Living our dreams

NTU celebrates Singapore's 45th birthday with the spirit of the Youth Olympic Games.

It was a day for national colours. On 6 August, the festive mood swept the Pavilion at NTU as students, staff and faculty members, in striking red and white, came together to mark the nation's birthday.

Buoyed by music and motion, this year's National Day Observation Ceremony was an occasion for the community to celebrate Singapore's 45th year of independence against the backdrop of NTU's 55th anniversary and the honour it had in hosting more than 5,000 top athletes and officials as the world's first youth Olympic Village.

A simple but meaningful flag-raising ceremony was held, after which the National Pledge was recited. NTU President Dr Su Guanbing then addressed the audience.

Our global footprint

In his speech, Dr Su shared some of the university's major achievements in recent months. These milestones, he said, had brought the university closer to its aspirations of becoming a great global university. This year alone, NTU hosted several prestigious conferences, such as the Second World Conference on Research Integrity, the first International Communication Association Conference in Southeast Asia, and the Computer Graphics International Conference.

Rising in stature in diverse fields, NTU also opened the S$200m Energy Research Institute @NTU, signed agreements with top universities and is currently leading the development of the Singapore Centre on Environmental Life Sciences Engineering, a key national research centre tackling environmental and water issues.

An Olympic village for the world

NTU would also achieve another milestone when it officially opened the Youth Olympic Village, welcoming athletes from all around the world during the inaugural Youth Olympic Games, said Dr Su. He noted that the eco-friendly features of the "green village" support NTU's focus on environmental sustainability, which is also one of the goals of the Olympic movement.

Dr Su was especially heartened to note that 2,500 volunteers from NTU had stepped forward for the games. "Whether you are a student performer entertaining the athletes, a translator helping to bridge language barriers, a recreation facilitator organising fun games in the Village or a student reporter writing for the daily Youth Olympic Village newsletter, I hope you will learn and benefit from this once-in-a-lifetime experience and also have lots of fun in the process," he said.

"Let us show the world that Singapore is not only known for its competency and efficiency, but that our kindness and smiles are equally worthy of a gold medal!"

Referring to the theme of this year's National Day, "Live Our Dreams, Fly Our Flag", Dr Su said: "Let us press forward with confidence and optimism to turn our dreams for Singapore and NTU into reality, and fly our flag high and proud, this National Day."

Performance by Youth Olympic Games talents

The finale of the ceremony was a treat for the senses. The opening act by NTU ACES, the five-time national cheerleading champions, wowed the crowd. Next, NTU's hip hop and modern jazz dancers had the audience grooving to their beat. The final performance brought a creative twist to contemporary dance by fusing Malay and modern Chinese dance movements.

Showcased as NTU's "Youth Olympic Games talents", these students helped to ignite the Olympic spirit of Excellence, Friendship and Respect at the inaugural Youth Olympic Games in August.