Thirty-six esteemed alumni are presented this year’s Nanyang Alumni Awards at the NTU Alumni Homecoming 2016 in recognition of their stellar achievements and contributions. A high-flying entrepreneur best describes Mr Wu Hsioh Kwang (Commerce/1974), one of a total of thirty-six alumni who were honoured at the Nanyang Alumni Awards on 15 October 2016 for their glittering achievements, leadership and contributions to the University and society. Mr Wu, together with Y.B. Datuk Seri Ir. Dr Wee Ka Siong (CSE/1996) and Dr Liang Wern Fook (NIE/2000), received the Nanyang Distinguished Alumni Award, the highest honour bestowed upon NTU alumni.

In tandem with the Nanyang Alumni Awards, this year’s Homecoming 2016 was filled with activities ranging from investment and health forums to an Oktoberfest-themed evening with games, food and music. As a long-time alumnus from Nanyang University, I feel extremely honoured to have received this award from NTU. I am also flattered as there are many other alumni who have made major contributions to the University and society as well,” said Mr Wu.

A respected senior in the Chinese community, Mr Wu serves on the Board of Governors of NTU’s Chinese Heritage Centre and Confucius Institute. This year, Mr Wu was conferred the Public Service Medal at the National Day Awards 2016. “I have always been dedicated to promoting quality education and the importance of Chinese culture in Singapore. This award spurs me to put in even more time and effort towards serving the community,” Mr Wu said.
A HEART FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

A “turning point to a new chapter” is how Y.B. Datuk Seri Ir. Dr Wee Ka Siong, Member of Parliament (MP) representing Ayer Hitam, Johor, and Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department, Malaysia, remembers his time as a Masters student at NTU’s School of Civil and Structural Engineering.

“I still recall the days of crossing the Causeway every day from Johor to Johor on my motorcycle to attend classes. I am glad to be part of NTU’s tremendous leaps of transformation over the years into the premier university it is today,” Dr Wee said.

The long-time public servant still refers to the engineering principles he learned at NTU in guiding his work today. “As engineers, we have learnt how to apply pragmatism and logical reasoning to our daily life and work,” he said.

“Dealing constantly with issues akin to improve the circumstances of others or even alleviate their burdens. This principle is also one that I have constantly employed throughout my work as a government official and public servant from even before my first elected as MP for Ayer Hitam in 2004.”

Dr Wee, a 2012 recipient of the Nanyang Alumni Achievement Award, has always made time to give back to NTU. In 2014, he helped to launch the NTU Alumni Association (Malaysia) and remains its patron.

“I am keenly aware of my own obligation to give back to society. Being conferred this honour reaffirms my belief in making the most of our given lot in life and giving back in public service, using the knowledge and experience that we have acquired to better the lives of our communities,” he said.

LYRICS THAT MAKE THE HEART SOAR

Can any one person start a musical movement that unites people from all walks of life and inspire their national pride? That would be Dr Liang Wern Fook, a pioneer of the Xinyao (Singapore songs) music movement with over 200 musical compositions and songs under his belt.

Staying humble about his contributions, Dr Liang made a point to acknowledge the groundswell of support from friends and the media. “The Xinyao music movement can never be built single-handedly. I drew strength from the support of the public, my friends and the media,” he explained.

“Back then, community centres were willing to provide spaces for Xinyao activities. The media was less commercialised—radio stations would allocate 30-minute time slots for musicians to record their music in the studio. When completed, they would broadcast it with a short introduction about the composer and the song.”

Citing “Sparrow with a Bamboo Twig” (麻雀衔竹枝) as his favourite composition, Dr Liang is also a prolific writer whose essays and poetry have earned him accolades such as the Singapore Book Prize in 1996.

For Dr Liang, music has been an integral part of his life and he is unwavering in his support for NTU’s School of Computer Science and Engineering.

“I feel greatly honoured to receive this award as it is a recognition of the contributions I have made to the Alma Mater, and an encouragement to keep striving for positive change,” he said. "I am always enthusiastic about taking up new challenges," Dr Liang said. “I will continue taking on new projects such as composing songs for drama series and movies. I am debuting a new album in mid-October which has 15 new and recent compositions.”

NTU’s BRIGHTEST STARS

This year, a total of 11 alumni received the Nanyang Alumni Achievement Award, which recognizes alumni for their significant contributions to the University.

Our shining alumni is Ms Sim Ann (HSS/2006), Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. “I was in the first batch of students pursuing the Graduate Diploma in Translation and Interpretation (GDTI) offered by NTU in 2005. Most of my classmates, like me, were working adults. It was no easy task balancing studies with work, but I enjoyed the course immensely,” she recalled.

Inspired by her experience at NTU, Ms Sim chaired the inaugural term of the National Translation Committee, advocating for effective communications in all four official languages through quality translation. “I am glad that I was given the opportunity later to do my part for the translation community in Singapore,” she said. “I thank NTU and my lecturers for the opportunity to take part in the GDTI.”

Three days from small businesses to youth, Ms Sim has her place full. As a member of the Committee on Future Economy, she is helping to support small and medium enterprises; and as Co-Chairman of the National Committee on Youth Guidance and Rehabilitation and Council Member of the National Youth Council, she is doing her part to nurture Singaporean youth.

SHINING EXAMPLES OF FORTITUDE AND SERVICE

Eight NTU alumni have received this year’s Nanyang Outstanding Young Alumni Award for their exemplary achievements. A past honouree is Dr Muhammad Nazir Bin Amir (NIE/2003, 2014), an engineer who felt compelled to make a career switch after a relief teaching stint at Greenview Secondary, where he worked with Normal Technical students.

Now a Lead Teacher (Physics) at Greenview Secondary School, Dr Nazir came up with the Relevant, Appealing and Personal (RAP) pedagogical approach to make lessons relevant to the real world and personal experiences of his students. For his pursuit of new frontiers in education, he received the President’s Award for Teachers in 2014.

Two years after graduating with a PhD degree from NTU, Dr Nazir remains close to the faculty as NIE, collaborating with them on research publications and participating in hands-on workshops. This year, he is a recipient of the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Programme, which will allow him to take courses and complete a project at a university in the United States.

When asked, Dr Nazir said that his passion for teaching stems from a simple motivation—his students and colleagues. “I had an enriching learning journey going through the doctoral programme in NIE. As a pedagogical leader, I am always on the lookout for ideas to inspire and excite my students and fellow teachers, and this keeps my passion alive.”

Fourteen individuals who have chosen to dedicate their time and energy in service to their alma mater have been rewarded with the Nanyang Alumni Service Award. One such individual is Mr Heng Tong Chuan (SCE/2006), a Senior IT Manager at the Singapore Island Country Club, who is unwavering in his support for NTU’s School of Computer Science and Engineering.

Mr Heng was Vice President of the School of Computer Science and Engineering Alumni Association (CSSEA) from 2013 to 2015, and President from 2011 to 2013. His years of service began as an undergraduate, where he was President of the Computer Engineering Club, as well as a member of the NTU Students’ Union.

“I feel greatly honoured to receive this award as it is a recognition of the contributions I have made to the Alma Mater,” said Mr Heng. “NTU’s education system was instrumental in shaping me to be an independent and highly adaptive individual.”

Y.B. DATUK SERI IR.
DR. EE KA SIONG

DR LIANG WERN FOOK

ISSUE 96 / SEP–NOV 2016

ISSUE 96 / SEP–NOV 2016
NANYANG DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

This is the highest honour bestowed upon the alumni of the University, recognising the truly remarkable accomplishments of alumni who have gained national, regional or international distinction as outstanding exponents of their chosen fields or professions, and whose endeavours reflect admirably on, or bring honour to, the University.

VISIONARY OF CHINA’S TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr Wu Hsioh Kwang

Commerce
B.Com. / Class of 1974

Mr Wu is the founder, Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the publicly-listed Straco Corporation Limited (SCL), which specialises in high quality tourism-related projects that incorporate entertainment, education and culture.

Today, SCL is one of the few foreign companies that have managed to establish themselves in China’s competitive tourism industry. Its flagship project in China is the 20,000-square-metre Shanghai Ocean Aquarium, which is one of Shanghai’s most popular attractions with over two million visitors each year. In 2014, SCL acquired the iconic 165-metre high Singapore Flyer through its subsidiary Straco Leisure Pte Ltd.

Despite his hectic schedule, Mr Wu finds time to serve on several boards including as Vice-Chairman of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Committee of Management, First Vice-Chairman of the Singapore Business Federation’s China Business Group, and as a Council Member of the National Arts Council. He is also a member of the Board of Governors of both NTU’s Chinese Heritage Centre and Confucius Institute, as well as a Board Member of the Haas School of Business.

In August, Mr Wu was conferred the Public Service Medal at the Istana.

PASSIONATE POLITICIAN, STALWART PUBLIC SERVANT

Y.B. Datuk Seri Ir. Dr. Wee Ka Siong

School of Civil and Structural Engineering
M.Eng. / Class of 1996

For more than a decade, Dr Wee has faithfully served his constituents in Ayer Hitam, Johor as their Member of Parliament. He is also currently a Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department, a position he has held since July 2014.

Dr Wee’s political career began in 1992 when he joined the Johor Bahru Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), which is part of Malaysia’s governing Barisan National coalition. He has held various roles along the way, most recently being elected in 2013 as the Deputy President of MCA, where he has placed much focus on Chinese education in Malaysia.

A recipient of the Nanyang Alumni Achievement Award in 2012, Dr Wee helped launch the NTU Alumni Association (Malaysia) in January 2014 and has since continued to lend his support to it. In 2015, Dr Wee was conferred the Datin Gemilang Seri Melaka which carries the title Datin Seri by the HE Governor of Malacca State.

Dr Wee, a civil engineer by training, is a member of the Board of Engineering Malaysia and a registered engineer with the likes of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Engineer and the International Association of Engineers.

MASTER OF MUSIC IN SINGAPORE

Dr Liang Wern Fook

National Institute of Education
Ph.D. (Chinese Literature) / Class of 2000

An acclaimed singer-songwriter with six albums and over 200 musical compositions and songs under his belt, Dr Liang is considered a pioneer of the Xinyao (Singapore songs) music movement. His significant works include Eve of History Exams, The Spanner Song, Friendship Forever, One Step at a Time, and Singapore Pie. His compositions have been sung by Mandopop superstars including Andy Lau, Jacky Cheung, and fellow Singaporeans Kit Chan and Stefanie Sun.

Musical talent aside, Dr Liang is also a published poet and essayist who has earned critical acclaim with his essay collection The Last Years of Kreta Ayer, poetry collection In Fact I am in Love with Time, and short-story collection The 21 Dreams of Liang Wern Fook.

Dr Liang has received numerous prestigious awards, including the Cultural Medallion for Music from the National Arts Council in 2010, the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award (Literary Arts) in 1992 and the Singapore Book Prize in 1996. He is currently an Adjunct Associate Professor with NTU’s Division of Chinese, and in 2008 received the Nanyang Alumni Achievement Award.

A ONE-MAN “BRIDGE LINKING LITERATURE AND MUSIC” IN SINGAPORE

Dr Liang Wern Fook

National Institute of Education
Ph.D. (Chinese Literature) / Class of 2000

An acclaimed singer-songwriter with six albums and over 200 musical compositions and songs under his belt, Dr Liang is considered a pioneer of the Xinyao (Singapore songs) music movement. His significant works include Eve of History Exams, The Spanner Song, Friendship Forever, One Step at a Time, and Singapore Pie. His compositions have been sung by Mandopop superstars including Andy Lau, Jacky Cheung, and fellow Singaporeans Kit Chan and Stefanie Sun.

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“Leaders do not learn from success. If I want to learn how to be successful, I would focus on the reasons that led to the failure of others and avoid repeating their mistakes. Success cannot be replicated but those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Only when confronted with failure can we examine what went wrong and find ways to improve.”

“To all budding song writers, cast aside the technicalities surrounding music composition. Focus instead on the story you would like to tell through your song. Most importantly, be willing to try out new things in life, as diverse experiences offer different perspectives which could help you in your compositions.”
NANYANG ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Nanyang Alumni Achievement Award recognises alumni who have gained national standing due to the significant contributions made to their chosen fields or professions that are worthy of recognition and have brought honour to the University, and/or demonstrated extraordinary service, commitment and dedication for the advancement of the University.

PROLIFIC, AWARD-WINNING WRITER WHO HAS MADE WAVES IN CHINA

Mdm Tham Yew Chin
Arts
BA / Class of 1972
BA (Honours) / Class of 1973

Better known by her pen name You Jin, Mdm Tham began her career as a features reporter at the now-defunct Singapore newspaper Nanyang Siang Pau, before teaching for nearly three decades, first at Huai Yi Secondary School, then at Pioneer Junior College.

To date, You Jin has published 180 books in countries such as Singapore, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Malaysia. She broke into the China market in 1989, and a decade later, Chongqing City’s Chongqing University set up the You Jin Research Centre for university students to study her works and those of other Southeast Asian writers.

You Jin’s accolades include the inaugural Singapore Chinese Literary Award from the Singapore Literature Society in 1991, the Cultural Medallion—Singapore’s highest arts accolade—in 2009, and the Singapore Literature Prize (Merit award, Chinese Non-Fiction) in 2014.

A LEADER IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Ms Low Peck Kem
School of Electrical & Electronic Engineering
B.Eng. / Class of 1986

Ms Low is the Chief HR Officer & Senior Director (Business Partnerships) of the Public Service Division, Prime Minister’s Office, where she is responsible for professionalising HR in 16 government ministries and 65 statutory boards.

She previously served in various roles in industry, before making the switch to the public sector in 2007 when she joined the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) as a Divisional Director with its National HR Division.

Ms Low is currently a Board Member of the Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices and an Advisory Council Member of the Singapore Training & Development Association. She won the 2004 Best HR Leader Award and the 2008 Outstanding Contributions to HR Award by HRM Awards, and the 2010 Leading HR Leader Award at the Singapore HR Awards.

A DRIVER OF GROWTH AT A HOME-GROWN ENGINEERING GIANT

Mr Teo Cher Koon
School of Mechanical & Production Engineering
B.Eng. / Class of 1987

Mr Teo Cher Koon is the Managing Director, President and Controlling Shareholder of ISDN Holdings Ltd, an integrated engineering solution provider principally focusing on motion control, industrial computing and other specialised engineering solutions.

Mr Teo has been instrumental in the company’s rapid growth. The Singapore Exchange Mainboard-listed ISDN group currently comprises 67 subsidiaries, with 64 sales offices and approximately 830 employees serving over 5,000 customers across the world. Its group revenue grew from approximately S$55 million in 2005 to S$236 million in 2015.

ISDN has been a member of Singapore 1000 since 2009, a prestigious ranking by DP Information Group. Singapore 1000 analyses over 70,000 audited financials each year to arrive at the top 1,000 corporations.

A FOUNDER OF ONE OF SINGAPORE’S TEN LARGEST ACCOUNTING FIRMS

Mr Tan Song Kok, Henry
Nanyang Business School
B.Acc. / Class of 1988

Mr Henry Tan is the Managing Director of Nexia TS, one of the ten largest accounting firms in Singapore. In 1997, Nexia TS expanded into China, where it now has an accounting network with more than 1,500 partners and professionals located in 23 cities. Mr Tan is the Chairman of Nexia China.

To help other entrepreneurs in Singapore, Mr Tan previously served as President of Spirit of Enterprise and Entrepreneur Organisation, and as a member of the Nanyang Business School Alumni Advisory Board. Nexia TS has also provided scholarships and bursaries to financially needy students.

Mr Tan has received numerous awards for his outstanding work as a leader and entrepreneur, including the Spirit of Enterprise Award (2004 Honourite Recipient), Midas Touch Asia Enterprise Awards 2013 (Platinum Award) and SME One Asia Awards 2013 (Distinguished Award).

VISIONARY IN THE INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY SPACE

Mr Lee Zee Sye, Simon
School of Civil and Structural Engineering
B.Eng. / Class of 1989

Mr Lee is Chief Executive Officer of T-2sqrt, which counts Avisia Asia, Panasonic, SingTel and Prudential among its clients.

He is currently chair of the Business and Community Partners’ (BCP) programme for the University’s Development Office, which is aiming to raise S$1.2 million this year with S$3 million in matching government funds for the University’s endowment fund. Mr Lee and his wife Michelle Ang, an alumna of NTU, set up their own fund in 2015 to offer two bursaries—in perpetuity—to undergraduates. In addition, he is a founding member of the NTU Alumni Council.

The accolades Mr Lee has received include the Nanyang Alumni Service Award in 2004, the Total Defence Award in 2012 and 2013, and the Singapore SME1000 Net Profit Growth Excellence Award (Infocomm and Technology) in 2014, and most recently, the Promising Award, as well as, the Grand Award at the inaugural Tocshew Entrepreneur Award.
AN INSPIRING POLITICIAN AND CIVIL SERVANT

Mr Yang Rui
Nanyang Business School
BSc. / Class of 2001

Since he was selected to work at Jianchapsu Commune, Ba County, Hebei Province in 1982, Mr Yang has served in various roles including Executive Deputy Director-General of the Publicity Department of Hebei Provincial Committee of CPC, Secretary of CPC Chengde Municipal Committee of Hebei Province, and Vice Governor of Hebei Province.

As Vice-Governor of Hebei Province, Mr Yang helped to implement major strategies of the Coordinated Development for the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region, New Type of Urbanization, and the planning and construction of Beijing New Airport and the Airport Economic Zone.

He is currently the Standing Committee Member and the Director-General of the Organization Department of Heilongjiang Provincial Committee of CPC, President of the Party School of Heilongjiang Provincial Committee of CPC, and President of Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Governance.

SINGAPORE POLITICIAN

Ms Sim Ann
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
G/Dipl. Translation / Class of 2006

Ms Sim Ann is the Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. She also holds the appointment of Deputy Government Whip.

She sits on the Committee on Future Economy (CFE), and will be co-chairing the Lifestyle Cluster under the Council for Skills, Innovation and Productivity (CSIP). She is also the Co-Chairman of the National Committee on Youth Guidance and Rehabilitation and a Council Member of the National Youth Council.

In 2013, Ms Sim was a commanding officer in the Holland-Bukit Timah Group Representation Constituency (GRC) as one of the four-member People’s Action Party team led by current Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan. In 2015, she contested and retained the right to represent Holland-Bukit Timah GRC as a Member of Parliament.

PHILANTHROPIC BUSINESSMAN PAYING IT FORWARD

Mr Wang Hairong
Nanyang Business School
EMBA / Class of 2007

Mr Wang is the Chairman of Huanan Bulli Engineering Sci & Tech Co., Ltd (BLEST), a Shanghai Stock Exchange-listed company which provides engineering, construction, procurement and project management services.

Prior to BLEST, Mr Wang was the Chairman of RH Energy Ltd, which he founded in 1998 and led to its listing on the mainboard of the Singapore Exchange in 2007. Mr Wang expanded the business with acquisitions such as Zomeda Energy Ltd, Huanan Bulli and Wahran Petrochemical. He has also previously worked at the China National Petroleum Corporation.

In 2007, he donated to his alma mater to set up a lifelong scholarship. In 2014, he set up the Hairong Scholarship to offer to all undergraduate students at NTU.

A CHAMPION OF INDONESIA’S WAR ON TERROR

Police General
Dr Muhammad Tito Karnavian
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
PhD / Class of 2013

Police General Karnavian is currently the Chief of Indonesian National Police. Prior to that, he was the head of Indonesia’s National Counter-terrorism Agency (BNPT) and led the country’s war on terror.

He has also led Indonesia’s elite Densus 88 counter-terrorism squad as well as the Jakarta police force.

A firm believer in the importance of international and regional cooperation in today’s environment of international terrorist networks, Police General Karnavian is often invited to lend his expertise at related conferences, meetings or forums.

Police General Karnavian has received numerous accolades for his work, including the Distinguished Policeman Medal, Military Medal for Loyalty to Motherland, Military Medal for Good Service to Motherland, and the Military Medal for Good Service to the World.

PASSIONATE CONTRIBUTOR TO THE GLOBAL BASKETBALL SCENE

Dr Koh Koon Teck
National Institute of Education
PG.Dip.Ed / Class of 1993
M.Ed / Class of 2000
Dip. Dept Mgt / Class of 2002

As an Assistant Professor at the National Institute of Education and Assistant Head for its graduate programmes, Dr Koh’s research interests are in coaching and teaching in Physical Education and Sport. He is also an active contributor to the local basketball scene as team manager at both the 2013 and 2015 Southeast Asian (SEA) Games. In 2013, Dr Koh led the team to a bronze medal—their first SEA Games medal since 1979.

Dr Koh has devoted his energies to developing the sport as Chairman of the Basketball Association of Singapore’s Coaching & Development Committee for 14 years. He is currently Chairman of the International Basketball Federation Asia Coaches Committee.

In March 2016, Dr Koh was appointed the President of the Singapore Physical Education Association. Presently, he is also the Vice President of the ASEAN Council for PE and Sport.

PHILANTHROPIC BUSINESSMAN PAYING IT FORWARD

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Nanyang Business School
EMBA / Class of 2007

Mr Wang is the Chairman of Huanan Bulli Engineering Sci & Tech Co., Ltd (BLEST), a Shanghai Stock Exchange-listed company which provides engineering, construction, procurement and project management services.

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A BUILDER OF LANDMARKS

Mr Lee Yong Miang, Von
School of Civil and Environmental Engineering
BEng. / Class of 1995

Mr Lee is the Chairman and founder of the Expand Group of Companies, which has built landmark projects such as the Superstores and Energy Centre for the Gardens by the Bay, the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, and the Marina Bay Promenade.

Today, Expand has received accolades such as the SME 500 award, Singapore 1000 award, the Enterprise 50 award, and the prestigious Green Mark Platinum Award. On a personal front, Mr Lee received the Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2008 from the Association of Small & Medium Enterprises and the Rotary Club of Singapore.

Mr Lee recently gifted NTU with S$1 million to start a new endowment for financially needy students. The Von Lee Yong Miang Bursary Fund has received matching funds from the Singapore Government, bringing the total endowment to S$2.5 million.
The Nanyang Outstanding Young Alumni Award recognises alumni under the age of 40 whose endeavours in their chosen fields or professions are worthy of recognition and have brought honour to the University.

2. Dr Nripan Mathews (MSE/2003)
3. Dr Majid Ebrahimi Warkiani (MAE/2013)
4. Mr Alphonsus Chern Xianjun (WKWSCI/2008)
5. Dr Muhammad Nazir Bin Amir (NIE/2003, 2014)
6. Ms Cheryl Chan Wei Ling (MSE/1999)
7. Mr Ted Chen Chiu Hsiao (EEE/2012; TIP/2015)
8. Ms Sarah Choo Jing (ADM/2013; NIE/2016)

The Nanyang Alumni Service Award recognises alumni whose dedication and volunteer commitments through alumni clubs and associations or to the University’s programmes and activities have significantly enriched the University, so as to encourage continual commitments in the future.

1. Mr Wong Choon Bong (NBS/2011)
2. Dr Liang Jing (EEE/2009)
3. Mr Christopher Sia Jiun Kae (SCE/2005; NBS/2010)
4. Dr Vinay Kalia (NBS/2003)
5. Mdm Tan Soh Wah (Arts/1972)
7. Mr Lu Jiasheng (NBS/2008)
8. Ms Zhao Xiaorong (NBS/2007)
9. Mr Kelvin Chen Junguang (MAE/2008)
10. Mr Gabriel Lee Heng Bin (HSS/2012)
11. Mr Heng Tong Chuan (SCE/2006)
12. Mr Cao Hongming (HSS/2003)
13. Mr Zhou Junlin (NTC/2007)
14. Mr Andy Seo Jia Hui (SPMS/2010)