Mr Suratman’s work — which has seen him comment about the Malay experience in Singapore, addressing issues that range from filial piety to displacement — has seen him win numerous awards. Notably, he received the Cultural Medallion in 2010 for his contributions to Singapore literature.

In his retirement years, the tireless Mr Suratnam still gives of his time and knowledge by being a part-time lecturer at NIE in Malay language, literature and teaching pedagogy. He remains active in the Angkatan Sasterawan ‘50 (Writers’ Movement ‘50) literary association and continues to write and publish novels and short stories.

OFF GRIT AND CAMARADERIE

The Chairman and Managing Director of Teckwah — a supply chain management and digital services provider — Mr Chua Kee Seng Thomas, has received numerous awards and accolades through the years.

Teckwah reached a point in its growth trajectory where its workforce comprised of old guards who had been with the company for many years and new hires who were degree holders. In order for the team to work in concert, Mr Chua introduced weekly half-day training sessions. His efforts paid off — by way of a shared learning experience, staff gained a better understanding of the business in the process. Mr Chua’s strong corporate culture and values — teamwork, initiative, commitment, and continued improvement.

The self-effacing Mr Chua considers his greatest triumphs to be instances in which he was able to give back to society and help others in their business. Throughout his career, he has actively devoted his time towards this endeavour, having sat on the board of various organisations.

He previously also served as the President of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry and as a nominated Member of Parliament (NMP), and was quoted at the time as saying: “I think there’s a lot of things that as an NMP representing the business community that I could do, I understand the ground better, and am able to receive feedback from the businesses on the problems they are facing.”

Mr Suratman still gives of his time and knowledge by being a part-time lecturer at NIE in Malay language, literature and teaching pedagogy. He remains active in the Angkatan Sasterawan ‘50 (Writers’ Movement ‘50) literary association and continues to write and publish novels and short stories.

39 alumni were recognised at the annual Nanyang Alumni Awards 2019 for bringing the NTU name to greater heights as a result of their sterling achievements.

Mr Chua Kee Seng Thomas (Arts/1979), and dedicated public servant Mr Zaify Mohamad (EEE/1999 & NBS/2003) went home with top honours as they demonstrated excellence in their professional and personal endeavours.

Penning a Mark

A mercurial multi-hyphenate, Mr Suratman has been a force to be reckoned with in Singapore’s literary, educational and political spheres for decades. He recognises that it takes fortitude and determination in order to create excellent work and to leave an indelible impact on society.

Mr Suratman once told The Straits Times: “Creativity and discipline must go hand in hand if a writer wants to make his mark. ‘Rhythm which cannot be separated.”'

A spirit of ceaseless learning is one of Mr Suratman’s true north values. He has fond recollections of his time at NTU as being part of the first batch of Malay Studies students.

“I was the oldest student at the time at age 34, compared to my classmates who were young undergraduates. It was a challenging time, as I had to manage my studies while taking care of my family and teaching night classes concurrently. Still, I’m grateful for all the memorable moments I had with my friends, including one where we squeezed five persons into my tiny Volkswagen after class!” he recounted with a laugh.

By the time he graduated from Nanyang University in 1979 with a Bachelor’s in Literature, Mr Suratman had already published two novels and edited two anthologies of Malay-language literature. He has since been responsible for several poetry collections and novels, including Tiga Warna Bertemu, a collection of poems by 41 Singapore poets in an attempt to record the development of Singapore Malay-language poetry from the 1940s and beyond.

In compiling and publishing Tiga Warna Bertemu, he became the first Singaporean to write for The Institute of Language and Literature (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka) in Malaysia. He has also given recitations of his poetry in France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom and United States.

The AGENDA

Educator and community leader Mr Suratman bin Markasan (Arts/1971); visionary leader and businessman Mr Chua Kee Seng Thomas (Arts/1979); and dedicated public servant Mr Zaify Mohamad (EEE/1999 & NBS/2003) went home with top honours as they demonstrated excellence in their professional and personal endeavours.

While blazing a trail professionally is often an indication of a person’s calibre, being able to make an indelible mark in both work and beyond is a quality that is exclusive to those of remarkable substance. Three luminaries who exemplify such traits were bestowed the prestigious Nanyang Distinguished Alumni Award. Educator and community leader Mr Suratman bin Markasan (Arts/1971); visionary leader and businessman Mr Chua Kee Seng Thomas (Arts/1979); and dedicated public servant Mr Zaify Mohamad (EEE/1999 & NBS/2003) went home with top honours as they demonstrated excellence in their professional and personal endeavours.
Mr Zaqy is currently Minister of State, Ministry of National Development & Ministry of Manpower (MOM), and the Deputy Government Whip. In his role, he has been relentless in his push for an inclusive and caring society and has undoubtedly made a positive impact on the lives of many Singaporeans. His efforts include supporting the integration of persons with special needs into the workforce, improving safety and work conditions, and making work conditions safer and healthier for all workers.

That said, to Mr Zaqy, there remains a long road ahead. He states as the world changes, it is crucial that Singaporeans must collectively work towards finding pathways for all to succeed. He believes that doing so will set the nation in the right direction to move it into the future.

In spite of a busy schedule, Mr Zaqy notes that progress towards this in recent years has been heartening, and he is hopeful on this front. He said, “I think the good thing is that the message is getting through to many Singaporeans.” He added, “That’s something we have to continue to work towards.”

Outside the political sphere, Mr Zaqy has enjoyed a hugely successful career in various roles with consultancy and technology firms such as Arthur Andersen, IBM, Dimension Data (NTT Group) and Ernst & Young (EY). He was also a counsel of the Singapore Bar 1997, where he was called to Bar in 1997, and winning the Singapore Quality Class Action Award in 2005 by Chartered Accountants Institute. His efforts paid off, with Teckwah on the business excellence journey. For Mr Zaqy, these are key strengths he defines himself to this day.

In addition to his literary achievements, the erudite Mr Suratman has also made significant contributions to the education sector. After completing his secondary school education, Mr Suratman completed his BA in English at the University of Malaya, and his MA in English at the University of Singapore. He continued his studies in the United States, where he earned his Ph.D. in English at the University of Arizona. He is the author of several academic books and articles, as well as numerous essays and reviews. His work has been featured in numerous publications, including academic journals and literary magazines.

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Mr Zaqy is currently Minister of State, Ministry of National Development & Ministry of Manpower (MOM), and the Deputy Government Whip. He has used his position to push for an inclusive and caring society that will enable all workers to thrive. He said: “Our lower-wage workers deserve to thrive by having decent work environments and being appreciated for the work they do on a daily basis.”

Mr Zaqy concurrently also holds other responsibilities such as the Member of Parliament for Chua Chu Kang GRC and Adviser to Marsiling-Yew Tee GRC Grassroots Organisation. Previous roles include serving as Vice Member of SPRING Singapore and of Singapore Science Centre, Chairman of Chia Chiu Kang Town Council and of the Government Parliamentary Committees for Trade and Industry and for Finance, Trade & Industry and Vice-Chairman of Young PAP.

MR SURAATMAN BIN MARKASSAN
B.A. / Class of 1971
Educator, community leader, socio-political commentator, poet and writer.

In addition to his literary achievements, the erudite Mr Suratman has also made significant contributions to the education sector. After completing his secondary school education, Mr Suratman completed his BA in English at the University of Malaya, and his MA in English at the University of Singapore. He continued his studies in the United States, where he earned his Ph.D. in English at the University of Arizona. He is the author of several academic books and articles, as well as numerous essays and reviews. His work has been featured in numerous publications, including academic journals and literary magazines.

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MR CHUA KEE SENG
THOMAS
B.A. / Class of 1979
Visionary leader and businessman.

In addition to his literary achievements, the erudite Mr Suratman has also made significant contributions to the education sector. After completing his secondary school education, Mr Suratman completed his BA in English at the University of Malaya, and his MA in English at the University of Singapore. He continued his studies in the United States, where he earned his Ph.D. in English at the University of Arizona. He is the author of several academic books and articles, as well as numerous essays and reviews. His work has been featured in numerous publications, including academic journals and literary magazines.

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MR ZAQY MOHAMAD
School of Electrical & Electronic Engineering
B.Eng. / Class of 1999
Nanyang Business School
M.Sc. (Financial Engineering) / Class of 2002
Dedicated public servant pushing for better conditions for all workers

In recognition of the extraordinary leadership he has dispensed himself for himself as a public servant, NTU is proud to present Mr Zaqy Mohamad with the National Alumni Achievement Award.

Mr Zaqy is currently Minister of State, Ministry of National Development & Ministry of Manpower (MOM), and the Deputy Government Whip. He has used his position to push for an inclusive and caring society that will enable all workers to thrive. He said: “Our lower-wage workers deserve to thrive by having decent work environments and being appreciated for the work they do on a daily basis.”

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NANYANG ALUMNI

The award is conferred to recognise alumni who have gained national standing as a result of the significant contributions made in their chosen fields and professions, and have brought honour to the University.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

It also honours alumni who have demonstrated extraordinary service, commitment and dedication for the advancement of the University.

PROFESSOR LEO SURYADINATA

A leading expert on Indonesia’s ethnic Chinese

Prof Leo is an Adjunct Professor with NTU’s S Rajaratnam School of International Studies and a Visiting Senior Fellow at the IDEAS — Yusof Ishak Institute. During his long and illustrious career in academia, Prof Leo has held roles such as Director of NTU’s Chinese Heritage Centre, Professor with the National University of Singapore’s Department of Political Science, and senior research fellow with the Institute of South East Asian Studies.

In September 2018, Prof Leo became the first Singaporean to receive the Cultural Award from the Indonesian government. He was honoured for his contributions and efforts to deepen understanding of the country with his work in introducing Indonesia’s ethnic Chinese to the younger generation, I will be very happy if young scholars would like to learn with me.”

MS ANG SUAN HONG

A businesswoman extraordinaire who is taking her company to greater heights

Ms Ang is the Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Ohim Li Group (OLG), a leading global textile and apparel supply chain manager of casual lifestyle knitwear apparel to major United States retailers. She founded the company in 1977 with just $3,000 and six sewing machines. Today, OLG is one of the largest global textile and apparel supply chain companies in Asia, offering one-stop service which includes fabric innovation, product design, volume manufacturing and market intelligence. It ships around 60 million pieces annually and supplies to renowned retailers like Macy’s, Walmart, Gap Inc and Kohl’s, among others.

Ms Ang was named on Forbes Asia’s inaugural Emergent Women List in 2018 for the milestones she has forged in Asia-Pacific’s growing business world.

MRS CHUA - YEN CHING

A passionate educator who believes every student is a gem

Mrs Chua is best-known for her role in conceptualising the trail-blazing NorthLight School, which is today credited as the leading school for students who encounter difficulties coping with the mainstream academic curriculum. The school adopts an experiential approach in teaching and learning and places strong emphasis on nurturing its students’ socio-emotional development by recognising their achievements, encouraging peer support, and creating conditions to promote self-esteem.

Mrs Chua served as NorthLight’s founding principal when the school took in its first batch of students for the enhanced vocational education programme in January 2007. By the end of her stint in 2011, over 80 per cent of NorthLight’s students — who are less academically inclined — had completed its three-year course and many continued to pursue their education with the Institute of Technical Education.

Today many of the alumni are doing well, contributing to society and making a difference to their families.

MR SONNY BENSILY

A civil engineer who took the plunge and never took “No” for an answer

In 1995, after a decade in the workforce, Mr Bensily took the plunge and started Prime Structures Engineering Pte Ltd. Today, the organisation has over 100 employees from numerous countries including India, Ireland, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka and England.

Prime Structures Engineering has been involved in the construction of some of Singapore’s most iconic architecture such as Changi Airport Terminal 3 and Marina Bay Sands (MBS). For MBS, Prime Structures was involved in the construction of the Ned Khan Art Wall, the podium, the canopy; and for special mention the SkyPark — the company successfully cladded the belly of the ship-like platform on top of the three hotel towers 57 storeys above ground level!

The proud alumni has also given generously via the Sonny and Diana Bensily Bursary and Class of 1985 Pioneer Fund.

MR ZAINAL BIN SAPARI

A union leader protecting the interests of low-wage workers

Mr Zainal is a Member of Parliament (MP) for Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC and Chairman of Pasir Ris-Punggol Town Council. As an MP, he has helped many of his residents on a wide range of appeals for housing, jobs, citizenship and others.

He also started the Community Voucher Programme to support needy families.

Concurrently, he is the Assistant Secretary-General of the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC). He lobbied for the Progressive Wage Model (PWM) to assist low-wage workers, and pushed for legislative amendments and guidelines that would provide them with better protection and welfare.

Mr Zainal is now the Chairman of three low-wage sector tripartite committees where he champions the implementation of the PWM with the tripartite partners. The PWM has since been made mandatory in these sectors and has positively impacted over 77,000 low-wage workers, increasing their salaries over time.

MR YONG MING CHONG DANNY

Leading hedge-fund manager with a heart of gold

Mr Yong co-founded Singapore-based Asia focused alternative investment firm Dymon Asia Capital with Nanyang Business School (NBS) friend Keith Tan. The duo started off as rivals on the hardball court but became firm friends in the classroom.

In 2008, armed with US$100 million in seed capital from Tudor Investment Corporation and US$13 million in proprietary funds, they started Dymon Asia. Around that time, investment bank Lehman Brothers sparked off the Global Financial Crisis, but the duo stayed the course and successfully grew Dymon(9,490),(987,884)
NANYANG OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

Presented to 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.

- Ms Aisha Sahar Waheed Al-Kharusi (RSIS/2014)
- Mr Ong Yong Cheng Matthew (NIE/2005)
- Ms Annabelle Kwok Shi Min (SPMS/2015)
- Mr Yang Zhan Zack (EEE/2016)
- Ms Dipna Lim Prasad (SSM/2014)
- Mr Wang Han Yi Ray (ADM/2012)
- Mr Chen Xianyong Alex (CEE/2014 & NBS/2016)
- Ms Loo Qingwen Jean (WKWSCI/2007)
- Mr Dhruv Khanna (NTC/2014)
- Ms Hong Shuheng Kaylene (WKWSCI/2011)
- Ms Aisha Sahar Waheed Al-Kharusi (RSIS/2014)
- Mr Ong Yong Cheng Matthew (NIE/2005)
- Ms Annabelle Kwok Shi Min (SPMS/2015)
- Mr Yang Zhan Zack (EEE/2016)
- Ms Dipna Lim Prasad (SSM/2014)
- Mr Wang Han Yi Ray (ADM/2012)
- Mr Chen Xianyong Alex (CEE/2014 & NBS/2016)
- Ms Loo Qingwen Jean (WKWSCI/2007)
- Mr Dhruv Khanna (NTC/2014)
- Ms Hong Shuheng Kaylene (WKWSCI/2011)
To recognise alumni whose dedication and volunteer commitments — through alumni clubs and associations or the University’s programmes and activities — have significantly enriched the University.

Please scan QR code or visit ebook.ntu.edu.sg/shelf-nanyang-alumni-awards.html to read the Awardees’ full citations.

Mr Shen Xiaohe (EMBA/2006)
Mdm Tay Gek Khim (NIE/1999 & 2007)
Mr Huang Weidong (NCPA/2004 & 2010)
Mr Ee Kwang Yong Phillip (EEE/1998 & RSIS/2004)
Mr Sun Jian (NIE/2010)
Mr Zhang Guonan (EMBA/2008)
Mr Ee Kwang Yong Phillip (EEE/1998 & RSIS/2004)
Mr Sia Chiew Kai Stanley (CSE/1989)
Ms Rasiah Raslyn Agatha (WKWSCI/2010)
Mr Muhammad Hidhir bin Md Razak (HSS/2014 & SOH/2018)
Ms Soh Shan Bin (SBS/2010)
Mr Law Yi Ping Jason (MSE/2009)
Mr Muhammad Arshad Kashif (EEE/2003)
Mr Fong Wai Sun (NBS/1997)
Ms Soh Shan Bin (SBS/2010)
Mr Chua Seng Cheong (Commerce/1975)
Mr Hoon Tai Meng (Commerce/1976)
Mr Meng Yang Andy (SCSE/2012)
Mr Muhammad Arshad Kashif (EEE/2003)
Mr Yap Kok Kin (EEE/1984)
Dr Ong Hiap Liew (Science/1978)
Mr Law Yi Ping Jason (MSE/2009)
Mr Muhammad Arshad Kashif (EEE/2003)
Mr Fong Wai Sun (NBS/1997)
Mr Meng Yang Andy (SCSE/2012)