and success in the Year of the Tiger for your family and loved ones!” concluded Mr Toh, to cheers swelling in the Zoom room. Suffice to say, the Year of the Water Tiger kicked off with resounding success for the alumni community amid a flurry of “huats” and “hurrahs.”

For Full-time Singaporean Undergraduate Students

NUS Bursary tops up Government Bursary to provide full coverage of tuition fee for full-time Singaporean undergraduates from households with PCI ≤ $690

NUS Bursary provides $4,000 per annum for living expenses for newly-established Opportunity Enhancement Grant provides $150,000 over 4 years to support students to attend overseas programmes

Opportunity Enhancement Grant will also provide $10,000 over four years for full-time Singaporean undergraduates from households with PCI ≤ $690

In addition to financial aid in the form of bursaries, grants, loans and more for all eligible full-time undergraduates

ENHANCED FINANCIAL AID FOR FULL-TIME SINGAPOREAN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Per Capita Income

Tuition fees fully covered

$690 or to $1,000

Financial support for living expenses & top-up of current schemes for on-campus stay and overseas exposure for full-time Singaporean undergraduates (Per Capita Income ≤ $690)

In addition to financial aid in the form of bursaries, grants, loans and more for all eligible full-time undergraduates

Additional financial aid for Singaporean NUS undergraduates from low-income households

$1,000

for full-time Singaporean undergraduates (Per Capita Income ≤ $690)

$690

Full coverage of tuition fees for full-time Singaporean undergraduates from households with PCI ≤ $1,000

NUS will expand its financial aid for full-time Singaporean undergraduate students from households with PCI not exceeding $1,000. These students will receive a higher quantum from the NUS Bursary to top up the existing Government Bursary for full coverage of tuition fees.

Financial support for living expenses & top-up of current schemes for on-campus stay and overseas exposure for full-time Singaporean undergraduates (Per Capita Income ≤ $690)

NUS will continue to provide a comprehensive range of financial aid for students, in the form of loans, bursaries, grants, work-study schemes and more.
WITH PROLONGED HOURS AT THE DESK and decreased mobility due to the onset of COVID-19, Working From Home (WFH) has taken a toll on our bodies. How should we prevent and manage neck and back pain? These commonly-asked questions were answered at the first hybrid session of Health & Wellness on 6 January 2022 by Dr Mohammad Mashfiqul Arfin Siddiqui (Medicine '03), Senior Orthopaedic and Spine Surgeon at Farrer Park Hospital. More affectionately known among his patients as Dr Mash, he also advised attendees on the preventive measures one can take and red flags to watch out for in keeping one’s spine healthy. The session ended with a robust Q&A session with questions from both the cosy, in-person audience along with over 300 online attendees.

Self-Care and Preventive Health - Pharmacists Share Some Tips!

Join Ms Chung Wing Lam (Science '09) and Mr Colin Tang (Science '14) to learn about effective medication management, and pick up tips on storage and ways to reduce the side effects of medicines. To encourage healthier living, they will also shed light on the role of the pharmacist in diabetes control, diet enhancements and smoking cessation.

Office of Alumni Relations
Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Science

Self-Driving Vehicles: Application and Trends

ARE SELF-DRIVING VEHICLES THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE? On 16 February 2022, Tech Talk welcomed an intimate in-person crowd at Shaw Foundation Alumni House and over 200 online attendees in its first hybrid session. Attendees were all ears as Dr Nicholas Ho (Engineering '13), Lecturer and Consultant (Artificial Intelligence Practice) at NUS Institute of Systems Science, enlightened the crowd on the upcoming trends in Self-Driving Vehicles, their potential applications and the possible involvement of state-of-the-art technologies such as 5G. It was a fruitful session as enthusiastic participants also took the chance to post their burning questions to Dr Ho.

Digital Assets, Blockchain and the Metaverse

What will the Metaverse look like in the next three years? Join Professor David Lee as he takes a sneak peek into the future to demystify the nascent technology of Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs), Decentralised Finance (DeFi) and Smart Contracts. Come and learn how the Fourth Industrial Revolution will change society and the business world!
**FUTURE-READY WORKSHOPS**

**Your Relationship with Money**

TO KICKSTART THE NEW YEAR, more than 200 participants joined this session on 24 February 2022 to explore their relationship with money and how it impacts relationships with others.

Ms Audrey Joy Tan (Arts and Social Sciences ’11), Co-Founder of PlayMoolah and Circles of Angels, gave valuable insights into how one can build financial and emotional resilience through eight forms of capital, and how to better manage their finances in an economy disrupted by the pandemic.

Besides finances, Ms Tan also encouraged the audience to be good stewards of their other resources, such as opportunities, time and talent. In the last 30 minutes of the session, Ms Tan also answered various questions on financial management posted by the attentive alumni participants.

**STAGFLATION: WHAT IT IS; HOW TO OVERCOME IT**

19 APRIL 2022, TUESDAY

7.30PM - 9.00PM

via ZOOM

Join us online at: alum.events/FRapr22

**Ms Audrey Joy Tan sharing the various ways to put your money to work.**

**FUTURE-READY WORKSHOPS **

**Breaking The Bias**

**WoW: In Conversation**

Stellar female alumnae joined the conversation on fostering gender equality and diversity in the workplace at the recent WoW: In Conversation panel discussion.

**WOULD IT BE NEW MOTHERS RETURNING TO THE WORKFORCE, or young female graduates negotiating their first pay cheques, it is undeniably that women at various stages of their lives face different professional challenges. Yet even as companies are openly committing to supporting women and addressing gender segregation, equality between males and females remains an important work-in-progress in many workplace settings.**

On 9 March 2022, in the spirit of International Women’s Day, like-minded members of the NUS community attended a virtual panel discussion led by Dr Intan Azura Mokhtar (Science ’98) titled “Shaping a Gender-Equal Workforce of Tomorrow”. The panel of speakers comprised Mdm Zulaiha Yusuf (Arts and Social Sciences ’88), Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Yayasan MENDAKI, and Social Service Fellow; Ms Anuprita Bhomick (Business ’03), Head of Customer Experience, Google; and Ms Annie An Dongmei (Computing ’15), Solutions Architect, Amazon Web Services.

In a power-packed 90-minute conversation and Q&A session, panelists shared riveting anecdotes from their childhoods, insights from their workplaces, and — most importantly — valuable lessons gathered from years of navigating the professional workforce. No proverbial stones were left unturned as the panelists dished it all.

**WOH WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN**

Both Mdm Zulaiha and Ms Anuprita benefitted from growing up in an environment of strong, supportive women, who in turn made them the female role models they are today. Ms Anuprita’s mother, in particular, made sure that she excelled in her studies and career, despite the traditional family dynamics she was brought up in — in which men were the sole breadwinners and women the primary caregivers at home.

“My mother pushed me into studying engineering and even took care of my children after they were born so I did not have to compromise my career,” said Ms Anuprita. Ms Anuprita further shared that her mother’s strong support had unknowingly inspired her own daughter, who is currently pursuing a Masters in Neuroscience at Cambridge, to carve out a path as an academic.

On the other hand, Mdm Zulaiha shows her support for other women in her capacity as the Deputy CEO of Yayasan MENDAKI. There, among other illustrious achievements in her decades-long career, she spearheads the organisation’s WoW Programme, which enables women to restart their careers, build their life skills, re-integrate into the workforce, and remain relevant with professional development and mentorship. This is especially important for the Malay/Muslim community, which sees a majority of females retreating into full-time caregiving roles after they were born so I did not have to compromise my career,” said Ms Anuprita. Ms Anuprita further shared that her mother’s strong support had unknowingly inspired her own daughter, who is currently pursuing a Masters in Neuroscience at Cambridge, to carve out a path as an academic.

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The hope, then, is that more companies embrace diversity in the workforce, and invest in women as an asset. More importantly, women should learn to advocate for their own needs. As Ms An and Ms Anuprita expressed eloquently, they believe that women are born leaders, emphasising the importance of investing in oneself and embracing the lifelong learning spirit throughout one’s career.

**CELEBRATING DIVERSITY**

For Ms An, who started her career in progressive tech companies, her career was thankfully well-supported by her colleagues and husband, even when she returned to work as a new mother. While she continues to find a new work-life equilibrium, with her youngest child being just six months old, Ms An shared that there are many circles and events supporting women in tech and non-tech roles, such as Women of the Future (WOF) Awards Southeast Asia, TechGirls, and Cloud Readers. Within her company, there are also support groups for women and mothers — particularly those returning to the workforce after having children. This has led her to be especially vocal about enabling younger coders and sharing her experience with young professionals as a mentor.

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The Great Lockdown: Lessons Learned During the Pandemic from Organizations Around the World

“An excellent, timely read. Each story in the book takes you to a different part of the world, to a different industry. The stories offer an open and intimate view of the fears and emotions of those leaders as they navigated COVID-19. Each chapter details the tough choices these organisations had to make as they navigated what is undoubtedly one of the biggest events of our lifetime.”

Charles Breene, Group Chief Executive Office, POS Malaysia Berhad; Ex-CDO, Canada Post; Ex-CDO, DHL eCommerce

Available at: amazon.sg/Great-Lockdown-Lessons-Learned-During-the-Pandemic-From-Organizations-Around-the-World

Evolving with Purpose

How placemaking helps build a community-centric Kent Ridge Campus.

In How to Make a Great Place (2021), The Urban Redevelopment Authority describes ‘placemaking’ as the understanding of how people use and access public spaces. This knowledge is used to shape and activate public spaces and bring communities together. In Singapore, government agencies have been building close partnerships with stakeholders to plan initiatives in key precincts with this aim in mind. With the emergence of challenges such as COVID-19 and changes in contexts, placemaking has become even more essential in managing physical spaces, especially in NUS where there are continual, rapid changes to university education that need to be addressed.

The NUS campus has undergone major developments, having shifted from Bukit Timah to Kent Ridge. Placemaking has played a vital role in the design and architecture of our buildings while retaining our rich histories, stories and traditions. One may wonder how it has influenced the evolution of the campus, and how it has shaped the NUS community today. In Kent Ridge: An Untold Story (Tan et al., 2019), it is explained that the buildings in NUS were designed to look similar to ensure the adaptability of the campus to sudden changes. Against the backdrop of student activism in the 1960s and 1970s, the campus layout thus follows a linear pattern with limited open spaces. It was also built along the natural contours of the Ridge to preserve the beauty of Kent Ridge and a unique unity of design.

With the opening of the University Cultural Centre, NUS Museum and Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, stronger cultural life on campus for the community with the University (Tan et al., 2019). The focus was placed on augmenting “points of arrival” within the campus, such as Central Library, Yusof Ishak House and Faculty of Engineering, improving road connectivity at Prince George’s Park and the construction of the University Cultural Centre. The Third Plan, formulated in the late 1980s, aimed to establish NUS as a premier international university, and created a distinct mode of student accommodation that emphasised residential learning amid recreational facilities to support social and emotional growth. This manifested into University Town, which has become the University’s lively intellectual, social and cultural hub. Since then, placemaking efforts have been made to build a stronger cultural life on campus for the community with the opening of the University Cultural Centre, NUS Museum and Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music.

According to the University Campus Infrastructure’s publication, NUS Masterplan Concepts (2009), the Academic Green attempted to create a clear pedestrian connectivity from NUS to Frontier, providing a green lung within the Medical to Science precinct. Designed as a connector and hub for students, staff and researchers, it boasts gardens, courtyards, linkways and activity nodes to promote recreational and intellectual exchanges.

As NUS rises as Asia’s top university, placemaking will continue to play a key role in reinventing and integrating spaces on campus to benefit the community, while retaining the beauty of Kent Ridge and a unique unity of design.
**NURTURING NEW VISIONARIES**

NUS College Dean Professor Simon Chesterman and his Vice Deans share their plans and aspirations for the college.

**Professor Simon Chesterman**

Dean, NUS

An advocate of interdisciplinary education, Prof. Chesterman has been with NUS Faculty of Law since 2007 and its Dean since 2012. He is an authority on international law, technology policy and higher education. He is also the author/editor of 21 books, including four young adult fiction novels.

How will NUSC differ from USP and YNC?

There’s much in our curriculum that draws on the experience of USP and YNC — and also elements that are completely new. We have designed common curricular experiences for students early in their degree courses. These common modules draw heavily on precursors at YNC and USP, emphasizing the liberal arts tradition of providing thought-provoking, small-group discussions. But we also have a new Global Pathways programme and Global Experience modules, which leverage heavily on the global networks of the highly sought-after NUS Overseas Colleges programme. Another signature programme is the Impact Experience Project that will integrate experiential learning, interdisciplinary and impact on the wider community.

What learning experience can students expect from NUSC?

By integrating NUSC into the degree programmes of almost all of the undergraduate offerings at NUS, we’re hoping to complement and enhance those pathways. There has been a push towards interdisciplinary and breadth across all of NUS, with the creation of the College of Humanities and Sciences, the College of Design and Engineering, and so on. NUSC will take that a couple of steps further, with historians and scientists, lawyers and business students, studying and living cheek-by-jowl, learning with and learning from one another.

NUSC places a lot of emphasis on the interdisciplinary curriculum. Why is this important?

In a world being reshaped by artificial intelligence, our graduates need qualities that machines don’t yet have — as well as the ability to understand and work with those machines. As Pablo Picasso once said, computers are useless: all they can give you are answers. The speed with which the world is changing and the complexity of problems like climate change and global inequality, require anyone who would solve those problems to see things from multiple perspectives and be able to work with people from other disciplines and other cultures. So naturally we hope our graduates will be snapped up by employers who want their creativity, initiative and drive. But we’re also hoping that many NUSC alumni will chart their own paths and start their own companies or organisations.

Associate Professor Quek So Ying

Vice Dean (Inreach)

Assistant Prof. Quek heads the Department of Physics at NUS Faculty of Science, where she serves as an Assistant Dean (Special Duties).

What can you tell us about your new appointment?

I will be in charge of admissions and outreach to students, alumni and donors, as well as public relations. I hope to bring to this role an open mind and a big heart to build bridges and a common vision with schools, students, alumni and other stakeholders. NUSC is also putting in place a holistic admissions system; I’d like to bring into this role the humility to listen to different perspectives and experiences.

What are you most excited about for the new college?

As the first honours college in Singapore, we will be a trailblazer for higher education that empowers our students to develop their full potential. We provide an environment for students to solve problems with interdisciplinary approaches, thinking out of the box. I’m excited to bring unique educational opportunities to people from all walks of life, including the socially disadvantaged.

Associate Professor Eleanor Wong

[Law ’18], Vice Dean [Residential Programmes & Enrichment]

At NUS Law Faculty, the well-known poet and playwright is Vice Dean (Student Life and Global Relations), Director of the Centre for Pro Bono and Clinical Legal Education, and Coordinator of the International Most Programes.

As a Vice Dean at the new NUSC, what aspects will you be in charge of?

I will direct the NUSC residential programme and oversee aspects of residential living to facilitate an enriching experience.

What are you most looking forward to at NUSC?

Let me speak principally about student life. I am excited by the possibilities. I see the students in this new community co-creating their own distinctive culture: one that is inspired and influenced by their predecessors but uniquely NUSC. I served on the planning board and learnt from the USP and YNC student representatives that both USP and YNC strongly value the principles of respect for students’ identities, their independence and diverse interests. I have no doubt that these qualities will carry through to NUSC.

Associate Professor Loy Hui Chieh

[Arts and Social Sciences ’97], Vice Dean [Academic Affairs]

Assistant Prof. Loy is a member of the Philosophy Department at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences where he is also Vice Dean (External Relations and Student Life). His academic interests include ancient Greek philosophy, early modern and contemporary ethics, and political philosophy.

What do you hope to bring to this new role?

My team will oversee all the traditional academic matters in NUSC. This means identifying and appointing suitable instructors with a passion for education, overseeing course design and implementation, and collecting and analysing feedback data to support improvement.

What are your hopes and vision for the new NUSC?

To use NUSC as a platform to bring the energies of passionate lecturers, grounded administrators, inspired alumni, curious students and valued partners into an explosive mix that will set all off into growth trajectories, NUSC will be a launchpad for students to head out beyond Singapore to transform themselves and the world. I expect to be transformed too.

What aspects will you be in charge of in your two new roles?

I will be in charge of the Global Experience modules (GEx), the Impact Experience Projects (IEPs) and Growth Mentoring. GEx offers specially-curated learning immersion trips to international hubs. IEX gets students to engage community partners to work on social impact projects to make the world a better place. I hope to build a team of dedicated lecturers and administrators to transform students to become critical changemakers and global citizens with deep values of integrity and humility.

What are you most excited about for the new college?

To make sure that the education students receive at NUSC is exciting and rigorous in ways that complement and enhance their main degrees in NUS. To be a community of passionate educators dedicated to the mission of the college, and to nurture curious and critical-minded problem-solvers and positive changemakers.

Associate Professor Daniel Goh

[Arts and Social Sciences ’97], Vice Dean [Special Programmes] and Associate Provost [Undergraduate Education]

At NUS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Assoc Prof Goh is a sociologist who also leads the integrated social science programme, Understanding Social Complexity, at NUS College of Humanities and Sciences.

What are you most excited about for the new college?

I will be in charge of the Global Experience modules (GEx), the Impact Experience Projects (IEPs) and Growth Mentoring. GEx offers specially-curated learning immersion trips to international hubs. IEX gets students to engage community partners to work on social impact projects to make the world a better place. I hope to build a team of dedicated lecturers and administrators to transform students to become critical changemakers and global citizens with deep values of integrity and humility.

What are you most excited about for the new college?

To make sure that the education students receive at NUSC is exciting and rigorous in ways that complement and enhance their main degrees in NUS. To be a community of passionate educators dedicated to the mission of the college, and to nurture curious and critical-minded problem-solvers and positive changemakers.
The Bukit Timah Campus is a throwback to NUS’ early beginnings and a rarity in Singapore’s modern built environment. For close to a century, generations of students have passed through the campus, their memories adding to its long history—a story that continues to be written.

**A HISTORY MAJOR, MS ELIZABETH TAN (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’95) HAS A HEALTHY RESPECT FOR THE PAST.**

So, when she pursued a Master in Public Administration at the NUS Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) in 2019, the sense of history at Bukit Timah Campus (BTC)—where LKYSPP is located—was apparent to her from the first day of class.

“The buildings at BTC are unique, with British colonial-era architectural features such as the arched corridors, pilasters and red pitched roofs,” says Ms Tan, 37. She was also struck by the quotes from famous figures that adorn the walls of these buildings, particularly one from former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew (’41), who had briefly studied at BTC (then called Raffles College) between 1940 and 1941. “Knowing that Lee Kuan Yew had studied there before, and that the School is named after him, provided a sense of continuity and awe. As a student, I felt inspired and empowered by the setting.”

That said, one need not be a history buff to appreciate the special place that BTC holds in the larger Singapore story—and in the hearts of those who consider themselves privileged to have studied there. Through conversations with BTC alumni of yesteryear as well as more recent times, and with faculty leaders who helped usher in NUS’ “second act” with BTC in the mid-2000s, The AlumNUS strings together a narrative of a campus steeped in tradition, while still fit for 21st-century learners.

**THE GOOD OLD DAYS**

In many ways, students attending BTC today have inherited a space that is not too different from the one created for the inaugural batch of 43 Raffles College students in 1928. Much of the campus’ original layout and architecture remains intact—the two quadrangles (grassy courtyards) flanked by stately, low-rise buildings with covered walkways and wide arches; the majestic Angsana tree at the Lower Quadrangle, planted shortly after the campus was built; the pylon-like tower and the two small domes distinguishing the roof of the Manasseh Meyer Building; and the circular driveway leading to the main entrance in front of Oei Tiong Ham Building. Even the names of these buildings have been kept, in a nod to BTC’s earliest benefactors.

It all started back in 1918, when the British colonial administration proposed the establishment of a college to mark the centenary of Singapore’s founding by Sir Stamford Raffles. The idea was supported by local communities, and notably by individuals such as Oei Tiong Ham, Manasseh-Meyer and Eu Tong Sen—prominent businessmen and philanthropists of the day—who made large donations. A decade later, on land formerly part of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, Raffles College commenced operations as the first institution for tertiary education in the arts and sciences in British Malaya.

As the years passed and student numbers increased, the campus was steadily expanded to cater to their growing needs. More buildings were constructed between the 1940s and 1960s, including a new wing simply named Block A, a Library Building, a geometric-style Block B and a 10-storey Science Tower. It was also around this time that Raffles College was upgraded to university status and underwent a couple of name changes, to the University of Malaya in 1949 and then the University of Singapore in 1962.

This latter period in BTC’s history was the one that Professor Kishore Mahbubani (Arts and Social Sciences ’73), currently a Distinguished Fellow at NUS’ Asia Research Institute, entered as a young philosophy student. As the 73-year-old wistfully describes, there was a “magical aura” about the place. “It was a wonderful campus, very green and welcoming. I remember sitting for hours and hours in the library, devouring philosophy books. Back then, the Philosophy Department was very small, I think there were fewer than 20 students and only six or seven professors. The professors were all open and accessible, and we socialized a lot with them, which is quite unusual now.”

For economics major Mr David Ho (Arts and Social Sciences ’72), his experiences outside the classroom were just as memorable as those inside, if not more so. “Our cohort was heavily involved in student activism—and our Class of ’72 is proud to have seven elected Members of Parliament,” says Mr Ho, also 73. The small, intimate campus bred familiarity as well. “It was easy to run into and make friends with peers from different faculties. I’m still close to them, after nearly 50 years.”

However, it was only a matter of time before the University outgrew its campus and had to relocate to a bigger site. That moment came in 1981, not long after yet another name change to the present National University of Singapore. After NUS moved to its current main campus at Kent Ridge, the Bukit Timah site was subsequently occupied by other tertiary institutions, including the National Institute of Education (NIE), from 1982 to 2000; and Singapore Management University (SMU), from 2001 to 2005.
The shift to Kent Ridge heralded an ambitious new era for NUS, as it strove to excel further in both education and research, and become one of Asia’s top universities. By the early 2000s, NUS had arrived on the world stage and was well-regarded as a research-intensive university. Yet despite all this success, there was a nagging sense among many that something was missing: that without BTC — without a tangible heritage to hold on to — the University was incomplete.

Professor Shih Choon Fong, who served as NUS President from 2000 to 2008, picked up on this sentiment early in his tenure. “In my meetings with senior alumni who had graduated from BTC, they described feeling unmoored and expressed dismay and frustration because they didn’t have a place to call ‘home,’” he recalls. Although not an NUS alumnus, Prof Shih — who had studied at Harvard University and whose heart still “beats faster” whenever he goes back there — understood how they felt. BTC is an integral part of NUS, and of the lives of those who studied there. It is where generations of alumni spent their most formative years, not just learning but making lifelong friendships and, sometimes, finding life partners. I would say BTC is the ‘cradle’ of NUS. In fact, you could say BTC is the ‘cradle’ of all universities in Singapore.

Professor Shih Choon Fong, former NUS President

Professor Shih explained. As NUS President, he was also acutely aware of the importance of honouring and preserving the University’s past; otherwise, NUS would lack rootedness and “roll like tumbleweed”, and its alumni would feel less connected to their alma mater.

With NUS’ centennial celebrations approaching in 2005 and SMU slated to move to Bras Basah in early 2006, NUS President Dr Tan hired Mr David Ho (far left, centre), at the then-Deputy Prime Minister Dr Tony Tan’s request, to help with the organizing, such as scheduling post-event press conferences. On 28 May 2005, about 800 people showed up at BTC for the big bash, their excitement palpable. Everyone had heard by then that BTC would be returned to NUS; all that was left was a formal confirmation. When Dr Tan finally made the announcement that night, he first made a five-minute standing ovation, whoops and cheers which followed showed just how much NUS alumni had wished for the news. “We didn’t go into planning the event knowing that it would be such a momentous occasion for NUS, but we’re happy with how things turned out,” Mr Ho says modestly. Adds Prof Shih, “It gave deeper meaning to NUS’ centennial — reconnecting with the University’s past and the founding of Raffles College.”

TO SERVE AND PRESERVE

Barely had the festivities died down when NUS began renovating BTC to make sure it would be a conducive learning environment for present-day students. First, the decision about who would relocate there had to be settled.
The aesthetics of the old Library Building (left) have been sensitively preserved at the CJ Koh Law Library (right).

**CAMPUS MILESTONES: ACT 2**

2005 The Government realises the old Raffles College grounds to NUS.

2006 NUS’ Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, the Faculty of Arts and the research institutes move back to the premises, now known as NUS’ Bukit Timah Campus.

2009 Six buildings which make up the former Raffles College compound, as well as the two quadrangles, are gazetted as national monuments.

**LINKING PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE**

Like Kent Ridge Campus, BTC sits on hilly ground with gentle slopes. Both have plenty of greenery and are well-integrated with the natural environment – which, in BTC’s case, is the Singapore Botanic Gardens. “BTC’s location in the middle of the Botanic Gardens, Singapore’s first UNESCO World Heritage Site, makes the campus even more special,” says LKYSSP alumnus, Ms Elizabeth Tan, who is currently pursuing a double degree at NUS. “It was amazing to be able to study there, in a place which embodied history and where I also felt connected to nature.”

Relocating from Kent Ridge to BTC meant greater space available for both LKYSSP and NUS Law, which enabled them to better accommodate increasing student intake and offer more teaching and study spaces, faculty offices and other facilities such as larger student lounges. To facilitate student rotation and to make the two campuses, free shuttle bus services were provided for students taking double-degree programmes and cross-faculty modules, those involved in NUS clubs and societies, as well as hostels/stay at Kent Ridge.

Crucially, NUS elected to preserve the existing buildings, upgrading or refurbishing them where necessary. Classrooms and lecture theatres were of course equipped with air-conditioning and modern technologies. Some areas were converted into a moot court and a multi-purpose auditorium, or reconfigured to encourage student-centred learning and peer discussion. Many renovations, however, were carried out to restore the buildings to their former glory, such as reinstating Block B’s original façade and the coffered ceiling at the lobby of the Dei Tong Ham Building. The quadrangle laws also underwent landscaping to maintain their design intent as communal incorporation spaces.

One year after being handed the keys to the place, NUS made the historic return to its old stomping grounds in July 2006. NUS Law and LKYSSP, along with several research institutes, moved back to BTC. So did the CJ Koh Law Library, which fittingly took over the old Library Building. Other renamed structures included the Science Tower, now called Tower Block; and Block A, which was unveiled as the Li Ka Shing Building in 2007 in recognition of the Hong Kong tycoon’s generous gift to LKYSSP.

LKYSSP was an obvious choice – and not just because its namesake had studied there back in the day. Prof Mahbubani, Founding Dean of LKYSSP from 2004 to 2017, cites other political leaders besides the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew who had received their education at BTC, such as Mr Goh Chok Tong (Arts ’64) and Mr S. Dhanabalan (Arts ’60). A few, including Dr Tony Tan (Science ’82) and Professor S. Jayakumar (Law ’63), had even studied and taught there. “BTC has strong links with a critical generation of Singaporeans – the first builders of Singapore’s success story – and I dare say our country would not be so successful had BTC not trained them. In that sense, the campus is a precious part of our nation’s history,” says Prof Mahbubani. Personally, as a BTC alumnus, he was elated to “come home” as well.

More pragmatic considerations were behind the Faculty of Law’s (NUS Law) move back to BTC. “BTC would not have been suitable for very large faculties or those requiring specialised equipment, so the decision for us to move was a somewhat practical one,” says then NUS Law Dean, Professor Tan Cheng Han (Law ’87). His undergraduate years had been spent at Kent Ridge Campus, and to this day he has a soft spot for it, but Prof Tan was nonetheless excited to lead NUS Law’s shift to BTC. “What was striking to me was how enthusiastic BTC alumni were about the move. It was an honour and privilege to engage with them and to see how happy they were that NUS was reclaiming its heritage. It was nice to be a part of this history that I had not experienced previously.”

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVOURITE SPOT?

“BTC was amazing for the opportunities to meet and hang out with friends, to be part of a community, and to be able to study there. If I was trying to describe my time there, I would say it was a new and exciting experience.”

Ms Elizabeth Tan (Class of ’11)

Ms Elizabeth Tan, who is currently based in the United States, “I stayed at the old Raffles Hall for two years while studying at BTC. In the valley between Raffles Hall and Eusoff College, there was a sarabat stall where my friends and I would often grab tea and hang out.”

Prof Kishore Mahbubani (Class of ’71)

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVOURITE SPOT?

BTC old and young alumni reveal some of their most cherished memories on campus.

If she were to change anything about BTC, it would be for the campus to host more University-wide events. “One of the things I liked most about my undergraduate years at Kent Ridge was how there were so many opportunities to meet people beyond my faculty. It would be nice for students from both campuses to congregate at BTC, which would also allow the Kent Ridge community to visit and appreciate the site,” Ms Tan suggests.

Mr Ryan Kwan (Business and Law ’20), a Justice’s Law Clerk at the Supreme Court of Singapore, also enjoyed the best of both worlds while pursuing a double degree at NUS. On the one hand, he observes jokingly, the sprinkling Kent Ridge Campus promotes “exercise”; on the other hand, the smaller BTC promotes “efficiency”. Adds the 27-year-old, “Since graduating from NUS, I’ve returned to BTC on a few occasions to help coach the court most teams for competitions. The unchanged physical space is a powerful reminder of all the good memories that I had on campus.”

The years post-2000 have been kind to BTC, with relatively minor modifications being made here and there to improve the facilities and infrastructure. The campus has been the venue for annual Bukit Timah Year-coming reunions ever since the big bash in 2005, although recent instalments have switched to an online or hybrid format due to COVID-19. With BTC’s location in the middle of the Botanic Gardens, students are returning to in-person learning, hence reviving the campus spirit and re-establishing BTC as the bastion of higher education that it was always designed to be. As far as the future goes, who knows what may happen at or to BTC? It could continue to anchor LKYSSP and NUS Law for years to come;

“On the upper levels of Block B, there are study spaces set up outside the seminar rooms. I had many discussions there, with friends and others, that would help me focus on my studies.”

Mr Ryan Kwan (Class of ’20)

“At the old Union House canteen, I had lunch and hung out with friends. From there, you can sit and reflect while admiring the surrounding buildings. The view is prettier in the evenings, when shadows fall on the buildings and valley.”

Ms Elizabeth Tan (Class of ’10)

“The Upper Quad was where I usually had lunch and hung out with friends. From there, you can sit and enjoy the view of the Botanic Gardens.”

Mr Ryan Kwan (Class of ’20)

“If the Board of Visitors were to change anything, it would be for the campus to host more University-wide events.”

Ms Elizabeth Tan (Class of ’10)

“View of Block B (which houses NUS Law) from the Upper Quad. Its facade, with concrete fins forming a grid, has been restored.”

“The Upper Quad was where I usually had lunch and hung out with friends. From there, you can sit and reflect while admiring the surrounding buildings. The view is prettier in the evenings, when shadows fall on the buildings and valley.”

Ms Elizabeth Tan (Class of ’10)
THE GOLDEN GANG

Fifty years is a long time to stay together; long enough to see one another go through trials, tears and triumphs. But for members of the Class of ’72 — an extraordinary cohort shedding for four to five years (to include those who graduated a few years before and after), and growing together on the Bukit Timah campus — the camaraderie only grows stronger with time.

A CLASS OF ITS OWN

United through shared memories and passions, the Class of ’72 — and their close long-time friends — continues to give back to the NUS community, 50 years since their graduation.

HEY WERE POST-WAR CHILDREN, BORN WITH TROUBLE IN THEIR BLOODSTREAM WITH OPTIMISM FOR A NEW AGE.

They were socially and politically aware youths who debated over world issues, yet were also free-spirited folk who bonded over beer and chow, and songs of the time. And for a good part of their university days, the Bukit Timah campus was ‘home’.

What are your fondest memories of your days at the Bukit Timah campus, and what do you think bonded the members of different schools to become one united cohort?

JULIANA PATRICIA LIM: For me, the memories largely centred around music. By the time I joined NUS, there was already a very established tradition of a weekly folk song session held in one of the lecture theatres, when our batchmates Archie Ong and Andrew Liew would pick up a guitar, and all of us would join in singing folk songs like the melodious ‘Blowin’ in the Wind’ and ‘If I Had a Hammer’ that were made popular by Joan Baez and Bob Dylan.

This was the era of the Vietnam War and these were American protest songs, but for us they were just nice songs of the time. We first bonded over music, and never stopped singing since — well, except during the pandemic.

ROY HIGGS: You can say that the whole thing started off with friendship and links that we established on the Bukit Timah campus. While Hong Sai, as a Dentistry student, would have been at the Sepoy Lines, the Architecture school was at Lady Hill, and Engineering where Singapore Polytechnic was, at Shenton Way, the Bukit Timah campus was the central core of multiple faculties, and where students would go to for cross-faculty classes. It was also where Eusoff College, Raffles Hall and the Dunearn Road Hostels were located, so while it was a small campus, it was a gathering ground for students across faculties.

The central meeting places were where the food and drinks were. We had a few cantinets: one behind the academic staff canteen; one at Union House, which was a focal meeting point; and another at the Guild House at Dalvey Road. At the former Guild House, we, the students, might go for lunch and end up being kindly treated to drinks by the members there. I still remember one of the past presidents buying us beer and lunch. That was the culture then: anybody could go in and be welcomed. And these friendships then grew into professional ties as we went out into the workforce.

LOH HONG SAI: Dentistry students did our first year at Bukit Timah campus, before we joined our seniors at the Sepoy Lines campus in Singapore General Hospital. Even when we were at the Sepoy Lines, some of us would return to Bukit Timah campus occasionally to visit classmates still staying at Raffles Hall, listen to rallies and feel the nostalgic atmosphere again. Bukit Timah campus was where there were carnivals and festivals, and a more holistic campus life. The students then were politically sensitive and activated, and there would be many speeches made. Whenever we had time, we at the Sepoy Lines would say: ‘Let’s go to Bukit Timah, have a beer and listen to the students there’.

There were good memories — such as studying in the Law Library, which was cool, spacious and where the pretty girls were. There were also lightening episodes: freshmen would have to wear a green tie during Orientation Week and we were constantly picked on by the Arts students. There was a popular senior who was a king ragger and I was caught by him at Newton Circus, where I was hoping to have a quiet lunch by myself. He bought me lunch, but I had to eat it sitting on the floor, being fed by two girls who were with him! Subsequently I lost a day of dental class because we bonded with our peers were very different from students today. We also had a lot of Malaysians within our cohort, and they had very strong bonds, looking after one another, being away from home. They also extended their friendship to us and to this day, some of my best friends are the Malaysians I met at NUS.

VICTOR ROGER SAVAGE: Bukit Timah was the citadel of the spirit of the Class of ’72. Those from the Science, Law and Arts schools formed the central core of the Student Union, but the halls of residence — Eusoff, Raffles and Dunearn — were where you would find the true cross-faculty bonds. Sixty per cent of the residential halls were Malaysians, and that was — as Hong Sai said — very important. But it was also due to the spirit of the generation. The post-war generation was highly creative. If you just look at the pop scene in Britain and America, we had bands such as The Rolling Stones, The Beach Boys, The Beatles...we were part of this generation. Among our cohort, you would find a lot of interesting and creative people: good writers, cartoonists and photographers.

There were pranks and anti-war demonstrations which bonded us. We were also brought together by studying late into the night and going to the sarabat stall at 3am. There was also ragging, which wasn’t condoned by the Univeristy, but it bonded seniors and freshmen — and many a senior-freshette pairing would go on to get married. Orientation was also a time when we organised many amazing things. I was involved in putting together big concerts at the National Theatre, featuring artists from all the nightclubs in town, from Filipino to American bands. We even had a revolving stage which allowed the seamless changing of sets. While the freshmen were given tickets to the concerts, the rest were sold to the public, with the proceeds going to charity.

What are some of the biggest achievements of the Class of ’72?

VICTOR: We certainly raised a lot of money for charity. On Flag and Flag day there would be a float competition, and the Arts students would put up the worst floats, with nothing but us on the lorry! (Laughs) I also remember a car rally. Raising money for the underprivileged was an important cause.

Our generation largely came from humble beginnings, and we worked our way up — our mentality and the way we bonded with our peers were very different from students today.

DR LOH HONG SAI
We were less than three per cent of the total population of Singapore, but we never saw ourselves as elites. We simply took based on our own circumstances and made the most out of it.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR VICTOR RODGER SAVAGE

the grind and appreciated life in a different way.

VICTOR: Another legendary incident was when one of the students invited Rose Chan (a popular Malaysian cabaret dancer at the time) to Raffles Hall, while the Master of the Hall was away at an overseas conference. The place was packed with some 450 boys. We asked why she accepted our invitation for free and she said: “I know you guys will all become my future customers!”

How do you think this difference affects the way university students bond today?

JULIANA: We were very innocent. They have social media; they know so much more about the world than we did! I don’t remember having any ambition. I was just a drifter enjoying myself.

VICTOR: Tertiary students accounted for less than three per cent of the total population of Singapore, but we never saw ourselves as elites. We simply took whatever card we had based on our own circumstances and made the most out of it. Today, with 30 per cent of the population with degrees, the competition is very different.

HONG SAI: Having taught at the University, I have seen changes in the thinking and ambition of youths over four decades. I get the feeling that the younger generation focuses more on their own welfare rather than that of others. University education is also becoming more professor-centric, with more emphasis placed on setting a student on his or her career path than developing their characters and grooming them as individuals.

How do you think camaraderie can be fostered among students today?

HONG SAI: At OAR, the philosophy adopted was that the first-year students are already treated like alumni, and some were appointed as Student Ambassadors to promote bonding through activities and graduate events in which they were invited. We wanted them to feel like part of the alumni family to instill a sense of belonging and attachment. This is done through engaging them in activities and placing them in societies. Most faculties also have a mentorship scheme where freshmen are grouped with seniors and they continue to bond over the next few years.

ROY: I am sure friendships and links will always be there among students, but the difference between the Bukit Timah days and now is the size. We were a campus of around 14,000 at Bukit Timah. In comparison, Kent Ridge is such a big campus, and its topography — North, East, South, West, all cut off from each other — means that students would segmentise into small groups. That said, within Kent Ridge, UTown is a place that offers some semblance of the social interaction we had. There are halls, dining facilities, lecture halls, places to gather — that was how it felt to be on campus. That’s a good starting point. And if we can replicate the success at UTown to recreate something where the arts, science and medical faculties are, there is potential to allow for students to naturally gather.

VICTOR: Having overseas exchange students studying here also helps to give our local students a perspective of what it means to be an undergraduate. Our students are too focused on academic work, studying, and their careers. Rather than soaking up the atmosphere of learning and discourses, or even just having fun, they are more obsessed with grades. Also, many of our students feel like they don’t owe anybody anything. But in my League universities, 60 to 70 per cent of each student’s tuition fees is paid for by alumni, and the students are made aware of this right at the beginning. The awareness that their alumni have been donating money to benefit their education creates a kind of alumni spirit. It sets the tone for the deeply-embedded relationship between alumni and students, and also inspires the younger generation to contribute to the school and the welfare of future cohorts when they graduate. Hopefully with more NUS alumni modelling this act of giving back, our generation to contribute to the school and the welfare of future cohorts when they graduate. Hopefully with more NUS alumni modelling this act of giving back, our
**M A Y**

### Digital Assets, Blockchain and the Metaverse
**Tech Talk**
Speaker: Mr. Lee Cheng Chuan (Arts & Social Sciences '97), Founder, 1M65 Movement

What will the Metaverse look like in the next three years? Join Mr. Lee as he takes a sneak peek into the future to demystify the nascent technology of Non-Fungible Tokens, Decentralised Finance and Smart Contracts. Come and learn how the Fourth Industrial Revolution will change society and the business world!

Register: alum.events/TSmay22
Contact: Mr. Kenneth Phang
kphang@nus.edu.sg

### The Rescue (PG)
**Feature Films**
A chronicle of the enthralling, against-all-odds story that transfixed the world in 2018: the daring rescue of twelve boys and their coach from deep inside a flooded cave in Northern Thailand.

Register: alum.events/MFF22
Contact: Ms Tan Li Hui
lhtan@nus.edu.sg

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**APRIL**

### Self-Care and Preventive Health – Pharmacists Share Some Tips!
**Health & Wellness**
Speakers: Ms. Chung Wing Lam (Science '09), Principal Clinical Pharmacist, Watson's Personal Care Store Pte Ltd Mr. Colin Tang (Science '14), Principal Clinical Pharmacist, Watson's Personal Care Store Pte Ltd

Join Ms. Chung and Mr. Tang to learn about effective medication management, and pick up tips on storage and ways to reduce the side-effects of medicines. To encourage healthier living, they will also shed light on the role of the pharmacists in diabetes control, diet enhancements and smoking cessation.

Register: alum.events/HWapr22
Contact: Ms. Tan Li Hui
lhtan@nus.edu.sg

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**J U N E**

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Information is correct at the time of publication and is subject to change without prior notice.
WHEN TIES RUN DEEP

For celebrated alumna Ms Violet Oon (Arts and Social Sciences ‘71), an association with the University spans across generations and is very much intertwined with her own family history.

Ms Oon first made her name as an Arts and Music Critic as well as a food columnist in the 1970s and was dubbed Singapore’s food ambassador by the Singapore Tourism Board in 2005. She has been to curate, collate and celebrate Singapore cuisine. An emotional ‘homecoming’

King Edward VII College of Medicine is of special poignancy to me as I was wanted at the Singapore General Hospital (SGH) for five weeks after suffering a stroke in June 2014. While being treated there with great care, I pondered each day, that just across the road was the college where my grandfather had studied to be a doctor, and I could channel his presence by my side as I slowly healed.

This was where my grandfather had learnt to heal others with a similar affliction, and it is of great meaning and sentiment to me that my hospital of choice today is SGH.

The College of Medicine Building, located within the grounds of SGH resembles a classical Greek building, with a colonnade of 12 Doric columns, 11 large sculptured timber doors, and allegorical bas-relief sculptures depicting the teaching and practice of medicine (Teo, 2005 as cited in Tan, 2005). Above the central doorway is a Roman eagle crowned with a wreath, a classical symbol that signifies a civil or official building (Teo, 2005 as cited in Tan, 2005). I am also heartened to know that this hallowed building — which is part of the fabric of my family — has been conserved as a national monument and will always remain just the way it was on the outside, when my grandfather first walked through the doors.

When night fell, the hallowed edifice of Greisen columns opposite my hospital ward lit up, seemingly illuminated as a beacon of hope. One particular evening, there was a Mariachi band from South America which performed in the courtyard facing the Medicine building.

While I loved it, I was unable to sustain my interest in the subject as my mind drifted off to sleep as soon as the curtains were drawn, leaving me to ponder the sounds of the guitar, and the voices singing. As I sat under the stars, enjoying music that touched his heart — against the backdrop of the medical school that my grandfather had studied in — I could feel the souls of three generations of Oons resonate in that starry, night sky.

Ms Violet Oon is a food critic, chef-restaurateur, consultant, cookbook author and authority on Peranakan and Singapore cuisine. Ms Oon first made her name as an Arts and Music Critic as well as a food columnist in the 1970s and was dubbed Singapore’s food ambassador by the Singapore Tourism Board in 2005.
Did you know that with a little planning, you can include a gift to NUS within your overall estate or financial plans?

Here are three ways you can make a legacy gift:

**Charitable Bequests**
Since a charitable bequest can take many forms, you have considerable flexibility. You can leave a specific asset, a specific sum of money, a percentage of your estate or what remains of your estate after you have provided for other beneficiaries. You can designate how you want your bequest to be used or leave it unrestricted so that the University may direct the funds to where it is most needed at the time. Most importantly, you remain in complete control of the bequest process and can change any bequest provision during your lifetime.

**CPF Monies**
You can nominate NUS as a beneficiary of your CPF monies using a CPF nomination form. Further information and the nomination form can be obtained from the CPF Board Office or the CPF website at www.cpf.gov.sg.

**Insurance Policies**
You can designate NUS as the beneficiary of your insurance policy when the policy is no longer important to you or your family’s financial security. Alternatively, you can purchase an insurance policy and name NUS as both the owner and the beneficiary.

If you would like to know more about making a legacy gift to the University, please email legacysgift@nus.edu.sg.
E GRADUATED FROM NUS FACULTY OF LAW IN 1991. More than three decades later, Mr Adrian Tan still keeps in touch with his cohort in a buzzing WhatsApp chat group. Says the partner at corporate boutique firm TSMP Law Corporation, “We know each of our quirks and foibles, strengths and weaknesses. We celebrate one another’s successes, and we console one another in times of grief.” Mr Tan’s best memories of life at NUS include being part of the Mooting and Debating Club, representing the University in international debates; and acting as the leader of a pickpocketing gang in his final-year class musical. Calling himself a proud graduate of the NUS Law faculty, he adds that this close rapport “shows you the strength of the NUS law community”.

Since then, Mr Tan has risen to the top of his field. At TSMP, the 56-year-old is the Head of Intellectual Property and Technology, specialising in areas such as confidential data misuse and contractual interpretation. And in what he considers a career highlight, Mr Tan was elected President of the Law Society of Singapore in January 2022. “The Law Society is the ‘trade union’ of lawyers,” explains Mr Tan, who was also the society’s Vice President from 2017 to 2020. “It takes care of its members,” he says. “They develop an instinct to small and are all connected by the professional world. That is why I need to be open, simple and direct.”

WHEN YOUNG [LEGAL] EAGLES LEAVE THE NEST

That directness has already caught the attention of those in the profession. In a highly-publicised speech at the Legal Year 2022 opening ceremony, Mr Tan highlighted one troubling statistic: last year, a record 538 lawyers in Singapore left the profession. Most of them had practised for fewer than five years, he noted, even as a record low number of new lawyers were called to the bar in 2021. To tackle this challenge, law firms first have to acknowledge that the young lawyer of today is a different breed, with many attractive alternative career options. “The Singapore legal industry is a victim of its own success,” he shares. “Singapore lawyers are highly sought after, recognised for their training, intelligence and diligence. So financial institutions, government, tech start-ups and family offices are keen to hire them.”

Mr Tan, who is married without children, acknowledges that COVID-19 has created another problem. With more lawyers working from home, the younger ones are deprived of the chance to learn by observing their seniors in person at the workplace. He too has had to find new ways of taking his TSMP team through cases, with them working remotely from home now. He believes the local legal sector must offer more flexible career paths for the new generation. If not, the brain drain will result in fewer lawyers representing the Singapore public in court, organising family estates, helping couples through a divorce or assisting firms in business transactions. It will also mean fewer lawyers volunteering at community legal clinics or doing pro bono work.

Mr Tan, who was inspired to study the law after reading about the lawyer Atticus Finch in Harper Lee’s classic novel To Kill A Mockingbird, adds, “It’s not in the national interest for us to have a shortage of legal practitioners. If we want Singapore to grow and prosper, we need more Singapore lawyers. Without them, there would be no one to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves.”
Mr Dang Tan Duc is the Executive Assistant to Chairman at Becamex IDC Corp, Head of BLOCK71 Saigon, and Director of Binh Duong Science and Technology Industrial Park. The NUS and Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy alumnus spearheads the development of a new generation of industrial parks and the tech start-up ecosystem to create platforms for Vietnam’s new economy.

Driving Progress Via Innovation

Through his work in supporting tech start-ups and innovation in his native Vietnam, Mr Dang Tan Duc (Design and Environment ’11) has been uplifting lives and communities.

REALISING A CHILDHOOD DREAM

Like many changemakers, Mr Dang’s journey began with a simple dream. He was born into a working-class family in 1987, when Vietnam was just opening up its economy. “My family struggled with day-to-day living. My mum — who didn’t have the opportunity to finish primary school and left her job after giving birth to me — only had the simple wish that her children would grow up to be literate,” he shares. “As a child, I couldn’t clearly imagine what I wanted to do later on, but an inner voice told me that when I grew up, I ought to contribute to improving the lives of those around me — and education was the key to realising that.”

Studying abroad was an unlikely prospect when Mr Dang was in high school because of limited opportunities, unaffordable tuition fees and living expenses. However, this became his teenage dream. He even recalls a day back in high school, when he learned about the story of Singapore’s progress from Third- to First-World nation, and wished that he could go to Singapore one day to learn from their Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew. Little did he imagine that these seeds of hope would eventually bear fruit, when years later, he became part of the first generation of Vietnamese students to study abroad on an NUS scholarship. Fittingly, he would later move on to pursue his master’s degree at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

Looking back, Mr Dang remembers standing upon the hill where the former School of Design and Environment sat during his undergraduate years, mesmerised by the night view of Jurong Island. “Seeing the lights of Jurong Island glowing throughout the night, I asked myself how Vietnam could develop a vibrant, industrialised economy like Singapore one day,” he recalls. He instinctively knew that to contribute to Vietnam’s transformation, his career path had to be one where the worlds of business and social impact intersect. That was why he decided to join Becamex IDC Corp, which has created millions of jobs in the country. Mr Dang currently spearheads the development of a science and technology industrial park with the ambition of aggregating a complete innovation ecosystem to attract global companies that enable the Vietnamese economy’s transition from labour-intensive to skill- and technology-intensive activities. With nine industrial parks currently in operation, one of his key roles is to drive initiatives that connect the innovation ecosystem with manufacturers. “We want to engage in higher value-added activities that use more technology — so when investors come to Vietnam, their priority will no longer be to look for low-cost labour and land,” he explains. “Instead, it will be to identify talent and tap on an innovation ecosystem in order to develop the competitive advantage of their ventures.”

BUILDING A START-UP ECOSYSTEM

Mr Dang’s passion for nurturing innovation and driving change extends beyond his regular job. He is also the head of BLOCK71 Saigon, a tech ecosystem builder and global connector created by NUS Enterprise to provide a launching pad for regional tech start-ups seeking to expand overseas and support Vietnamese start-ups that are going regional. BLOCK71 Saigon was started in 2011, with the transforming of an old industrial estate into the country’s most vibrant innovation hub. This was followed by the setting up of branches in strategic locations such as Silicon Valley, Shenzhen, Jakarta, Bundung, Yogyakarta, Nagoya and elsewhere. Launched in November 2020, BLOCK71 Saigon has since developed into a vibrant community comprising more than 20 tech start-ups primed to disrupt incumbent industries. These include Nano Technologies, a fintech start-up that enables early wage access for blue-collar workers; Antsomi, which has created an AI-enabled customer communications platform; Otrafy, which automates the collection, management, storage and transfer of certification data; BinarGroup, which reaps value from large, old and unstructured datasets with AI technology; Tetra, which automates the collection, management, storage and transfer of certification data; and Alphatec, which automates the collection, management, storage and transfer of certification data.

In 2021 alone, BLOCK71 Saigon has since developed into a vibrant ecosystem with several start-ups that are going regional. BLOCK71 Saigon is also the launchpad for regional tech start-ups seeking to expand overseas and support Vietnamese start-ups that are going regional. BLOCK71 Saigon’s ecosystem includes Nano Technologies, a fintech start-up that enables early wage access for blue-collar workers; Antsomi, which has created an AI-enabled customer communications platform; Otrafy, which automates the collection, management, storage and transfer of certification data; and Alphatec, which automates the collection, management, storage and transfer of certification data.

Paving the Way

Mr Dang shares that his time at NUS has shaped who he is today and proven pivotal to his career. It equipped him with critical thinking, problem-solving and leadership skills, as well as values such as meritocracy, pragmatism and integrity that have served him well throughout his career. The large network of successful NUS alumni — many of whom have joined MNCs or founded their own start-ups — has also been invaluable in supporting BLOCK71 Saigon. The life experiences he gained during his undergraduate years were just as important in shaping his values. Many may be surprised to learn that the native Vietnamese almost lost his life in Ghana during a three-month internship for a non-profit organisation. While there, Mr Dang contracted malaria and had to transfuse three-quarters of his blood. This, and his other experiences while participating in community service projects in Malaysia, Cambodia and Vietnam, taught him the value of ‘servant leadership’.

Social impact has become the central motivation of his career, inspiring him to become an agent of change. This was one of the main reasons he decided to join and stay at Becamex in the first place. “Becamex is a state-owned enterprise, not a private or multinational company, hence it was not based on the decision to get the best compensation,” he shares. Instead, it is the desire to devote his time and talent to the organisation that continues to make significant socio-economic impact in Binh Duong province and Vietnam as a whole, that drives the father-of-three to work tirelessly. Mr Dang’s days regularly begin as early as 4am, when he wakes to plan his day and also optimises his time by working during his daily three-hour journey to and from the office. “I remember during one of our meetings, the Chairman — who I respect very much — said, ‘When you are on your deathbed, you are not going to bring wealth with you. Think about what you can do that will leave a legacy,’ he shares. His hope is that his legacy will be to make a small but meaningful difference to the lives of the people around him, contribute to the acceleration of Vietnam’s new economy — and of course, bridge the partnership between Singapore and Vietnam. A

We want to engage in higher value-added activities that use more technology — so when investors come to Vietnam, their priority will no longer be to look for low-cost labour and land. Instead, it will be to identify talent and tap on an innovation ecosystem in order to develop the competitive advantage of their ventures.

Mr Dang of the finish line of his first Ironman 70.3 Vietnam race (which involved swimming 1.8km, cycling 90km and running 21km).
**‘NATURAL’ BY DESIGN**

By studying the history of Singapore's flora, fauna and landscape, we stand to learn a lot about ourselves as a people. Environmental historian Associate Professor Timothy P. Barnard has unearthed some surprising insights on our collective history through his research.

From forest reserves to the Botanic Gardens, down to the trees and other foliage planted along the roads, Singapore offers a meticulously maintained pairing of its urban environment and the natural environment. Having nature so close to, and even within, the city is quite a wonderful thing and adds significantly to the quality of life Singaporeans currently enjoy.

It is this natural environment that fascinates Associate Professor Timothy P. Barnard, who has been passionate in teaching and examining the cultural and environmental history of Southeast Asia. His research in this area has seen him peeking back the layers of Singapore's carefully manicured gardens and nature reserves to uncover the stories of its historical environment and show how we have evolved and progressed as a society from colonial times to today. Assoc Prof Barnard also believes the environmental history of Singapore contains the stories of our society, embedded in the flora and fauna of locations such as the Singapore Botanic Gardens. And this is where he has a surprise for us all: Singapore's natural environment is not natural at all.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY 101**

We all know history as the study of past human interactions on a macro level. Most of us would see history as a record of what a particular nation or people did; or to with whom, and when Environmental history takes this a step further and studies the interactions between humans and the natural world over time, seeing how we influence our environment, and how the environment influences us.

Environmental history is a comparatively new discipline, having emerged from the environmental movements of the 1960s and 70s in the United States. It is perhaps fitting then that an American would be the one to dig deep into Singapore's natural past; Assoc Prof Barnard is a Permanent Resident of Singapore and has been at NUS since 1969.

By any measure, he is pleased to be exercising his passion here. "Singapore is a wonderful place to study environmental history, because we have a nice starting point that is well-documented, that being 1819, when the British arrived," he shares. "They kept archives and records of everything, from temperature and the amount of forest cover to the types of animals present at the time."

**THE IMPACT OF IMPERIALISM**

When the British led by Raffles claimed Singapore for 'King and Country', it was the beginning of a new era for the island. But the real changes to the environment would start once the British East India Company (EIC) took over in 1824. The island at the time was heavily forested and occupied by just a few thousand inhabitants. Being a company (and the largest in the world at the time), the EIC was in the business of generating profits. The profitable commodities of the colonial era came from plants: be it tea from China, nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves or cotton, it was agriculture that made the world go around. Driven by profits, the British turned the island into one large plantation.

Workers cut everything down to plant their crops, mostly pepper, gambier, coffee and cotton, irreversibly altering the flora and fauna of the island. As such, the island was almost completely stripped of its original environment and dotted with farms and plantations by the time it achieved independence in 1965.

Singapore then underwent extensive reforestation projects, a result of the government's efforts to make the island a more liveable place, resulting in the Singapore we know today. "Singapore was over 90 per cent deforested by the 1880s," Assoc Prof Barnard reveals. "By reforesting it, we changed the environment," he says. "Then, we put in the plants to fit our needs, and also chose the animals to come in — everything from dogs to horses to cows to pigs to pet animals; whether they be songbirds or the fish that are in our waters."

**CREATED AND CURATED**

This planned reforestation created a landscape very different from what it originally was 200 years ago — and this was what Assoc Prof Barnard meant when he said that Singapore's natural environment is 'not so natural'. "It's one that was created and planted. In a sense, the hands of man shaped it and made it," he says.

To illustrate the extent of its creation — and curating — nature, he cites an obvious feature where every single tree in Singapore has been curated — and this was what Assoc Prof Barnard refers to horses to cows to pigs to pet animals; whether they be songbirds or the fish that are in our waters."

"In each era of the Botanic Gardens' history, it has played a role that was important economically," says Assoc Prof Barnard. "The ultimate example (of cash crops) of course is rubber. The development of rubber is one of the most important events in the last 150 years. It transformed the environment in Singapore and other countries in Southeast Asia, when the British brought in labour to work those plantations." He adds that money from rubber also created a lot of the future economic leadership of Singapore.

Yet this familiar landscape could have ended up as a footnote in history. "The Botanic Gardens was left behind once we became independent, as it was seen as a colonial institution, and was only revived in the 1990s," Assoc Prof Barnard explains. "Now we have a UNESCO World Heritage Site, so it's not going anywhere, but the key thing to me was how intimately connected it is to the economy, the government and Singaporean society, throughout our history." Working alongside Botanic Gardens Director Nigel Taylor, who included on-site lectures for history modules, Assoc Prof Barnard realised the Botanic Gardens represents a microcosm of Singaporean society as a whole. The extensive planning that went into the Gardens reflects the wider Singaporean society, because it is meticulously planned to achieve a certain set of objectives. The Gardens is far removed from its original colonial-era purposes of crop research, and now serves to provide Singaporeans a liveable urban environment — one he calls a "pleasant place, but planned and designed for specific purposes".

**FINDING MEANING IN MYTH**

While history lies at the core of what Assoc Prof Barnard does, he views the way it is taught nowadays as simply being a litany of dates, names and events, to be regurgitated come examination time. What matters more are the deeper meanings of these events, and the lessons that can be extracted from them. This has led him to examine Singapore's past from the aspect of the island's mythology. The legend of the 'swordfish that attacked Singapore' does resonate with him, as it reflects a traditional Southeast Asian way of telling stories, and also involves animals and how they can shape human society.

An example he points out is a Peranakan joke about the mosquito. The urban development of Singapore actually took into account whether it was malaria or dengue that was the disease threat of the day. Pets also influenced the direction of society: when pedigree dogs were introduced to Singapore in 1884, nabies became a problem on the island, as dogs had previously been used to help with the deforestation. The urban development of Singapore led to a range of local regulations and ordinances in an attempt to limit the spread of the disease, which had their impact on 19th-century Singaporean society. "If you look back to those original stories, like the kris [that Sang Nila Utama allegedly encountered] or swordfish, they are also interesting ways to convey basic principles about the society, or about what was going on at the time."

Assoc Prof Barnard continues to impart his knowledge of Singapore and the region to students in his lectures, consisting of introductory modules on Asian history as well as upper-level ones on the Malay world, environmental history and film. "I want to recreate [the knowledge] through similar stories that we can understand on modern times, as we can think of Singapore in new ways," he says.

**A FISHY TALE**

In his book Imperial Creatures (2019), Assoc Prof Barnard recounts the tale of Singapore being attacked by swordfish (Singapura Dilangan Todak). One day, swordfish began spearing people on the shore, so the ruler sent his soldiers to deal with it. Unfortunately, they suffered many casualties without having much effect. Seeing this, a smart young man suggested using the trunks of banana plants. The ruler agreed and the swordfish spearred the trunks and got stuck. But the ruler became jealous of the young man and had him killed. Assoc Prof Barnard sees this as a symbolic story, about the attitudes of the ruling class and their reaction to change and threats, in the wake of the fall of the Kingdom of Singapura and the flight of its rulers to Malacca.
LIGHT HAS LONG FASCINATED THE HUMAN MIND, INSPIRING SCIENTISTS, PHILOSOPHERS AND ARTISTS ALIKE. It is the many ways we perceive light(ness) — or quality of light — which the artists in this year’s NUS Arts Festival plumb for meaning and motivation in a greater search for answers to navigate the dark, complex and uncertain post-COVID world we presently live in. While live festival performances ended on 27 March 2022, NUS Centre For the Arts will be streaming video recordings of these performances for a limited time. Read on for some festival highlights and find out how to view them.

NUS ARTS FESTIVAL 2022

18–27 MARCH

SHADES OF LIGHT(NESS)

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[DANCE]

Thanmai by NUS Indian Dance

A journey that reflects on the metaphysical and physical qualities of light and what it means to us as humans. Join NUS Indian Dance in the exploration of the true nature of light through the lens of science, spirituality and time with Bharatanatyam, poetry and visual art.

The performance features a number of NUS alumni who returned briefly to campus to take part in the closing show of this year’s Festival. Thanmai is the last work with NUS Indian Dance by the late Mrs Santha Bhaskar, who was NUS’ longest-serving artistic tutor and nurtured generations of NUS students since 1977.

[THEATRE]

Blackout by NUS Stage

A trippy black comedy about a tortured soul, plagued by identity crises and heartbreak. An exploration of the self, love and loss, the play looks at the splintered world inside and outside of the main character’s mind. Blackout is directed by award-winning theatre-maker Mr Chong Tze Chien (Arts and Social Sciences ’99), a graduate from the NUS Theatre Studies programme who was awarded the Young Artist Award by the National Arts Council in 2006.

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[MUSIC]

InTempo’22: Musical Escapes by NUS Wind Symphony

Let the music take you to places of the past, present and future, to experience the joy of travelling, and celebrate the unique cultures of our world. Featuring a global repertoire, including world premieres of two newly-commissioned works by Singaporean composers, join NUS Wind Symphony on an exhilarating trip around the world.

The Ho Hew Long Music Score Commission Fund ensures that school bands have a wider selection of royalty-free music compositions to perform. The two commissioned works explore the COVID-19 pandemic and how it has changed the world, yet also our ability to start anew and adapt to the ‘new normal’.

FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Missed out on our live programmes? Recordings of the performances and talks are available for limited screenings from 28 March to 17 April 2022. Head to nusartsfestival.com for more information about how to access the digital screenings.

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DR ARTHUR YAP (ARTS ’65)  
- Received the Cultural Medallion in 1981
- Dr Yap’s first poems were written during his time at St Andrew’s School, when they were published in the school magazine. He continued writing while at the University and published his first collection of poems, Only Lines, in 1971. It won him the National Book Development Council of Singapore’s Book Award (Poetry) in 1976. Three years later, Dr Yap joined NUS as a lecturer, a post he would hold until 1998. Poems were not Dr Yap’s only medium of expression; he also painted extensively, holding seven solo exhibitions during his lifetime. He passed on in 2006.

DR LEE TZU PHENG (ARTS ’68)  
- Received the Cultural Medallion in 1985
- Many have read Dr Lee’s words without knowing they were hers: in 1990, she penned the lyrics to that year’s National Day theme song, ‘My People, My Home’, which has since been sung by scores of students since. But it was for her poetry collections that Dr Lee received the Cultural Medallion in 1985. Her first anthology, Prospects of a Drowning, published in 1986, features poems that were written while she was at the University. During that time, her works explored the identity of newly-independent Singapore, with some of these works later selected as texts for literature examinations. Dr Lee received the NUS Distinguished Arts and Social Sciences Alumni Award in 2018 and the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award in 2021.

EMERITUS PROFESSOR EDWIN NADASON THUMBOO (ARTS ’57, ’70)  
- Received the Cultural Medallion in 1979
- Widely regarded as the unofficial poet laureate of Singapore, Emeritus Prof Thumboo is known for chronicling national issues in his poetry. Ulysses by the Merlion, arguably his most famous work, describes Singapore’s highest arts accolade. His poetry collections that Dr Lee received the Cultural Medallion in 1985. Her first anthology, Prospects of a Drowning, published in 1986, features poems that were written while she was at the University. During that time, her works explored the identity of newly-independent Singapore, with some of these works later selected as texts for literature examinations. Dr Lee received the NUS Distinguished Arts and Social Sciences Alumni Award in 2018 and the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award in 2021.

LITERARY ARTS

DR WONG MEN WON © WONG MENG VOON (ARTS ’66)  
- Received the Cultural Medallion in 1981
- You may know Dr Wong better by his pen name, Meng Yi, whose microewriter and is eager to help other writers hone their craft, co-founding the Singapore Theatre company, TheatreWorks, Mr Ong is best known for staging Shakespeare-inspired works. He has been a prolific writer for 40 years, and even Poland.

MR SURATMAN MARKASAN (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’71)  
- Received the Cultural Medallion in 2010
- Mr Markasan is one of Singapore’s Malay-language literary pioneers and has found international fans through his plays. He has written more than 100 plays. These have been staged both at home and abroad, in cities like Berlin, Busan and Melbourne. During his University days, Mr Markasan became an early member of The Necessary Stage. He started writing plays for them in 1988 after initially acting and handling publicity and backstage production. He continues to give back to the local theatre community by teaching at the NUS Theatre Studies department and running theatre workshops for students.

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MR JOANNA WONG (SCIENCE ’62)  
- Received the Cultural Medallion in 1981
- An early visit to the Chinese opera cemented Mrs Wong’s passion for the art form and she has since spent her life developing and honing her craft. Encouraged by her husband, Mrs Wong began performing professionally in a Singapore opera troupe in 1957. There were also informal Cantonese opera performances, which grew her reputation as a strong and dynamic performer; one especially able to take on the roles of warrior princesses. Mrs Wong received the NUS Distinguished Science Alumni Award in 2014 and the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award in 2015.

DR MAX LE BLOND (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’72)  
- Received the Cultural Medallion in 1981
- Singaporean stories and Singaporeans on stage that was the bold vision Dr Max Le Blond put forth in the local theatre scene. Guided by this, he created and developed a Singapore theatre scene that prominently showcased Singaporean identities and characters in locally-written plays and adaptations. His efforts encouraged other theatre practitioners to embrace their Singaporean identities and inspired the formation of English-language theatre companies such as ACT3 and The Necessary Stage.

MR ONG KENG SEN (LAW ’88)  
- Received the Cultural Medallion in 2013
- As the critically-acclaimed artistic director of local theatre company TheatreWorks, Mr Ong is best known for staging Shakespeare-inspired works. He is also renowned for his work with arts festivals and in the early 2000s, became the first Asian to be appointed to curate In-Transit, the Berlin international arts festival. In 2013, he was appointed the festival director of Singapore International Festival of Arts (later known as Singapore International Festival of Arts) to ramp up its position he held until 2017.

A MARK ABOVE THE REST

The Cultural Medallion was instituted in 1979 by former Singapore President and then-Minister of Culture, Mr Ong Teng Cheong. It is Singapore’s HIGHEST ARTS ACCOLADE, honouring individuals whose artistic excellence, contribution and commitment have enriched and distinguished Singapore’s arts and culture scene.

To date, there have been 130 Cultural Medallion recipients. Each Cultural Medallion recipient will have access to funds of $80,000 to support their continuous artistic pursuits and help make a positive impact on Singapore’s artistic and cultural development.

Source: National Arts Council
MUSIC

DR CHOO HOEY (DOCTOR OF LETTERS (HONORARY) ’89)

Received the Cultural Medallion in 1979.

Singapore’s music scene has forever changed because of Dr Choo, who founded the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) in 1979 and served as its first resident conductor and music director. He first encountered classical music at an early age, while listening to his father’s vast record collection. That childhood love turned into a lifelong passion and Dr Choo built up the SSO into a regional powerhouse.

In 1996, he stepped down as its music director and Mr Goh took over as music director. He first encountered classical music at an early age, while listening to his father’s vast record collection. That childhood love turned into a lifelong passion and Dr Choo built up the SSO into a regional powerhouse.

He has dedicated his career to musical excellence and to nurturing young musicians. He is the conductor emeritus of the SSO and received the Cultural Medallion in 1986.

DANCE

MR GOH CHOO SAN SCIENCE (’70)

Received the Cultural Medallion in 1986.

Mr Goh served as the resident choreographer and associate artistic director of the Washington Ballet, where he was a major in ballet composition and performance. He received global recognition for his works that were characterised by sensitive, elegant interpretations, strong athleticism and incorporation of Asian elements. He showed an early passion for ballet and wanted to follow in the footsteps of his three older siblings, who were already professional ballet dancers. But his father insisted that he first complete a university education. After graduating from the University, Mr Goh went to Europe to begin his illustrious but short-lived career. Mr Goh passed on in 1987, just a year shy of his 40th birthday.

DR LIANG WERN FOOK (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’88)

Received the Cultural Medallion in 2016.

Dr Liang has contributed extensively to Singapore’s xinyao (local folk songs) movement. His love for music was sparked at a young age, when he heard a neighbour playing the piano. He then begged his father for piano and music lessons. Armed with these, he wrote songs and music while at the University and released his first album in 1985. He continues to pen pop songs for Mandopop heavyweights like Stefanie Sun, Jacky Cheung and Andy Lau.

VISUAL ARTS

MR TAN SWIE HIAN (ARTS ’68)

Described by TIME as Singapore’s “renaissance man”, Mr Tan’s art stretches across a variety of mediums including, but not limited to, painting, sculpture, Chinese calligraphy, printmaking, seal-carving and even dramatic performances. Regardless of medium, his works often effortlessly blend Eastern and Western philosophy. Over the years, Mr Tan has published 25 collections of poetry, essays and fiction, and has also translated books by English and Indian authors into Chinese.

PROF TAN SIAH KEE (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’72)

Received the Cultural Medallion in 2000.

The gentle art form of calligraphy has a champion in Prof Tan, who was introduced to it as a student. He credits calligraphy for teaching him the values of patience and hard work — and he spreads these through the Chinese Calligraphy Society of Singapore, the nation’s primary organisation for the art form. He has worked tirelessly and is renowned for his public calligraphy demonstrations and workshops, both at home and abroad. In 2000, he became the first overseas recipient of China’s Special Honour Award for Contribution to Chinese Calligraphy (China Calligraphers’ Association).

MR HO HO YING (ARTS ’63)

Received the Cultural Medallion in 2012.

Mr Ho is a prominent pioneer of modern art in Singapore, having co-founded the Modern Art Society Singapore in 1964. He often draws inspiration from Chinese culture, calligraphy and philosophy. Also a scholar of Chinese language and literature, Mr Ho has authored numerous books and short stories, and has contributed to the growing field of critical artistic discourse in Singapore.

MR CHONG FAH CHEONG (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’71)

Received the Cultural Medallion in 2014.

Mr Chong is a self-taught sculptor who is locally and internationally recognised for his iconic creations. Among his public works, he is most famous for First Generation, a bronze sculpture depicting a group of boys jumping into the Singapore River near the Fullerton Hotel. His works explore society and social issues, addressing concepts and themes about social class, family and wealth.

Mr Chong received the NUS Distinguished Arts and Social Sciences Alumni Award in 2016.

MS JENNIFER THAM (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’85)

Received the Cultural Medallion in 1979.

Ms Tham has been the conductor of the Singapore Youth Choir since 1986. In this time, she has been actively involved in educating young musicians and local audiences on contemporary choral music. She also uses choral music to foster deeper cultural exchanges between countries and does so in her capacity as an elected board member of the International Federation for Choral Music. Hundreds of budding artists who have learnt from Ms Tham have been inspired to pursue professional careers in the arts and music.

DR CHENG FAH CHEONG (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’85)

Received the Cultural Medallion in 2016.

Mr Goh served as the resident choreographer and associate artistic director of the Washington Ballet, where he was a major in ballet composition and performance. He received global recognition for his works that were characterised by sensitive, elegant interpretations, strong athleticism and incorporation of Asian elements. He showed an early passion for ballet and wanted to follow in the footsteps of his three older siblings, who were already professional ballet dancers. But his father insisted that he first complete a university education. After graduating from the University, Mr Goh went to Europe to begin his illustrious but short-lived career. Mr Goh passed on in 1987, just a year shy of his 40th birthday.

MR CHONG FAH CHEONG (ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ’71)

Received the Cultural Medallion in 2014.

Mr Chong is a self-taught sculptor who is locally and internationally recognised for his iconic creations. Among his public works, he is most famous for First Generation, a bronze sculpture depicting a group of boys jumping into the Singapore River near the Fullerton Hotel. His works explore society and social issues, addressing concepts and themes about social class, family and wealth.

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DINNER

LOCALLY BORN ARTISTS

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Mr Cheng Fah Cheong (right) receiving his NUS Distinguished Arts and Social Sciences Alumni Award in 2016 from then-NUS President Prof Tan Chorh Chuan (Medicine ’83).

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Mr Cheng Fah Cheong (right) receiving his NUS Distinguished Arts and Social Sciences Alumni Award in 2016 from then-NUS President Prof Tan Chorh Chuan (Medicine ’83).
NUS Alumni Manila Chapter Christmas Gathering 2021

21 alumni from seven faculties and schools attended this gathering, which began at 7pm. The evening began with a welcome speech by Chairperson of NUS Alumni Manila Chapter, Mr Richard Tan (Public Policy ’12), followed by a short sharing from guest speaker, Atty. Maria Anthonette C. Velasco-Allones (Public Policy ’06), Chief Operations Officer of the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB). During his speech, Mr Tan reiterated the purpose of alumni organisations – to provide a platform for face-to-face social, professional and business networking opportunities, and to enjoy the company of fellow alumni from Asia’s leading university who currently work and reside in and around the Metropolitan Manila area. The agenda for the coming year included plans to hold smaller gatherings, such as inviting sub-groups of alumni from various faculties and schools, which will be rolled out from the first quarter of 2022. Depending on the situation, the Chapter may also consider holding a general membership meeting by the second quarter of 2022.

Guest speaker Atty. Velasco-Allones shared with attendees the importance of tourism to the economy of the Philippines, the recent activities of TPB, and the current reopening of the islands to domestic tourism. After her speech, she graciously gifted each attendee a raffle ticket. The event included a gift exchange, where each attendee was given a raffle ticket.

NUS Alumni Manila Chapter, Mr Richard Tan (Public Policy ’12), Member Mr Nestor Precioso (Science ’06), Member Mr Lee Vivas (Business ’13), Ex-Officio Member and Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Philippines Chapter Chairperson Mr. James Dupuy-Delage (Public Policy ’16), Chairperson Mr Richard Tan (Public Policy ’13), and Member Mr Leandro Poco (Design and Environment ’06).

Chew Chong Lin Dental Bursary Raises Close to $815,000

10 February 2022

The Chew Chong Lin Dental Bursary aims to provide financial aid to needy undergraduates from the NUS Faculty of Dentistry. The idea to raise an endowed Undergraduate bursary, in honour of Emeritus Prof Chew Chong Lin (Dentistry ’71) for his contributions to the faculty, was first initiated by Associate Professor Jennifer Neo (Dentistry ’79) in 2019 but derailed due to COVID-19. The initiative regained momentum and to date, has raised close to $815,000. Prof Chew graduated at the then-University of Singapore in 1971 with a Bachelor in Dental Surgery. He has a long and distinguished career, serving in significant appointments with the faculty as Dean (1995 to 2000), Vice Dean (1980 to 1983), Head of Department of Prosthetic Dentistry (1980 to 1983 and 1986 to 1990), Head of Department of Restorative Dentistry (April 1990 to 2000) and Director of the Graduate School of Dental Studies (1986 to 2012). Prof Chew started the milestone Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme, which has since introduced generations of dental students to the research process so critical to the faculty’s practice. Under his Deanship, the Faculty also introduced the Competency-Based Curriculum. As Director of the Division of Graduate Dental Studies, he was instrumental in formalising the graduate training of five specialties into structured residency training programmes, four of which have conjoint examination status with the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh.

Prof Chew was also the first Director of the Centre for Advanced Dental Education (CADE), set up in 2007 to formalise Graduate Diploma and Continuing Dental Education programmes. The CADE introduced the Annual Faculty of Dentistry Symposium in 2005 and the Graduate Diploma in Dental Implantology in 2007. He was also Co-Chair of the NUS Dental Centre Planning committee responsible for proposing the setting up of the National University Centre for Oral Health, Singapore.

In addition, he has held various Ministry of Health portfolios since 1989, including Deputy Director of Medical Services (Dental) (1989 to 1993), Chair of the Planning Committee to oversee the setup of the National Dental Centre (1989 to 1995), Chief Dental Officer (2001 to 2006) and President, Singapore Dental Council (2009 to 2021). He was Chairman of the National Dental Centre Board (1997 to 2000) and also served as Member of the SingHealth Board (2000 to 2003). Prof Chew was the first from the dental profession to be conferred with the prestigious National Outstanding Clinician Mentor Award, which recognises individuals who have contributed substantially to the training of young clinicians and clinician scientists through mentorship. This was followed by the NHG-NUHS Life-time Achievement Award and NUHS Emeritus Consultant in 2009. He was among the 15 recipients of the inaugural NUS Inspiring Mentor Awards in 2009.
Empowering the Youth and Promoting Mental Health with Music

9 to 11 February 2022

Music Cities Convention (MCC) is a global event that explores the use and importance of music in the development of cities all around the world. The event features talks and presentations on topics as diverse as global music city policies, economic development, health, technology and education. The first Canadian and 10th global edition of MCC was livestreamed from Calgary and Edmonton, Canada, with international speakers joining remotely from over 15 countries in six continents, including Singapore. This year was themed “Scaling Up Music Cities: Cultivating the Future of Alberta”.

Ms Eileen Chai (Science 01), co-founder of 3AM Music Collective (3AmMC) and Strings For Kindness (SFK), was invited to speak at the convention. Her presentation on “Empowering the Youth and Promoting Mental Health with Music” highlighted the role of music in spreading awareness and acceptance of mental health conditions. Through music, 3AmMC has been able to raise awareness and remove stigma attached to mental health conditions. She also shared the importance of having an empathetic ear. When speaking to members of the public, 3AmMC members, who are not professionally-trained counsellors, encourage without dishing out advice. Her initiatives have also helped empower youths and educate listeners on what someone with depression and anxiety experiences, as they transit during the healing process. Armed with greater confidence, these young musicians can now make their own creative choices on how they use music, to give back or pass forward this new strength of empowerment to other people. The virtual attendees appreciated Ms Chai’s illuminating sharing session, which concluded with a pre-recorded performance by the SFK and The Violin Travels, of Ms Chai’s original composition, ‘Everything Is Possible’.

Geography Majors’ Tea 2022

On 11 February 2022, the Department of Geography held its annual Geography Majors’ Tea over Zoom. A total of 44 individuals participated in the lively event. The Majors’ Tea is a yearly highlight in the Department’s calendar. The session saw three alumnae return to the community to offer undergraduates valuable advice on career opportunities and choices. The panel featured Ms Deborah Lee (Arts and Social Sciences ’08), Senior Assistant Director at Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment; Ms Gladys Ng (Arts and Social Sciences ’18), Business Development and Programmes Manager at Workato and Co-Founder of CareerWares; and Ms Grace Tang (Arts and Social Sciences ’18), Research Specialist at Twitter. Taking place over two hours in the afternoon, the event was packed with candid sharing from the speakers, thought-provoking question-and-answer sessions from students, intimate breakout discussions, and even a Kahoot quiz and lucky draw. Key topics that were raised included: how to pick one’s career of choice, how to take advantage of the numerous offerings at the Department, and where Geography could take one beyond a teaching career. With experience spanning the public sector, private enterprise and even entrepreneurship, the alumnae panel recounted their exciting career journeys, which truly embodied the versatility of a Geography degree.

The Department thanked the speakers for generously offering their time in supporting the event. Much appreciation also goes to the NUS Geographical Society for their assistance in organising another successful Majors’ Tea.

NUSS-NUS Mentorship Programme Appreciation Session

17 February 2022

Launched in Academic Year 2012/2013, the NUSS-NUS Mentorship Programme is a joint collaboration between NUSS (NUS) and NUS. The programme was designed to establish a platform for students to share and learn from mentors for their holistic development, facilitate smoother university-to-work transition for students in areas of communication and interpersonal skills, and promote networking opportunities between students and the graduate communities. The Academic Year 2020/2021 marks the eighth year that NUSS has organised this programme. The continued success of the programme would not have been possible without the generous support of NUSS volunteers, in particular 34 mentors who have repeatedly volunteered and invested their time and resources to guide the mentees, sharing with them their wealth of experience and professional expertise.

Dr Foo Chek Woo (Science ’81), who mentored Ms Celine Cho (Engineering ‘21) from Environmental Engineering since September 2020, shared, “It was a distinct joy for me to have this privilege of mentoring Celine. The greatest testimony of the success of this mentorship is that we remain in communication long after the mandated mentorship period had concluded, and our active interaction continues into her current working life.”

The mentees too have benefitted greatly from the programme in both personal and professional growth. Ms Hnin Azali, a Year 3 Computing student, laud her mentor, Ms Theresa Tan (Computing ’95), “She told me about her professional life journey and work ethic. Her principles align with my personal values and to hear from a female leader in technology empowered me.”

To thank the current batch of participants, an appreciation session was organised by NUSS at Kent Ridge Guild House’s Delta & Seng Gee Guild Hall on 17 and 24 February 2022.

The AlumNUS thanks all contributors for the articles and photos in Alumni Happenings, showcasing our vibrant alumni community. For the full stories, please visit nus.edu.sg/alumni/News/AlumNUS/Issue-129/Community/alumni-happenings.
PRIVILEGES ON CAMPUS

Food and Beverage

Wake The Crew
20% off with minimum spending of $30.
wakethecrewcoldbrew.com

Affordable Wines
10% off for $5,000 purchase and above.
10% off Zieher Wine Glasses, decanters and accessories.
5% off Event Classic Wines.
5% off Riedel Wine Glasses and Decanters.
Free set of 6 Schott Zwiesel Banquet Series Bordeaux Wine Glass, with every $350 nett purchase of Chateau Carignan Wines.
affordablewines.com.sg

Mom Ling Bakery
Enter promo code NUSMLBALUM to enjoy $5 Cash Voucher with minimum spending of $80, on top of existing promotions.
mdmlingbakery.com

Artea Singapore
Enjoy 10% off à la carte orders.
artea.sg

Grill Ninety Nine
Enjoy 10% off à la carte food items.
grillninetynine.com.sg

Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum
10% off single-entry tickets as well as for both Individual and Family memberships.
lkchnhm.nus.edu.sg

University Cultural Centre (UCG)
20% off venue rental.
fta.nus.edu.sg/venues

Shaw Foundation Alumni House
20% off venue rental.
nus.edu.sg/alumnet

Privileged & Offers

Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum
10% off single-entry tickets as well as for both Individual and Family memberships.
lkchnhm.nus.edu.sg

The AlumAPP is available for download for all NUS alumni. Gain access to alumni-dedicated news, be notified about events, and enjoy special deals at popular retail outlets and service providers.

NUS Libraries
Complimentary entry to all NUS Libraries upon presenting the AlumNUS card.
• Annual Subscription fee at $128.10 (Usual Price $313.10) or
• 5-year membership package at $460.10 (exclusive to NUS Alumni only).
lbuportal.nus.edu.sg

Health & Beauty

Farrell Park Hospital
24-Hour Emergency Clinic services for NUS alumni.
farrerpark.com

EasyCare International (IDOC Clinic)
$10 Telemedicine when using the partner portal.

Atos Wellness
Experience one of these at $48 (excluding GST) with their experienced therapists or masseuses at Atos Wellness:
• Executive Aroma Facial (worth $180).
• Stress Bustling Relaxing Body Massage (worth $180).
• Electronic Lymphatic Drainage (worth $180).
atoswellness.com.sg

HealthConnexion Medical Clinic
• Health Screening packages for NUS alumni:
  o HealthTrack Regular (A) at $320.
  o HealthTrack Select (A) at $528.
  o HealthTrack Premier (A) at $1028.
farrerpark.com

Angel Baby Box
• 10% off all products.
facebook.com/angelbabybox

StorHub
Enjoy special discounts on storage fees and complimentary one-time transportation service, depending on the package.
storhub.com.sg

Lifestyle

Flowers and Kisses
10% off all products.
flowersandkisses.com.sg

PureHybridz
10% off only the following PureHybridz services: Saltwater Masterclass, Freshwater Masterclass, Kayak Fishing Lessons.

New Age Polish
$100 off Paint Protection Film (PPF) and Paint Protection Coating (PPC) services.
newagepolish.sg

Aranda Country Club
• $340/night for Super Peak Period.
• $320/night for Peak Period.
• $180/night for Off Peak Period.

PureHybridz
Complimentary deals along with the booking of Executive Suites.

Celline Cookimeshants Art
10% discount on all workshops and classes.
ccmonstersart.com

Education

Metaquest
Enjoy 50% off a Trial Lesson and $53.50 Waiver of Registration Fee at MetaQuest for a full term.
metaquest.com.sg

Aranda Country Club
• Exclusive rates for Executive Suites.
  • $180/night for Off Peak Period.
  • $320/night for Peak Period.
  • $340/night for Super Peak Period.

Adidas
Complimentary deals along with the booking of Executive Suites.
arandaclub.org.sg
How Ms Lim Biyi (Engineering ’10) juggles a successful career with her longtime love of cheerleading.

Left: Ms Lim Biyi and her husband showing their enthusiasm for the sport even on their holiday. Top: Alpha Verve practising their cheer routine on the day of their competition.

I had more experience to share with the team. ”Her husband was also offered a coaching position. Together, they brought Alpha Verve to new heights, including a win at the national championships in 2015. Ms Lim did this while juggling her career at SATS. Reflecting on how she balanced her full-time job and her cheerleading passion, she says, “I did give up opportunities at work to make time for cheerleading. It is natural that sacrifices were made along the way to achieve milestones like our national championship win. That’s why we always give our all during training to ensure that those sacrifices did not go to waste.”

She also counts the support of her husband and employer as factors for her team’s success. “My bosses are understanding and afforded me the flexibility to manage both responsibilities. My husband also covers training sessions for me when I have to work late,” says Ms Lim, who trains with the team about four to five times a week on average, and even more than that closer to competitions.

As much as she loves cheerleading, she stresses that it’s not all fun and games. The threat of injuries looms large over the sport. “Since I took over, we have put in place strict training guidelines, compulsory safety trainings and imposed penalties for incomplicity to ensure a safe training environment for our cheerleaders,” she adds.

A demand that Ms Lim is used to: after all, she has been cheerleading since her secondary school days. “At that time, cheerleading was gaining in popularity because of the movie Bring It On; and when we did some simple stunts during sports day, they were well-received. So when I entered NUS, I heard about Alpha Verve and decided to give it a try.” That decision led to many long nights of training and self-improvement, as the team was not professionally coached at the time. “We relied on web videos and trial-and-error,” recalls Ms Lim, whose husband is also an Alpha Verve alumnus. Thanks to their grit and determination, the team placed second in the all-girls group category at a nationwide competition in 2008.

Because of her close involvement with the team, Ms Lim stayed on after graduation to help out. She also joined an external cheerleading team, while returning to Alpha Verve to share the valuable lessons she learnt. Than in 2014, she accepted a request from Alpha Verve’s team members to be their coach, after the previous coach retired. “I graciously accepted, knowing that I had more experience to share with the team.” Her husband was also offered a coaching position.

Together, they brought Alpha Verve to new heights, including a win at the national championships in 2015. Ms Lim did this while juggling her career at SATS. Reflecting on how she balanced her full-time job and her cheerleading passion, she says, “I did give up opportunities at work to make time for cheerleading. It is natural that sacrifices were made along the way to achieve milestones like our national championship win. That’s why we always give our all during training to ensure that those sacrifices did not go to waste.”

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"When I represented Singapore at a competition in Japan in 2013, where I stood in front of a crowd and performed a routine on behalf of my country ... it was an unforgettable experience.”

"When Alpha Verve won the first-ever podium position in history during my first year as their coach. All the cheerleaders and alumni broke into tears of joy as we experienced a moment that we had waited 10 years for!”

Left: Ms Lim Biyi and her husband showing their enthusiasm for the sport even on their holiday. Top: Alpha Verve practising their cheer routine on the day of their competition.

BRINGING GOOD CHEER

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 Butterfly

By ROY SIM

How Ms Lim Biyi (Engineering ’10) juggles a successful career with her longtime love of cheerleading.

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Bukit Timah Homecoming 2022

Disco Fiesta

02 July 2022
Saturday
6.00pm – 8.30pm
Upper Quadrangle, Bukit Timah Campus

Catch up with fellow alumni
Groove to disco hits of the 70s
Win Attractive Prizes
Disco King & Queen Contest

Find out more at alum.events/BT22

Organised by:
Office of Alumni Relations

Co-hosted by:
Faculty of Law
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy