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# Honorary Doctorate Degree For Professor Yang Chen Ning

By Wu Di

**One of the greatest men of our times was honoured in NTU recently...**

Over 300 students and admirers gathered in the hall of Nanyang Auditorium on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008 to witness one of the greatest men of our times being conferred the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science.

The ceremony, presided over by the President of the Republic of Singapore and Chancellor of NTU, Mr. S. R. Nathan, was a tribute to the life of Professor Yang Chen Ning, Nobel Laureate (1957) and his long career and contributions to the world of science. "It was an easy decision," said Dr. Su Guanng, President of NTU, when asked why this particular man was chosen. "He is not only a giant in the field of science but also in other fields. He has become an icon for education and research among Chinese communities throughout the world. Nobody has a stronger claim to be the Honorary Degree recipient and we are proud that he has accepted it."

Born in Hefei, Anhui, China in 1922, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics, shared with Mr. Lee Tsung-Dao, at the mere age of 35. Since then, Professor Yang has been continuously active as both a scientist and an educator. Now, at the age of 86, he still actively works at the Tsinghua University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. A role model for several generations of young people, he has inspired youth to enter the diverse field of science and technology. He has motivated them to pursue their passion and contribute to society, and continues to do so for many more.

In his acceptance speech, Professor Yang expressed his gratitude, and his profound awe of the development wrought through the last forty years of Singapore's history. He reminded the captivated audience that they are the youth of the country, and are living in a great period in the history of mankind due to the massive scientific and technological development.



*The distinguished academic procession for the conferment ceremony.* PHOTO | JI XIANG

However, he also warned that the next fifty years are rife with threats and dangers that he has foreseen. Although he would not be able to witness the turmoil of the next half-century, he emphatically urged the Singaporean youth to contribute and do their part to help the whole of humanity through this "dangerous period".

Professor Yang's ties with NTU extend back to as early as 1967, when he visited the, then, Nanyang University. In the four decade-long bond with the university, Professor Yang has constantly helped the university grow. His ties with the University deepened in 2005 when he became part of the International Advisory Committee at the Institute of Advanced Studies, established to enhance the research culture at NTU.

The eponymous C.N. Yang Scholars Programme was launched by NTU in 2006. The Programme was aimed at exceptional students with a profound passion for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and who are keen on developing their aptitude for research.

Earlier in the day, Professor Yang attended the C.N. Yang Scholar Poster Exhibition at the Nanyang Auditorium, inspecting the showcase of thirty-two C.N. Yang Scholars' respective research projects.

Following the conferment ceremony, he enlightened those gathered with a lecture in Mandarin on "Reflections on the Rise of Global GDP – China Experience". Dr. Su believes that Professor Yang is an outstanding example for students who have the drive and ambition to pursue their dreams. He couldn't see any reason why we should not expect "a recipient of the Nobel Prize from NTU in the next twenty or thirty years"

**"He (Prof. C.N. Yang) has become an icon for education and research..."**

-- Dr. Su Guanng, President of NTU



Professor Yang Chen Ning