CELEBRATING NEW ALUMNI
A Convocation Special

PRESERVING LIFE THROUGH GENOME SEQUENCING

SIGNING OFF FROM THE LONDON OLYMPICS!

SOLVING WORLDWIDE CHALLENGES, THE INTERDISCIPLINARY WAY
Contents

02 Message from the President
校长寄语

04 From the Editorial Desk

COVER STORY
05 Celebrating New Alumni

ON CAMPUS
16 Solving Worldwide Challenges, the Interdisciplinary Way
18 Preserving Life through Genome Sequencing
21 Sharing Best Practices in Alumni Engagement
22 Battle of the Biologists

PERSONALITY
24 Ambassador for a More Sustainable Future
26 Signing off from the London Olympics!

ALUMNI CONNECT
32 Celebrating in Style
34 The Hand of an Old Friend
37 Strengthening Alumni-Alma Mater Relations in the United States
38 Alumni Sporting Spirit

ALUMNI HAPPENINGS
40 Nostalgic Night for Indonesian Alumni
41 Events Calendar

LOVING LIFE!
44 Vacation above the Clouds

CLASSNOTES
48 Our Alumni Share
校友感言园地
Dear NTU alumni,

Convocation is a momentous occasion: one that celebrates the accomplishments of our new graduates, marking the culmination of three to four years of their dedication and hard work. To our Class of 2012 graduates, Congratulations and thank you also, for setting a record high participation rate of 82.08% in the University’s graduation giving campaign. Your readiness to contribute to multidisciplinary research and post-graduate training is evident of the calibre of our new graduates, marking the culmination of three to four years of their dedication and hard work.

Interdisciplinary research is indispensable to any leading university devoted to addressing complex contemporary issues like globalisation. The vital breakthroughs and innovations required to solve many of today’s global problems cannot be achieved by a single discipline on its own. Interdisciplinary research and post-graduate training to a higher and deeper level, with the official launch of its Interdisciplinary Graduate School (IGS). The first of its kind in Asia, the IGS embodies the University’s pioneering efforts to launch a multidisciplinary approach.

In the years ahead, NTU will continue to strengthen itself through global interdisciplinary research collaborations and broad-based curricula, to generate fresh knowledge and cultivate leaders that would make positive and relevant real-world impact to solving the world’s mounting issues.

Whether you are a new alumnus stepping out into the professional world or continuing your graduate education at NTU, or one who has carried the good name of your alma mater professional world or continuing your graduate education at NTU, or one who has carried the good name of your alma mater, I hope you will all continue to contribute to the University’s journey towards making a difference to the world.

The world is growing smaller, in the trail of globalisation. With the new demands on the knowledge profile of graduates, promoting multidisciplinary research is not new to NTU. For the past few years, the University has been encouraging multi-dimensional efforts to enhance and to further interdisciplinary research. With the identification of five key thrusts under the NTU 2015 Peaks of Excellence blueprint, the IGS establishment is a timely one as it taps on the University’s faculty and talents across its research centres of excellence, research institutes, Colleges and Schools, to focus on the three key research areas of Sustainability, Healthcare and New Media. IGS will enable NTU to spearhead leading-edge research and solutions to address global challenges whilst advancing the creation of new knowledge at the forefront of engineering, science and innovation.

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Dear NTU alumni,

We are proud to present you the debut issue of the newly-revamped NTULink!

NTULink has been the magazine for NTU alumni since the early days of 1992. Today it is a name all NTU alumni can connect with. Whilst the magazine has undergone some minor changes over the past two decades, it is with this issue that it has been given a brand new look. Why a revamp? Because we want to enhance your reading experiences and to better connect with you.

Today, the magazine reaches out to more than 134,000 alumni over 100 countries. As the key communication channel linking alumni to the University, it is essential that NTULink engages you – the University’s most ardent ambassadors – better.

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In this issue, NTULink’s Editor-in-Chief, Ms Karin Yeo, shares her experience in climbing not one, but two volcanoes in Indonesia. So sit back and enjoy the easy reading this section offers. If you are keen to share your travel, food or lifestyle experiences in Loving Life, feel free to drop us a line at alumniaffairs@ntu.edu.sg.

The NTU Alumni Affairs Office is dedicated to the University’s cause for sustainability. One of the key components of this revamp is the paper we have chosen to print on. NTULink will from now on be printed on Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC) certified paper. FSC’s mission is to promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world’s forests. In choosing FSC certified paper, we ensure our compliance with the highest social and environmental standards on the market where we source for paper. If you wish to help us further this cause for sustainability, you can choose to read the magazine online at http://www.ntu.edu.sg/Alumni/publications and email us at the above email address to unsubscribe from the print version.

We hope the magazine’s new look and content will heighten your reading pleasure. If you have any views or suggestions on further improving the magazine, please do not hesitate to write to us. We would love to hear from you!

Sincerely,

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From the Editorial Desk

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Celebrating New Alumni

NTU rejoices with its newest graduates and welcomes them into the University’s alumni family.

Convocation is a grand affair. It is the moment where both graduates and their universities come together to rejoice in the accomplishments of the former. It is the rite of passage commemorating a new stage of life for these graduates. As Orrin Hatch, the senior US Senator for Utah, aptly said: “There is a good reason they call these ceremonies ‘commencement exercises.’ Graduation is not the end; it’s the beginning.”

Beginning on 25 July, NTU celebrated the achievements of more than 8,800 graduates, in as many as 18 ceremonies spread over nine days. Presiding at the first Convocation ceremony was His Excellency, President Tony Tan Keng Yam, who is also Chancellor of NTU. Mr Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Education, was also present. Convocation 2012 saw the graduation of the pioneer batches of students from the University’s Double Degree in Accountancy and Business, the Bachelor of Education and the Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Multilingual Studies.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

Despite an uncertain global economic climate, the employment outlook is bright for NTU’s Class of 2012. A preliminary survey conducted by the University at the end of June this year showed that about two in three graduates from the Class of 2012 have secured jobs before graduation, similar to last year. The inaugural batch of graduates from the Double Degree in Accountancy and Business has scored 100 percent employment.

NEW RECORD IN CLASS GIVING

The Class of 2012 set a new record in graduation giving this year. More than 82 per cent of graduates invited to make a class gift responded positively. With this new record of 82.08 per cent, the participation rate for NTU’s Graduating Class Gift has leaped ten times from eight per cent in 2005. The class gift supports bursaries for financially disadvantaged students and student life activities.

HONORARY DEGREES CONFERRED

During the ceremony, the University conferred an honorary Degree of Doctor of Engineering (honoris causa) on Professor Chad Mirkin and Professor Richard Parker.

Prof Mirkin was honoured for his outstanding contribution in the field of nanotechnology, and for his strong links with NTU, which have helped strengthened the academic standing of NTU internationally.

Prof Richard Parker, the Director of Research and Technology at Rolls Royce Group, was honoured for his significant contributions to NTU’s education and research, particularly in promoting a Master’s Degree in Project Management, and for initiating the joint laboratory between NTU and Rolls Royce in Power Electronics.
You are from the pioneer batch of students graduating from the Double Degree in Accountancy and Business; how do you feel about this?

Serene Lim (SL): I think that it is a great honour to be amongst the select few who have paved the way for future generations of students.

Yong Tat (YT): I feel excited about applying my skill sets from both disciplines in the corporate world. The learning journey was definitely not easy but the challenges gave me the confidence to step into the working world.

Xin Hui (XH): I am glad that NTU began to offer the Double Degree the year I entered university. Some might feel that the extra year spent is not worth the time, but I am very grateful to have had the extra year to explore more activities like going on an exchange and being part of different Schools.

Now that you’ve graduated, what’s next?

SL: I will be working at SPRING Singapore for the next two years, serving my bond with the company as I was on a SPRING EDS Scholarship. I hope to make the best of my experience to learn from successful business leaders and establish strong networks with the SME community, and to gain deeper insights into the business landscape in Singapore.

YT: I will be undergoing a two-year induction programme with Singapore Power. The highlight of the programme is the opportunity to be rotated across three functions within two years. This will provide me with valuable exposure across the different corporate functions.

XH: I have just begun working at KPMG as an audit associate. I am excited to embark on a new learning curve and see where this career path will take me!

Serene, how do you think an NTU education has helped you?

SL: My time at NTU has prepared me well for the future, and equipped me with the capability, confidence and conviction to take on the world. NTU has made me more mature and proactive. I was previously more tentative but I feel that I am now ready to take the lead and share my ideas. My soft skills have also improved, and I can build more meaningful relationships with people around me and work better in teams.

Yong Tat, as a new alumnus, how do you see yourself contributing back to your alma mater?

YT: I would like to contribute by sharing with the juniors experiences of my time both as an undergraduate and as a new working professional.

Xin Hui, where do you see yourself, five years down the road?

XH: I hope I would have had the opportunity to be posted overseas for a year or two, and to have built a strong foundation of both technical and management knowledge. International exposure is a career aspect that I believe is crucial to my own development.

What are some of your other interests in life?

SL: I am into Yoga - Hatha Yoga, Zumba, Latin Sculpt! These sessions serve as good breaks from work, bringing peace to the inner mind.

YT: I like to run during my free time. Running helps relax me. Other than running, I enjoy eating with family and friends and exploring different places to eat. I love to cook as well. In fact, when I was young, my ambition was to become a chef!

XH: I have been involved in grassroots work as a member of the Boon Lay CC Youth Executive Committee for the past five years. Volunteering remains my passion because it not only allows me to return what I can to society, but it also is a learning process in itself.

Double Degree, Double Joy

Armed with a double degree each under their belts, graduates Serene Lim, Seah Yong Tat and Lee Xin Hui are ready to take on the world.

“My time at NTU has prepared me well for the future, and equipped me with the capability, confidence and conviction to take on the world.”

– Serene Lim
Dream Chasers

Unafraid to push past boundaries, Shawn Yap, Koh Kim Joo and Benjamin Khan from the School of Art, Design and Media (ADM), personify that NTU spirit of adventure and innovation that turns dreams into realities.

What made you choose to major in your specific field?
Shawn Yap (SY): I was originally an animation student in polytechnic, so I wanted to try something new at NTU. Visual Communications is also broader in scope, allowing me to explore a lot more within the area I wanted to specialise in.

Koh Kim Joo (KJ): I pursued a diploma in multimedia at Singapore Polytechnic, which introduced me to all the different forms of media. Film and graphic design were my favourite subjects. Coincidentally, I was sent to Mediacorp Studios for an internship and the momentum carried me forward in applying to ADM to study film.

Benjamin Khan (BK): Digital animation was something I discovered by accident as my original aspiration was to become a scientist. As I grew older, I discovered that the innate freedom of drawing and painting was highly appealing. However, I wanted to combine art and science rather than choose between the two, so I decided to focus on animation as my primary medium – it is one of those few disciplines that require a high degree of both technical skill and strong creativity.

Now that you have graduated, what’s next?
SY: I am currently working as a game artist in gumi Asia; it was a job recommended by a friend of mine and I am grateful for that. The job is a blast - I get to do what I love and get paid for it!

KJ: I am currently working on a freelance project and at the same time waiting and applying for the right job that comes along. The array of jobs in the media industry in Singapore is very limited, and I hope to start off working for a reputable media company for a few years, pay off study loans and gain some experience first before applying to work in the United States where the industry is much more robust.

BK: I’ll be taking a short holiday, travelling a bit and tidying up numerous side projects I have accumulated over the years. And of course there is my final-year-project. After that it’s time to look for a job that would challenge me and satisfy my interests.

Benjamin, you are the winner of a Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal. What significance does winning this award have for you?
BK: I definitely feel very humbled because there are so many other creatives more deserving of it. My main objective in the university was to enjoy learning about the different aspects of art, so that I could apply the knowledge gained to my works for the enjoyment of others. The award helps both to highlight my portfolio and to connect me with others in my field.

Kim Joo, how do you think an ADM/NTU education has shaped you?
KJ: I think an education in the arts has definitely opened up my mind, and made me a more creative and critical thinker. I am glad that the NTU curriculum requires us to take subjects outside the core of studies; this has given me a more all-rounded education.

Shawn, apart from your interest in Visual Communications, what are some of your other interests in life?
SY: I am an avid comic fan and a published comic artist and writer, with two books under my name. I read and write new material whenever I have the time. I hope to be able to continue publishing; it is an avenue that brings me joy, knowing that Singaporeans are slowly opening up to more local works, allowing local artists like myself to fulfil our dreams.

“I am glad that the NTU curriculum requires us to take subjects outside the core of studies; this has given me a more all-rounded education.”
– Koh Kim Joo
Our Dedicated Educators

Their dedication to their profession and students saw them through long hours of after-work studies and pressing deadlines. Our pioneer batch of teacher graduates, Tan Xiuling, Eileen Soh, Regina Ng and Afidah Bte Ali, share their graduation joy.

Which three words best described your feelings on your graduation day?

Xiu Ling (XL): Elated, proud and honoured.
Eileen Soh (ES): I made it!
Regina Ng (RN): Proud, happy and updated!

You are from the pioneer batch of students graduating with a BA of Education; how do you feel about this?

XL: It is an honour and I feel proud.
ES: I feel honoured. The journey might have been challenging at times as there were no seniors we could consult especially when working on assignments but we were fortunate to have very supportive, understanding and accommodating lecturers.

How was it like to study part-time at NIE whilst holding a full-time job?

RN: Initially academic writing was a great challenge. Time management was another. Fortunately, we had very patient and understanding lecturers. The learning process was a very enjoyable one. It was a mixture of face-to-face sessions and self-directed and collaborative learning. It may sound weird but I enjoyed the readings and the assignments!
AA: It was truly a great challenge to study part-time whilst holding a full-time job. I had to juggle my time and fulfil my duties as a good student, dedicated teacher, filial daughter, dutiful wife as well as mother of four school-going children!

What inspires you about teaching?

XL: The different challenges that may take place each day, making the job more interesting.
ES: That I can be the guiding light for my pupils to help them see their strengths and help them to believe in themselves.
RN: The notion that I am shaping character and mind, and adding value to the young generation that passes through my hands.
AA: The sense of satisfaction I get when I see my students’ happy faces whenever they do well in their exams and the belief that I have a part to play in moulding the future.

Now that you’ve graduated, what’s next?

XL: To focus on family and work and to apply the knowledge and skills learnt to my work.
AA: I hope to be able to pursue a Masters degree one day. But I would do this as a part-timer!

Where do you see yourself, five years down the road?

ES: To be an effective classroom teacher who continues to value-add to the school and the education system.
RN: Most likely still in the teaching service, as long as health permits!

“That I can be the guiding light for my pupils to help them see their strengths and help them to believe in themselves.”
– Eileen Soh, on what inspires her about teaching.
Have you ever wondered what the different coloured hoods of the convocation robe represent or how many graduates NTU produces? Read on to find out.

### Convocation Trivia

The full academic dress consists of a gown, a hood and a mortarboard. PhD graduates wear a bonnet instead of the mortarboard. The colour of the hood indicates the discipline of the degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School / Degree</th>
<th>Colour of hood</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School of Art, Design and Media</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Biological Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
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<td>School of Physical and Mathematical Sciences</td>
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<td>Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information</td>
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<td>All Engineering Schools</td>
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<td>Bachelor of Accountancy</td>
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<td>Bachelor of Business</td>
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<td>Bachelor of Arts (Education)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Science (Education)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Science (Maritime Studies)</td>
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</table>

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### Bachelor’s Degrees

- **5,934** graduates received their Bachelor’s degrees.
- **1,345** Bachelor’s degree and ten higher degree graduates received their degrees at NTU’s first Convocation ceremony held on 5 and 6 August 1992, at the Kallang Theatre.
- **30** Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medals were presented to the academically most accomplished graduates.
- **18** valedictorians were selected to represent their respective graduation cohort during the ceremonies. The role of the valedictorian is to deliver the valedictory speech on behalf of the graduates at each of the Convocation ceremonies.
- **1,844** Diploma and Postgraduate Diploma in Education graduates who received their diplomas at the National Institute of Education’s Teachers’ Investiture Ceremony.

### Master’s & PhD Degrees

- **2,929** graduates received their Master’s and PhD degrees.
- **2,977** Male Bachelor’s Graduates
- **2,957** Female Bachelor’s Graduates
- **2,460** Master’s Degrees
- **469** PhD Degrees
- **206** Bachelor’s graduates received double degrees, including 115 pioneer graduates with the new Double Degree in Accountancy & Business
- **28** Bachelor of Education pioneer graduates
- **49** Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Multilingual Studies pioneer graduates

*Figures do not include the 1,844 Diploma and Postgraduate Diploma in Education graduates who received their diplomas at the National Institute of Education’s Teachers’ Investiture Ceremony.*
Youthful exuberance greets cameras everywhere. Every graduate is the pride and joy of his family. Friends and family members help to capture these joyous moments on camera. Graduation day is commencement day and the beginning of many new adventures ahead. Graduation marks the beginning of many things, including that of lifelong friendships. Eager anticipation for these waiting to receive their well-earned degree scrolls.
In striving to promote and facilitate interdisciplinary research and graduate education on globally pertinent issues, NTU’s newly launched Interdisciplinary Graduate School (IGS) aims to encourage more graduate students to undertake research projects spanning different disciplines. IGS’ Acting Dean, Professor Yue Chee Yoon, shares more with NTULink.

“If you are interested in solving grand challenges; if you want to generate new ideas and innovations which are impactful and can lead to solutions for mankind, then interdisciplinary research is for you!”

The increasing importance of interdisciplinary research in producing high-impact breakthroughs has been recognised over the past ten years. This has led to a worldwide trend in emphasising interdisciplinary research. “Researchers were previously only concentrating on research within specific disciplines. But they are now realising the numerous opportunities at the interfaces between engineering and other disciplines, which is what constitutes interdisciplinary research,” says Prof Yue.

More researchers around the world have begun to realise that the world’s problems cannot be solved within one discipline. “Take for example the issue on ageing, where we would need to look at the medical, engineering and even business aspects,” says Prof Yue.

Medical research is needed for developing new medicinal products that are required by the ageing population; engineers are needed to invent, design and build medical devices that are suitable for the elderly and these have to be done by taking business considerations into account to ensure that everything is cost effective and inexpensive.

INTERDISCIPLINARY GRADUATE SCHOOL AT NTU

Officially opened on 25 June 2012, IGS is the first of its kind in Asia. Through its interdisciplinary programmes, it aims to pioneer a new push in PhD education. Unlike traditional PhD programmes which are more specialised, IGS graduate students will pursue programmes which allow them to undertake projects spanning two or more disciplines.

By incorporating revolutionary and interdisciplinary research and graduate education across NTU, IGS will strengthen the University’s important role in encouraging the advancement of cutting-edge ideas and technologies from NTU to the world.

Focussing on key research areas corresponding to NTU’s key thrusts in Sustainable Earth, New Media and Future Healthcare, IGS will leverage on professors from all the Schools and Colleges in NTU to undertake interdisciplinary research and to act as advisors for its PhD students.

The Centres included in the thematic research programme on Sustainable Earth are, the Energy Research Institute @ NTU (ERI@N), the Nanyang Environment and Water Research Institute (NEWRI), the Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering (SCELSE), the Earth Observatory of Singapore (EOS), the Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) and the Institute of Catastrophe Risk Management (ICRM).

NTU’s Institute for Media Innovation will be the key centre under the thematic research programme on New Media, whilst a new key centre for Future Healthcare is being established. It will be closely associated with the new Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine. Each of these research programmes will be headed by a Programme Chair.

Using the example of ERI@N, Prof Yue explained how the centre adopts a holistic multi-faceted interdisciplinary focus to solve energy related issues. Focussing on wind and marine, solar and bio energy, researchers at ERI@N employ knowledge from various engineering and science disciplines, such as mechanical, materials and chemical engineering as well as physics and chemistry, to conduct research on areas such as energy storage, fuel cells, green buildings, marine renewable and electro-mobility.

Additionally, modelling studies and research on environmental science and impact, legislation and policy, and the economics and business aspects of energy are being pursued.

A total of 25 applicants, from over a pool of 300, have been accepted for IGS’ pioneer batch of interdisciplinary research PhD students. Each student will have two supervisors and one additional mentor.
Preserving Life through Genome Sequencing

Genomics expert Professor Stephan Schuster, who led his team at the Pennsylvania State University to fame with the Mammoth Genome Project, joins the Singapore Centre on Environmental Life Sciences Engineering (SCELSE) at NTU. He shares more about his role at SCELSE, his research focus on environmental genomics, and how the groundbreaking Mammoth Genome Project can help save endangered species.

Having joined SCELSE in June this year, Prof Schuster now heads Cluster Two of the Research Centre of Excellence, which focuses on Systems Biology, Genomics, Bioinformatics, Proteomics and Metabolomics. Researchers in this Cluster undertake projects to better understand microbial communities in any natural or engineered systems, to the level where informed control can be applied.

“We seek to understand the unknown biomass of the world by genome sequencing of mixtures of organisms. In combination with our bioinformatics approach, we are capable of unraveling the species composition from very complex microbial communities in the environment,” says Prof Schuster.

Another goal of Cluster Two is to understand the impact bacteria has on human health. “We are beginning to understand how many human diseases are caused by bacteria that do not cause acute infection, but instead cause a low level, on-going infection. These infections, when present in the human body in the long run, have an adverse effect on the well-being of a person,” he adds.

Impressed by the amount of vast resources available at the Research Centre, enabling it to take on complex science projects which had never been done before, Prof Schuster was encouraged to join SCELSE.

“For the work we do, we need an exceptional amount of computing capacity. Here in SCELSE, it was possible to build a world class computing facility, which allows us to process the enormous amount of genomic data we produce,” he shares.

“SCELSE has also established close collaborations with industry partners, which has proven to be very useful. As this field of science and research is technology driven, collaborations with our partners guarantee access to the most advanced technology platforms, allowing us to gain a competitive edge in our research projects,” Prof Schuster explains.

OF MAMMOTH FAME

In 2008, Prof Schuster and his team at Pennsylvania State University (PSU) broke new ground when they were the first to decipher the genome of an extinct animal, the woolly mammoth. The team sequenced the mammoth’s nuclear genome using DNA extracted from the hairs of a mammoth mummy that had been buried in the Siberian permafrost for 20,000 years and a second mammoth mummy that was at least 60,000 years old.

Prof Schuster’s achievement was recognised as one of the “Top 10 Scientific Discoveries” of 2008 by Time magazine and he was also named in the magazine’s list of the ‘100 Most Influential People’ in 2009.

“Before this project, all the sequencing done was performed using ‘Sanger sequencing’ which had a lot of limitations, including the enormous costs. The mammoth was a test project for sequencing ancient DNA, matching perfectly in size with the new sequencing technology that had just come online,” explains Prof Schuster.

“The mammoth project might look like an extreme project, but it was a wonderful example of how a science project can steer the public’s attention as the mammoth is still an icon for extinct animals and a very likeable creature. The project also led to the onset of sequencing human genomes at a very fast pace. We have also proceeded to sequence a series of animals which are currently endangered. By learning from the genetics of animals, and the reasons why the mammoth went extinct, we carried over the principle of trying to learn about current endangered species before it is too late,” says Prof Schuster.

LESSONS ON EXTINCTION

The broader implications of the research involved studying genomes of extinct animals and asking specific questions about their lifestyles. This would help researchers and scientists better understand why today’s endangered species are being pushed towards possible extinction.

“By not only sequencing a single mammoth, but also by finding biological materials in the hair of up to 18 different animals, we could show how these animals’ genetic diversity declined over 50 thousand years. We were not only able to compare the genetic diversity of...”
animals which lived at the same time, but were also given a 'time machine' that allowed us to observe the animal population that lived 50 to 100 thousand years ago,” explains Prof Schuster.

By examining the results, the team discovered that the closer the mammoth populations came to extinction, the more their genetic diversity decreased. And it was with these results that Prof Schuster has begun researching on how the endangered Tasmanian Devil can be saved from extinction. The Tasmanian Devil suffers from an infectious and very contagious cancer that has killed about 60 percent of its population over the last ten years.

“We selected two Tasmanian Devils based on geographic distances in Tasmania, Australia. By comparing the two genomes, we observed the same principles regarding genetic diversity as in the mammoths, and carried them over to the Tasmanian Devil. Genetic diversity helps to support the resistance of an animal against diseases. We believe that there is a direct link between the lack of genetic diversity and susceptibility of the Tasmanian Devil to cancer. As the animal no longer recognises the cancer as a foreign cell type, it cannot develop an immune response against the cancer," acknowledges Prof Schuster of the endangered Tasmanian Devil.

Sharing his views on saving endangered animals, Prof Schuster says: “By studying extinct species, we learnt very important lessons on how best to preserve endangered species. We need to enable the species to maintain their genetic diversity. And for this reason, we need to make sure that there are sufficient numbers, that the members of the species are being sufficiently diverse, and, most importantly, their habitats are being preserved. These three components make the triangle which pretty much guarantees the survival of any endangered species.”

Prof Schuster hopes that people would see the importance of maintaining diversity in the environment, not only because it allows for humans to gain access to a large number of medically relevant substances, hence keeping them healthy, but also because it makes lives more interesting. “I think it would be the most boring of worlds if we were to live in an environment that would be largely deprived of interesting fellow creatures,” he says.

**ABOUT PROF STEPHAN SCHUSTER:**

After receiving an initial degree in organic chemistry, Prof Schuster moved into Biochemistry and Microbiology during his graduate studies at the Max-Planck-Institute for Biochemistry in Martinsried, Germany. In his postdoctoral studies at the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, USA, he continued his work on Bacterial Motility and Signal Transduction. He subsequently moved into the field of Genomics working on vertebrate and microbial projects.

In 2005, Prof Schuster was appointed Associate Professor for Molecular Microbial Ecology at the Pennsylvania State University (PSU), USA. He currently heads Cluster Two at NTU's SCELSE, and is at the same time working for the Center for Comparative Genomics and Bioinformatics, PSU. His current research interests include Metagenomics, Evolutionary Biology and ancient DNA.

Hailing from eight countries and 25 institutions around the world, 34 alumni relations delegates gathered at NTU for the Institute in Alumni Relations, organised by CASE Asia-Pacific from 7 to 9 August 2012.

Facilitating the learning were five international faculty members and two guest speakers – experienced advancement practitioners* from Canada, US, Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Ms-Marie Earl, Institute Chair and former Executive Director of the Alumni Association and Associate Vice President, Alumni, of The University of British Columbia, Canada, said that despite the diversity of the delegates, issues they faced were similar.

Ms Navneet Kaur, an alumni officer at The British School in New Delhi, India said: “The faculty members provided great insight into each subject, shared in-depth knowledge on concepts and provided invaluable guidance as mentors. I met many exceptionally bright individuals whom I hope to keep in touch with, learn from and grow with over the years.”

On 8 Aug, NTU President Professor Bertil Andersson hosted a welcome dinner organised by the University’s Alumni Affairs Office. Prof Andersson emphasised the role of advancement in the pursuit of institutional goals. He said: “You need advancement activity to lift the institution up to the next level and to support stakeholders and the community”.

“Were there common concerns amongst us, like ‘How do we remain relevant to our stakeholders and our alumni in a fast-changing world? How do we attend to both day-to-day demands and ensure that we remain focussed on higher-level strategic issues? Any enterprise that is striving to be at the top of its game will be asking these same questions,” she said.

Over three days, through interactive plenary sessions and electives, delegates explored best practices, picked up networking strategies, learnt how to engage overseas alumni, benchmark and measure the success of alumni engagement activities.

“Sharing Best Practices in Alumni Engagement: Alumni relations professionals from around the world discuss how to stay relevant to alumni at the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Asia-Pacific Institute in Alumni Relations, held at NTU.”

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*Advancement professionals are those who work on behalf of their institution or on the issues of alumni relations, fundrasing, communications and marketing.
Young budding biologists from the world over gathered in Singapore for the first time during the prestigious International Biology Olympiad (IBO) held from 8 to 15 July. A total of 234 of the world’s most promising pre-university/senior high school biology students and 203 officials from 59 countries made Singapore their home during this period.

The student participants were housed in NUS dormitories, whilst the jury members and officials resided in NTU hostels during IBO 2012 Singapore. The eight-day event with rigorous practical and theoretical tests, social and cultural programmes and business meetings, was organised by a committee co-chaired by Associate Professor Shirley Lim from the National Institute of Education (NIE), and Associate Professor Lim Tit Meng from the National University of Singapore (NUS). Members of the Organising Committee comprised professors and staff from NIE, and the Department of Biological Sciences at NUS, as well as other staff members from various departments in NTU and NUS.

The opening ceremony held on 9 July at NTU’s Nanyang Auditorium, was graced by His Excellency, President Tony Tan Keng Yam, who was also the Patron of the 23rd IBO.

IBO 2012 Singapore ended on a high note with the Singapore team garnering four gold medals for the first time, ranking first of the 59 countries that competed. In addition, the top gold medal was awarded to Singapore competitor, Mr Noal Swadilendra Puspang – this is the third time since Singapore’s first venture into the IBOs in 2001 that it has won the top medal. The competition was closely fought as all the participants were winners at their respective countries’ National Biology Olympiads. The Singapore delegation was led by Dr Beverly Goh from Natural Sciences and Science Education, NIE, and Dr Ng Nghan Beverley Goh from Natural Sciences and Science Education, NIE, and Dr Ng Nghan Beverley Goh from Natural Sciences and Science Education, NIE, and Dr Ng Nghan Beverley Goh from Natural Sciences and Science Education, NIE.

The recruitment of IBO volunteers began in February 2012 with information sessions being held at NTU and NUS. Close to 200 students applied as volunteers, including foreign students studying in Singapore. A total of 106 volunteers were finally selected.

The youngest volunteer was 16 years old, whilst the oldest was 30.

A total of 83 female and 151 male students participated in IBO 2012 Singapore, with 24 of them celebrating their birthdays in July. Of these, four had birthdays that fell within the IBO period.

The International Biology Olympiad (IBO) is a competition for secondary school students where they tackle biological problems and conduct biological experiments. It is necessary for the students to be interested in biology and to have traits of inventiveness, creativity and perseverance. IBO tries to challenge and stimulate these students to expand their talents and to promote their career as scientists.

The IBO aims to bring together young people from over the world in an open, friendly and peaceful mind. Four students from each participating country are sent for the competition. These participants, who are winners of the countries’ respective national competitions, are accompanied by two team leaders.

DID YOU KNOW THAT…?

- A pair of twins, Marko and Mirko Pajatovic from Montenegro, participated in the IBO.
- Competition regulations state that participants are not allowed more than two weeks of intensive preparation, so they had been studying hard only from late June.
- Student participants had to surrender their electronic devices to the officials, and only received them at the end of the Olympics.
- Team Spain brought their own footballs and posed with them in photographs.
- Four challenging and innovative practical tests in the fields of Cell and Molecular Biology, Microbiology and Biochemistry, Plant Diversity, Anatomy and Physiology, and Animal Anatomy and Ecology were designed to test the students’ practical skills.
- Students wore multi-coloured laboratory coats which categorised their shirts for the different tests.
- The Theoretical Tests were held at NIE’s gymnasium which was converted into an examination hall to accommodate all the students. The tests consisted of two three-hour long papers. Given the lengthy duration, students were provided with snacks and drinks.
- IBO 2013 will be held in Bern, Switzerland.

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DID YOU KNOW THAT…?

- Singapore participated in the IBO for the first time, as an observer country, in the year 2000. A year later, Singapore competed for the first time, winning two gold and two silver medals and ranking third out of 38 countries.
- The recruitment of IBO volunteers began in February 2012 with information sessions being held at NTU and NUS. Close to 200 students applied as volunteers, including foreign students studying in Singapore. A total of 106 volunteers were finally selected.
- The youngest volunteer was 16 years old, whilst the oldest was 30.
- A total of 83 female and 151 male students participated in IBO 2012 Singapore, with 24 of them celebrating their birthdays in July. Of these, four had birthdays that fell within the IBO period.
- The youngest competitor was Emmanuel Oludowole, a 13-year-old, from Nigeria. Another young competitor was 14-year-old Elmar Pajatovic from Montenegro.
- A pair of twins, Marko and Mirko Pajatovic from Montenegro, participated in the IBO.
- Competition regulations state that participants are not allowed more than two weeks of intensive preparation, so they had been studying hard only from late June.
- Student participants had to surrender their electronic devices to the officials, and only received them at the end of the Olympics.
- Team Spain brought their own footballs and posed with them in photographs.
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- IBO 2013 will be held in Bern, Switzerland.
Ambassador for a More Sustainable Future

Whilst most 14-year-old girls are preoccupied with teenage trends and fashion, alumnus Dr Angela Lee Hui Mien was already advocating the notion of a more sustainable planet to her friends and schoolmates.

“I was fortunate to have gone through the nurturing of NTU, which not only gave me an all-rounded education but also the platform to pursue what I am most passionate about.”

A school project called ‘Macdonald’s Earth Effort’ kick-started Angela’s journey as an environmental advocate. Her team emerged as runner-up for their work on this initiative, and from there, Angela’s devotion to sustainable causes was born.

**A BALANCING ACT**

To Angela, sustainability is all about balance. The affable alumnus truly believes that the key to a more sustainable future lies in mankind’s ability to reduce environmental impact at costs that are feasible throughout.

**SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS, SUSTAINABLE WASTES**

One of Angela’s most significant achievements is testament to her conviction. As leader of a team which successfully created the world’s first ecologically-friendly spectacle frame, Angela had to source for recycled materials that were both practical for manufacture and feasible in cost.

Back in 2008, when Nanyang Optical conceived the idea of these ecological frames and approached the Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech) – where she was working – for collaboration, Angela knew immediately how a successful collaboration would mean a possible milestone for sustainable product development. Given her expertise in life cycle engineering and her passion for sustainable causes, she was the ideal person to head the project. The project was a breakthrough and has helped to change the stereotypical consumer mindset that sustainable products are aesthetically less appealing. The creation also won Angela recognition from her alma mater, and the Nanyang Outstanding Young Alumni Award in 2010.

Graduating from NTU in 2006, Angela first worked in SIMTech from 2007 to 2009 as a research scientist, before going to the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in 2010, and Linköping University in 2011 as a post doctoral fellow. She has since then returned to work at SIMTech, this time as a research scientist engaged in the sustainable management of products. Her research involves end-of-life product management (in particular e-waste) and the management of spent products in a more environmentally and economically valuable way. She also works with local companies, helping them to manufacture in more sustainable ways.

**SUSTAINABLE LIVING**

The devoted alumnus is not daunted by the massive undertakings that lie ahead, when it comes to convincing people to incorporate more sustainable habits into their day-to-day lifestyles. “Helping people realise the cost savings of a more sustainable lifestyle could be a useful way to begin,” she shares. She also believes that walking the sustainable talk is fundamental in encouraging people to take more responsibility for the way they live, and that every small act makes a difference. “When people around you start to adopt sustainable ways of living, others will feel more motivated to do the same,” she adds.

For alumni keen on making a difference to the environment, Angela encourages them not to be afraid of being different, and to discover various ways of exercising sustainable habits. “Stay firm to the belief that sustainability is the right way to go. If each NTU alumnus makes an effort to save a piece of paper everyday, we could really save a substantial amount in a year,” she says.
Signing off from the London Olympics!

Reporting on the Olympics is a dream come true for sports journalists. Alumnus Ms May Chen (WKWSCI/2010) lived that dream when she was selected as a young reporter for the 2012 London Olympics.

May was one of only three young reporters between the ages of 18 to 24 from around the world to be selected by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to cover the 2012 London Olympics.

"I was part of the IOC’s Young Reporters Programme, which was launched during the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in Singapore. When we – the young reporters in this programme – heard about the chance to report for the London Olympics, everyone wanted to be selected since we knew it would be an amazing experience," shares May.

She never thought that she would be chosen for the London Olympics reporting stint. "I just did my part as a reporter for the YOG without thinking too much about the London Olympics opportunity. In fact, when my name was announced, I was not even paying attention!" she jokes. "I didn't expect it because I felt there were others more deserving of it," adds May.

GEARING UP FOR THE LONDON OLYMPICS

Graduating from NTU’s Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information (WKWSCI) in 2010, the journalism major interned at The Straits Times’ sports desk where she helped cover the 2009 Asian Youth Games whilst still an undergraduate. She shared that she was a little undecided about her career upon graduation, and that it was the IOC Young Reporters Programme that inspired her to pursue sports journalism as a career.

"When I was covering the YOG, I was already halfway through applying for a job in the civil service. But I knew I could not let the chance to cover the Olympics go to waste. So I withdrew my job application and applied to The Straits Times instead," shares May of the moment that sealed her decision to pursue a career in sports journalism.

Her daily work as a sports journalist means reporting on sports regularly, which in turn became a form of preparation for the London Olympics.

IN THE THICK OF SPORTING ACTION

May was not required to cover any compulsory reporting assignments for the IOC at the Olympics. "I was given freedom to write for The Straits Times. We focussed on reporting on our local athletes and I covered a number of sports, including badminton and athletics. We also covered the foreign athletes, especially towards the end when most of the Singaporean athletes had completed their events. I managed to watch all of Usain Bolt’s races and I also caught Michael Phelps’ last race," she says.

Planning for her reporting assignments would usually begin a day before. Together with the other reporters from The Straits Times, May would plan which events to cover the following day. As expected, her days were filled with tight deadlines, made worse by the seven-hour time difference between London and Singapore.

"I remember getting very little sleep. If I was not able to file a story for the paper the next day, I would have to come up with a different angle, since the story would be dated by the time it goes to print. At the same time, I had to post snippets on Facebook and Twitter. There was a lot of multi-tasking going on!" says May.

Whilst in London, there were times when May had to work through the night to file a story. On good days, she would get about five to six hours of sleep. Given the daily pressure of reporting at the London Olympics, how did she manage not to be stressed?

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“Sure, it was tiring and you barely get any rest at all. But nobody complains about being at the Olympics and I don’t think I even realised that I was working. I guess that is what they mean by ‘Do what you love, and you’ll never work a day in your life.’”

“Olympic Experiences

Watching Michael Phelps live was a memorable experience for her. “I went to watch the men’s 4x100m freestyle relay without the intention to report, but my boss suggested that I write a story on it and it turned out to be such a good story! The French took their revenge on the Americans for their 2008 loss.”

“But I was seated high up in the stands and nowhere near the mixed zone – the place where the media interviews athletes after their events. I had to make a mad dash down and try to squeeze my way through all the big, burly reporters to get close enough to Michael Phelps. It is quite amusing to think about it now,” recalls May.

She also had the chance to watch Usain Bolt’s 100m sprint. “He was so fast that before I could finish tweeting, he had already crossed the finish line!” she exclaims.

“The stadium was filled to capacity, and everyone was cheering and you see the flashes going off all around you it was incredible being there.”

“Winning Ways in Entrepreneurship

What are some of the more effective ways to create and secure success in businesses? Accomplished alumni speakers shared this and more at the 21st Distinguished Alumni Forum.”
Beginning his entrepreneurial journey with the creation of a number of companies, Mr Roderick Chia (EEE/1998), the Managing Director of IDM Venture Capital, is the embodiment of the youthful entrepreneurial spirit. Mr Chia was one of the four speakers at the forum session titled ‘Successful Entrepreneurship – Overcoming Challenges and Sustaining Collaborations’, in which he spoke about how he broke down his big dream of becoming an entrepreneur, into smaller ‘dreamlets’. He shared how he immersed himself in the business eco-system and sourced for partners to start his business with.

What are the main challenges one faces when one begins an entrepreneurial journey?
Finding the right balance between cash flow, operation and vision is important. This is an ongoing process. But it is more difficult to achieve this balance at the start of the journey, when resources are very limited.

What are the key elements for operating a successful business?
Hiring the right people can be difficult. Very often, the right people are willing to work for you, but are not necessarily the best fit for the job. Hence, it is important to hire people who are not only good at their job, but who also bring different perspectives and ideas to the table.

What advice do you have for NTU alumni keen to launch their own businesses?

Taking the first step is very hard, and to continue taking those steps can be even more difficult. But if you never take the first step, you will never know if you can succeed!

Mr Sonny Bensily (CEE/1985) and Ms Low Yen Ling (NBS/1996).
The forum also featured two other successful alumni, Mr Sonny Bensily (CEE/1985) and Ms Low Yen Ling (NBS/1996).

What does becoming a successful entrepreneur mean to you?
I cannot claim that I am a successful entrepreneur. However, my efforts in starting my business and operating it well over the years have provided me with a balanced lifestyle and kept my family happy.

What are some of the sacrifices successful entrepreneurs have to make?
We need to put in a lot of effort and also spend time and money on others. We also need to be charitable and assist the less fortunate.

What are the main challenges one faces when one begins an entrepreneurial journey?
Our community appears to be less sympathetic to those who fail in business. There might also be a lack of social infrastructure to encourage people to start their own businesses. In such an environment, possessing the determination and courage to move on, no matter how difficult, is crucial, for the sake of oneself and one’s family.

What are the key elements for operating a successful business?
The business owner must adhere to upholding his integrity and honesty. He should always care for stakeholders’ interest and maintain good corporate governance practice in navigating his business.

What are the most crucial things you have done to grow your business?
Being small, I adopted a differentiation approach as my basic business strategy, to stay competitive. I also work hard to continue improving my practical knowledge.

What advice do you have for NTU alumni keen to launch their own businesses?
Practice good listening and communication skills. You should possess a fighting spirit to achieve success.
It was a fitting party for NTU’s Class of 2012 new graduates who were recently embraced into the Nanyang alumni family at Singapore’s famous nightspot, Zouk. Welcoming them into the big family was NTU President and Guest-of-Honour Professor Bertil Andersson.

In his welcome address to the new alumni, Prof Andersson thanked them for their support in the year’s graduation giving programme, and commended them for their record high participation rate of 82.08%. He shared with them NTU’s recent achievement in being ranked fourth in the world amongst the young universities, and told the alumni that they should not only be happy alumni, but proud ones too.

Celebrating in Style

In celebration of their new status as alumni, the University held a grand party at Singapore’s favourite nightspot, Zouk, to welcome its Class of 2012 graduates.

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With the push of a launch mechanism, Prof Andersson, together with four new alumni representatives, began the party. With that, alumni, guests and management took to the dance floor, grooving to the beat. A total of 1000 alumni, guests and staff attended the Welcome Class 2012 Alumni Party held on 4 August.

““This is a very interesting way of celebrating our graduation. I find it very special,” said Miss Yang Liu, a new alumnus from the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering. Miss Yang’s sentiments were echoed by Miss Khin Thida Win from the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. Ms Khin shared: “I really appreciate this party. What was most amazing and unforgettable was the chance to get together with friends, enjoy free drinks and cool DJ music, and not forgetting, the opportunity to watch Prof Andersson dance.”
大学的校园生活，如晨露般润泽了青葱岁月。当同学们经历了人生的磨难，心中仍有一片清澈的记忆，即使是往昔美丽的校园，和当年的好友同窗，走入校园，仿佛翻开一本旧相册让人回味。

伴着怀旧的奶油包，此次聚会开始了。校友们见到老朋友都很兴奋，还没喝早茶就已经开始纷纷合影，生怕错过这难得的机会。郑耀祥校友(理学院/1974)谈起这次聚会的特别惊喜“奶油包”：“那时我们常常在图书馆里自修。图书馆楼上，有一摊‘奶油包’。每到图书馆关门后，大家都会去买，怀旧的气息由‘奶油包’延伸至‘南大文物展’。由校友们借出作展览的早期南大学生证，毕业证书等‘珍贵文物’使大家仿佛漫步于时间的长廊。

此次聚会是近年来反响最热烈的一次。其中有28位校友远从国外赶来。当天的特别嘉宾，南大校长安博迪教授在致词时不仅欢迎了他们，也呼吁大家不要忘记。他说：“尽管南大现在发展迅速，但一定不能忘记学校的过去。”

第11届至第21届校友联合工委会主席郑桂发校友(商学院/1974)说：“近700人的出席，师生和老同学相聚，几十年不见，见到时那种不能用语言来形容的快乐，足见他们多么开心。”在致辞时郑校友说：“我建议大家探讨如何组织起来，通过南大毕业生协会或南大校友事务处，看看用什么方式进行经验分享和心得交流。”

当天活动的点睛之笔是曾渊沧校友(理学院/1975)主讲的“小富之道”精彩理财论坛。此次论坛的主持则是刘圣烈校友(理学院/1974)担任。校友们在论坛中了解到了一些股票与房地产的投资常识，受益匪浅。

6月23日下午，校友们登上了主办方提供的巴士，在校园游中结束了此次意义非凡的大聚会。
The Hand of an Old Friend

The scene of joy at NTU’s grand-scale reunion, where close to 700 Nantah Alumni reunited with their former classmates and professors, aptly mirrored the words of American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: “Ah, how good it feels! The hand of an old friend.”

Gracing the reunion with his presence was NTU President and Guest-of-Honour, Professor Bertil Andersson, who was heartened to see the huge turnout and to learn of the 18 alumni who had flown back from Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Australia and the United States for the event. Speaking to alumni that afternoon, Prof Andersson emphasised the importance of remembering the University’s past: “Even though NTU is one of the most rapidly developing universities in the world, the University’s past must not be forgotten. All the nostalgic activities planned for this reunion is our small way of saying: Thank you for being a part of today’s NTU and supporting today’s NTU.”

Chairman of the Combined Reunion Organising Committee, Mr Teh Kwi Huat (Commerce/1974), was most touched to witness the spirit of camaraderie in the air that day. He said: “The joy that captures their pride in being Nantah graduates.” In his welcome speech, he thanked alumni for their unwavering support and emphasised the importance of giving back to community and of supporting students in financial need. “Because we are all beneficiaries of the selflessness of Nantah pioneers, we too must practise this selflessness and carry on the Nantah spirit of giving back,” he said, encouraging alumni to make a gift at the reunion.

The grand-scale reunion began with alumni arriving on campus and catching up with friends over breakfast. A forum titled ‘The Way to Build a Little Wealth’ was scheduled right after breakfast. Speaker of the forum, Dr Chan Yan Chong (Science/1975), flew in from Hong Kong to share his insights on investment with alumni. The forum also included a question-and-answer session for alumni, hosted by forum chairperson, Mr Liew Shin Liat (Science/1974). Alumni were treated to an eight-course luncheon over a series of song and dance performances put up by alumni and students, following the forum. Dr Ho Ngiap Kum (Commerce/1975) gave an introduction to the NTU Herbs Garden and Chinese herbal medicine. An exhibition featuring yesteryear’s memorabilia was also set up specially for alumni, who literally walked down memory lane viewing exhibits that included Nantah’s sports attire, books and photos.

A fundraising initiative was held in conjunction with the reunion. At the end of the reunion luncheon, more than $800,000 (including government matching) had been raised. The Nantah Reunion was held on 23 June at the Nanyang Auditorium Foyer, and organised by the Alumni Affairs Office (AAO) for the Classes of 1970 to 1980 alumni.

The launch of the NTU Alumni Association (USA-East) signifies NTU’s continual commitment to provide its alumni a platform to connect, interact and leverage on one another’s expertise beyond the campus. The new chapter is the second to be launched in the US. The first, the NTU Alumni Association (USA-West), was launched in April 2011.

Professor Bertil Andersson, NTU’s President, said at the launch that the birth of two alumni chapters in the US is an exciting development for NTU, as this represents a firm step forward to tap the talent pools and knowledge networks in North America, in NTU’s journey to become a great global university.

Leveraging on this momentum, the President of the NTU Alumni Association (USA-East), Ms Raslyn Rasiah, set goals for alumni at the launch. Ms Rasiah, an alumnus from the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information’s Class of 2010, also emphasised the importance of maintaining a strong bond amongst NTU alumni.

The Association’s Vice President and Honorary Secretary are Mr Adamson Alagan and Dr Zhang Guanglan respectively.

Mr Alagan graduated in 2011 from NTU’s Nanyang Business School and is now the Chief of Staff at Wunderman.

Dr Zhang graduated with a Master’s degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering in 2001 and obtained her PhD in Computer Engineering in 2009. Based out of Boston, she will be starting her stint as a lecturer in Boston University this September.

During the luncheon, alumni and guests discussed ideas and shared their experiences. Professor Alan Chan, Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences was also present to give his insights and revealed how NTU will be encouraging greater research in the field of Humanities.

Thirty NTU alumni and staff attended the launch event held in Washington DC on 17 June.

Reunited, alumni and guests eagerly reminisced about their days at NTU, including memories from the NTU Garden and Chinese herbal medicine. An exhibition featuring yesteryear’s memorabilia was also set up specially for alumni, who literally walked down memory lane viewing exhibits that included Nantah’s sports attire, books and photos.

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The annual NTU Alumni sports fiesta once again displayed the best of sportsmanship and camaraderie amongst alumni.

Held for the sixth year running, this year's NTU Alumni Sports Fiesta proved to be just as popular as previous Sports Fiestas, with close to 420 participants and supporters competing in various games from the 4 x 100m relay run, to 3-on-3 basketball, tennis doubles, badminton doubles, table-tennis doubles, and 5-a-side soccer.

In his welcome address, Guest-of-honour Professor Er Meng Hwa, NTU's Vice President for International Affairs, wished all participants success and highlighted the importance of friendship over competition. He added that lifelong friendship is the glue that will bind everyone together, connecting alumni with one another and back to the University.

With the sounding of a gong, Prof Er declared open the NTU Alumni Sports Fiesta and launched the event's first competition – the 4 x 100m relay run. The race drew loud cheers as runners of eight teams sprinted around the track in their bid to take home the coveted first prize. The deserving winners were the participants from the National Institute of Education (NIE)'s Masters in Educational Administration programme.

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A number of regular alumni participants attended this year's Sports Fiesta. Amongst them was Ms Jean Chia (NIE/2009) who took part in basketball. Jean and her team mates emerged winners in the women's basketball competition.

"We have been winning the first prize ever since the first NTU Alumni Sports Fiesta. The event gives us an opportunity to catch up with old friends and I am delighted to see fellow alumni coming back to play sports together," she said.

"The facilities here are excellent and it is especially meaningful to come back to campus. I would often walk down the corridor that displays NTU's sports achievements. Seeing the photos of my friends and I brought back many wonderful memories!" enthused Ms Chia.

The NTU Alumni Sports Fiesta held on 25 August concluded with a prize presentation ceremony and buffet lunch.

回校的校友，回来了校园，驰骋赛场

第九届南洋理工大学校友体育嘉年华活动中，活力充沛的校友们回归校园，回到母校，驰骋赛场。在运动场上燃烧能量，尽情挥洒。

当天的大会贵宾，南大副校长(国际事务)余明华教授，以流利的中英文双语欢迎所有校友的积极参与，并强调校友们的支持对学校的重要性；他在致词中也强调比赛不是最重要的，最重要的是增加校友们的友谊和凝聚力，并宣扬“友谊第一，比赛第二”的体育精神。

当天的体育竞赛项目还包括羽毛球双打、乒乓球双打、网球双打、三人制篮球赛和五人制足球赛。取得了男子45岁以上组羽毛球双打冠军的王茂江(教育管理硕士课程/2012)说：“今天是我第一次参加校友体育嘉年华活动，这样的活动不仅让我们有机会与朋友相聚，更是加强校友与学校联络的平台，而且参赛者都有共同的爱好。’’他说：’’就像我喜欢打羽毛球，今天遇到水平很高的对手，这样打球非常有趣。

结束了一个上午的紧张赛程之后，校友事务处孙敏炎主任为所有获奖者颁发奖牌和奖金，与获奖运动员合影。校友们在为自己自豪，在为朋友喝彩，也在享受着当场的欢乐气氛。此次活动于8月25日在南洋理工大学体育中心举行。
Nostalgic Night for Indonesian Alumni

The University’s Indonesian alumni reunite for a memorable evening.

NTU’s Indonesian alumni living in Singapore had the opportunity to catch up with one another at their annual get-together, themed ‘Nostalgia 2012.’ Organised by NTU’s student club, Pelajar Indonesia NTU, and supported by the NTU Alumni Affairs Office, the event saw a turnout of about 100 Indonesian alumni and students residing in Singapore.

Guest-of-honour, Professor Kwek Kian Woon, NTU’s Associate Provost for Student Life, encouraged the alumni to support NTU students in their activities and programmes. He also updated them on the University’s recent developments, and emphasised the important role alumni play in NTU’s progress.

A number of entertaining performances were put up by students and alumni, making the evening an energetic and lively one. Some alumni also walked away with attractive lucky draw prizes.

Mr Rudy Darmawan Phan (WKWSCI/2010), one of the winners, got first time lucky as he walked off with shopping vouchers. It was the first time he attended the Indonesian alumni gathering. He looks forward to attending future alumni events for more networking opportunities.

The NTU Indonesian Alumni Night was held on 8 September at the Concorde Hotel.

13 October 2012
NTU Alumni Homecoming
南大校友回校日

20 October 2012
Launch of NTU Alumni Association (Taiwan)
南洋理工大学台湾校友会成立典礼

9 November 2012
Classes of 1996 – 2005 Reunion Celebrations
庆祝1996-2005级校友聚会

18 November 2012
Launch of NTU Alumni Association (Xinjiang)
南洋理工大学新疆校友会成立典礼

24 November 2012
NTU Alumni Movie Marathon
南大校友电影马拉松

8 – 10 December 2012
3D2N Trip to Cameron Highlands
金马仑高原三天两夜游

15 December 2012
NTU Alumni Christmas Ice-Cream Making Workshop
南大校友冰淇淋培坊

Information is correct as of press time. Events and dates may be subject to change.

To sign up for or enquire about any of the events, email alumniaffairs@ntu.edu.sg or call +65 6790 4875 / 4434
For a regular, monthly update of events, check out http://www.ntu.edu.sg/Alumni/Pages/Events.aspx
To subscribe to ClassACT e-zine for regular event updates and more, go to http://www.ntu.edu.sg/newsletter/managemysubscription.aspx

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Alumni Homecoming
13.10.2012

Guest-of-Honour
Mr Heng Swee Keat
Minister for Education

NTU Alumni Night 2012 (Nanyang Auditorium, NTU)
南大校友之夜（南洋大礼堂）

4.15 pm
Arrival of Alumni and Guests
校友与来宾莅临
Cocktail Reception
茶点招待

4.45 pm
Alumni and Guests to be seated
校友与来宾就座

5.00 pm
Arrival of Guest-of-Honour
Mr Heng Swee Keat
Minister for Education
大会贵宾、教育部部长王瑞杰先生莅临

5.10 pm
Welcome Address by NTU President Professor Bertil Andersson
南大校长安德逊教授致欢迎词
Speech by Guest-of-Honour, Minister Hang Swee Keat
王瑞杰部长致词
Presentation of Nanyang Alumni Awards / Cultural Performance
“南洋校友奖”颁奖典礼/ 文艺表演

6.30 pm
Buffet Dinner
自助晚餐

7.30 pm
End of Event
聚会结束

*Both forums run concurrently, please choose either forum 1 or 2
*中英文论坛同时进行, 请选择参加论坛(1)或(2)

RSVP to homecoming@ntu.edu.sg
For more information, please visit www.ntu.edu.sg/homecoming．
请电邮回复出席与否，详情请浏览以上网站。
Vacation above the Clouds

Waking up to a sea of serenity and eating your breakfast against the breathtaking backdrop of volcanic mountains is a vacation that could recharge any tired soul. This tranquility is even more treasured when you have worked every bone in your body for it. Karin Yeo recounts her search for peace of mind, in a vacation above the clouds.

Some say it is the wrath of the gods that makes volcanoes erupt. The Javanese people especially believe this to be so, in the case of Mount Merapi, Indonesia’s most active volcano.

Loosely translated as the ‘Mountain of Fire’, Mount Merapi is located on the border between Central Java and Yogyakarta. The volcano has been regularly erupting since 1548, with its last eruption taking place on 25 October, 2010.

A year before its eruption, I had embarked on a new life adventure: to climb Mount Merapi. That was a trip to push my own physical and mental boundaries; to strengthen endurance of body and mind.

A year after its eruption, I set myself a new challenge: this time to climb Mount Merbabu and Mount Merapi. For the journey, a group of us nature lovers engaged two mountain guides, both of whom could skip up and down the volcanic mountains with a frightening ease that makes us question our own physical capacities.

Climbing Merbabu, a dormant composite volcano standing at 3,145 metres high and adjacent to the Merapi, was fairly easy; the volcano’s gentle gradients meant that you could hike at a steady pace without ever getting too tired. The idea was to spend a night on the slopes of Merbabu, with the climb serving as a prelude to what was to come the day after – tackling the Merapi. The group travelled together, taking in the beauty of the surrounding verdant valleys. Deep down inside us though, was the unspoken apprehension of facing the unpredictable Merapi the following day.

The trek to our camping spot took us four hours. Dinner was red wine and beef steak grilled over a fire that our guides had skilfully started, in spite of the strong winds. The night air was cold but everyone was in high spirits dining atop a mountain.

The following morning, we awoke to a magnificent view and were grateful to spend time contemplating the magnitude of peace that greeted us, right outside our tents. The call for breakfast returned us to reality, but even so, there was something surreal about eating cornflakes with the Merapi in full view.

Our ascent from Merbabu was a swift and quiet one, arriving at base camp around noon. Everyone retreated to their rooms for a siesta soon after. Our guides had warned us of the need to get as much sleep as we could, as the ascent and descent of Merapi would take approximately 10 to 12 hours. Because of the arduousness of the Merapi terrain, climbers are advised to start their climb shortly after midnight, to avoid the heat of the day adding to the difficulty of the climb itself.

Close to midnight, we were all dressed, packed, and raring to go. Energy bars and drinks were distributed to keep us going for the climb, but we knew we had to be prudent with our supplies, as they would have to last through both ascent and descent.

The first part of the climb on the asphalt road was relatively easy, even if there was a rather steep incline leading to the foot of the Merapi. The end of the asphalt path marked the beginning of the mountain trail and here, our guides stopped to talk to us about the importance of moving as a team. As we took our first steps into the looming darkness of Merapi, we knew that there would be no turning back. In darkness, we had but our headlights to guide us. As we moved along the dense foliage and on the slippery ground, breathing became more laboured. After 20 minutes of coming to terms with the darkness, we took a pit stop. Here we could see the lights of the Yogyakarta village we had left behind, twinkling like stars of an upturned sky.
Reluctantly, we tore ourselves away from the village lights to continue our ascent. We aimed to reach the plateau—the last section before the summit—before sunrise. The incline had become a lot steeper. Our feet started to ache, even though we had cushioned them with thick socks and well-made hiking shoes. Trudging along the increasingly uneven grounds and manoeuvring the unpredictable sharp turns began to cast doubt on even the most optimistic amongst us. Every step our weary feet took required the greatest effort. Still, there was no other way than to push any thoughts of throwing in the towel to the back of our minds, as we willed the last remnants of our energy into moving our exhausted beings forward.

Finally, someone shouted that the plateau was in sight. True enough the gentle stretch of volcanic earth soon came into view. How strange it was that we welcomed this barren sight with such relish and relief. The air had begun to get warmer again and suddenly, we became aware of the glow from the rising sun. With the quiet satisfaction of reaching the penultimate stage of our journey, we sat and welcomed sunrise in silence.

The last leg to the peak was the most arduous and dangerous. Because of the recent eruption, many of the volcanic rocks have become loosely embedded along this treacherous zone. One false step is sufficient to dislodge a rock and set the others into an avalanche. Clutching each rock above us gingerly, we crawled in unison towards our goal, afraid to send a rock hurtling in the direction of those below us. This was a moment where truly you are responsible for your own life and the lives of your friends.

The last half-hour of the climb seemed an eternity. The toughest part was the caution we had to exercise, when all we wanted to do was to scramble as quickly as we could to the top. The first to reach the summit was Adrien, our guide. His success spurred on the others. With dogged determination, we exerted ourselves towards the end point until finally, there was nothing more to climb. We had conquered Mount Merapi! Like athletes at the finishing line of a marathon, we collapsed onto the ground, giving in to exhaustion, but not for long. An indescribable wave of joy and relief swept over us as we peered down at the clouds beneath us. The liberating experience of being at the summit was dreamlike enough to send us all into a momentary state of delirium.

We had pushed past our own physical and mental boundaries. Humbled by the grandeur of the volcano, we soon fell into silence, meditating on the wonders of a blissfulness unknown before to us.
Mr Lim Boon Kiat 林文杰 (Arts/1978) and his wife
Ms Chia Swee Hong 謝瑞芳 (Arts/1979)

My elite sporting experience in gymnastics, athletics and diving was a rather lonely one. Compared to team sports like rugby, basketball and water polo, the process of training and the camaraderie between team mates were different. My involvement with team sports only started when I studied in NIE. The two years in NIE taught me the importance of working together as a team and I enjoyed every moment of my time with my classmates.

My hobbies include meeting people, writing, reading, listening to music, playing the violin, cycling, running and swimming. I love to chat with friends and strangers as I am curious about what inspires and motivates them and about their life journeys. I love to write and to capture inspiring stories people have shared with me. I love to read as it takes my mind off work.

I have been to a number of countries in Europe and in the region. My favourite is the city of Amsterdam. I fell in love with the city’s culture of arts.

I have also spent a number of years in China undergoing sports training. The standard of living in China was very different in the 1980s to 1990s. My childhood to teenage years spent in the country humbled me as I saw the living conditions of my Chinese friends. I appreciated what I had in Singapore each time I returned home from my training stints in China.

I have been in the sports industry for a long time. I started gymnastics in 1982 and represented Singapore in the Southeast Asian Games in 1985. I was also an International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) judge in 2003; an International Association Athletics Federation (IAAF) coach in 2005; and an International Swimming Federation (FINA) judge in 2008. I have also been involved in sports administration, planning and marketing, and event operations and management for a number of years.

With my background and experience, I want to share the stories of our athletes. They may not be the elites, but they are in sports because of their passion for the sport and for what sports can do for them, their families and friends. Their tales of happiness and struggles could be used as examples to inspire sports lovers who are training hard, and as motivation for those who may need that extra encouragement to move towards a more sporty lifestyle.

Ms Eileen Chai (NIE/2005)

I graduated from the National Institute of Education (NIE) with a Post Graduate Diploma in Education (Physical Education), with Music as my secondary subject. In my batch, there were four PGDE classes majoring in Physical Education (PE). We divided into classes based on our secondary subjects – one English class, two Mathematics classes and one ‘mixed’ class. I was in the mixed class which comprised students of different talents in arts and music. The myriad of characters in our class made our lives in NIE interesting and enjoyable! Our class was like a close-knit family where we helped and cared for one another.

>>

Mr Ray Zhang (NBS/2006)

Whilst fast approaching our third year in the Nanyang Business School (NBS), my classmates and I initiated a club and an orientation programme for each specialisation programme within NBS. Our specialisation, Human Resource Consulting (HRC), was the first to hold its HRC Retreat, where the second year students, fresh into HRC, were able to interact with their seniors and industry partners.

As a result, I befriended many of our juniors, forging new friendships. I was especially proud to see many of my peers helping the juniors and one of my classmates even requested for one of them to be her bridesmaid! Subsequently, students from all other specialisations followed suit and started their own clubs.

Today, I am a Senior Manager of the Special Operations team at the Singapore Sports Council. The team strategises and integrates the ecosystem for priority sports. The multi-disciplinary course at NBS has helped me to think strategically and enabled me to work in fields outside of my own specialisation.

In 2010, I went to Nepal to propose to my then girlfriend. She had gone trekking with her friends and I had arranged with them to give her a big surprise. She said ‘Yes!’ immediately. She was my junior in NBS and I became friends with her through the HRC Club and the non-profit HR society my classmates and I formed after graduation. We got married on 7 July 2012.
Ms Liu Yanan (MAE/2010)

With my graduation from NTU, I feel a big difference between the person I was four years ago, and the person I am today. Besides excellent technical training in my chosen industry, civil engineering, I believe that my undergraduate education at NTU has provided me with a well-rounded education that gave me lots of opportunities to try new things and discover myself.

I stayed in the hostels for five semesters and I loved my time there! I enjoyed my hostel life because of the many activities I could participate in. I was a member of Hall One S.T.A.R Productions in my first two years. I found the experience very enriching. It was nice working with a group of people to fulfil a common aim. I also had the chance to interact with very creative individuals from different Schools, and this experience very enriching. It was nice working with a group of people to fulfil a common aim. I also had the chance to interact with very creative individuals from different Schools, and this provided me with a widened perspective and enlarged my social circle beyond that of the Engineering Schools. I was also involved in the Combined Engineering Camp for three years involved in the Combined Engineering Camp for three years where I had the benefit of working with brilliantly talented people over the past four years.

I went on an exchange programme to the US and I think this period was the turning point in my undergraduate life. It signalled the transition from extra-curricular interests in my period was the turning point in my undergraduate life. It signalled the transition from extra-curricular interests in my period was the turning point in my undergraduate life. It signalled the transition from extra-curricular interests in my period was the turning point in my undergraduate life. It signalled the transition from extra-curricular interests in my period was the turning point in my undergraduate life. It signalled the transition from extra-curricular interests in my period was the turning point in my undergraduate life. It signalled the transition from extra-curricular interests in my period was the turning point in my undergraduate life. It signalled the transition from extra-curricular interests in my period was the turning point in my undergraduate life. 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Later, we found out that there were those who had actually died climbing the mountain because they gave up and froze to death. So yes, the trip was definitely an unforgettable experience!
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**ALUMNI FAMILY MEMBERS 校友家庭成员信息**

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**Contact Information**

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Email: alunniaffairs@ntu.edu.sg

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48 Alumni Particulars Update 更新校友个人资料
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