



Malay-language literary pioneer Suratman Markasan (centre), one of the three recipients of the Nanyang Distinguished Alumni Award, with Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Education Chee Hong Tat and NTU president Subra Suresh. PHOTO: NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

## Top NTU alumni awards for poet, Zaqy Mohamad and Teckwah boss

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) has come a long way from its beginnings in the 1950s as Nanyang University to become one of the world's top universities today, a fact not lost as distinguished alumni were recognised at the NTU Annual Homecoming yesterday.

Of the 39 alumni honoured with the Nanyang Alumni Awards, three received the highest honour – the Nanyang Distinguished Alumni Award.

They were Malay-language literary pioneer Suratman Markasan, Teckwah Industrial Corporation managing director Thomas Chua, and Minister of State for National Development and Manpower Zaqy Mohamad.

Professor Subra Suresh, the NTU president, said: "This year's recipients have made positive impacts in various fields such as the literary arts, business, community and public service."

Through their career achievements and engagement with the university and the community,

these alumni have set a standard to which our students and fellow alumni can aspire."

Mr Suratman is a multi-award-winning poet and novelist who received the Cultural Medallion, Singapore's highest honour in the arts, in 2010 for his contributions to Singapore literature.

Mr Chua, who was a former Nominated Member of Parliament and president of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, transformed Teckwah from a simple paper-box maker into an international supply chain group.

Mr Zaqy Mohamad, an alumnus from the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Nanyang Business School, has led a successful career in consulting and technology firms such as Arthur Andersen, IBM, Dimension Data (NTT Group) and Ernst & Young.

The other award categories are the Nanyang Alumni Achievement Award, Nanyang Outstanding Young Alumni Award and Nanyang Alumni Service Award.

One of the winners of the Nanyang Alumni Achievement Award was Mrs Chua-Lim Yen Ching, deputy director-general of education for professional development and executive director at the Ministry of Education.

She helped to conceptualise NorthLight School to admit students with difficulties in handling the mainstream academic curriculum, and served as its founding principal.

The event at Nanyang Auditorium was attended by about 1,200 alumni and guests.

Prof Suresh noted that within the past year, NTU has climbed to its highest position in every major international league table.

Most recently, it broke into the top 50 of the world's best universities in this year's Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

NTU currently has more than 244,000 alumni in 162 countries.

**Felicia Choo**