

NP Fun(d) Raises Record \$1.1 Million To Ease Students' Financial Load

A celebration at Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Sports complex marked the closure of Ngee Ann's successful fund-raising efforts.
CHONG YIHAN reports.



SHOW ME THE MONEY: NRA and Magnum Force members displaying the amount in the Choo and Lim Endowment Fund for all NP staff and students present at the celebration. (Picture: Arman Shah)

Almost every needy student in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) will soon have access to either a bursary or study grant, thanks to aggressive fund-raising.

This added an estimated extra \$1.1 million recently raised through NP's Student Aid Fund (NPSF) in addition to another \$1 million in the new Choo and Lim Endowment Fund.

"The funds of \$1 million collected... will be given out over a three-year cycle," said Principal Mr Chia Mia Chiang, who started the NPSF fund-raiser last November. He told *Tribune* that this translates into about 400 more bursaries each year.

According to NP's Student Services (SS) Office, about "three out of every class of 20 students... are in need of some form of financial help". This means about 15% of our 14,000 student population, or about 2,000 students, could benefit from some financial assistance.

Annually, an estimated 1,600 bursaries and student grants are given to needy students, according to the SS Office. If we include the 400 extra that the NPSF funds will provide for, this will cover practically every student in need.

Eugene Khong, 19, a final-year Accountancy (ACC) student who has classmates benefitting from bursaries, felt that, "With these extra bursaries, students with financial needs will benefit in terms of buying school materials that they could not afford initially."

A jubilant celebration to toast the successful fund-raising efforts was held at the NP Sports Complex on April 21, dovetailing with the end of the Freshmen Orientation programme. Freshmen, seniors and staff assembled to partake in the festivities.

Aptly named, FUN(D) 2006, the occasion showed appreciation to donors, staff and students through fun and games organised by members of NPSF Committee, academic societies and the Student Development Alumni Relations (SDAR) office. There were rousing performances from NP's student groups: percussionists The Black Baracuda Batucada, Magnum Force and New Revolving Age (NRA) Hip Hop.

President of cheerleaders Magnum Force, Muhd Redza Bin Mohd Asri, 21, a final-year Mechanical Engineering (ME) student, said the squad felt "great about taking part in this event", adding, "It [FUN(D) 2006] was different because lecturers and staff were all there to show their support, and nobody is left out [of the festivities]."

A mascot parade, telematch and games among Schools kept the energy level up.

The School of Business and Accountancy (BA) was named the overall champions, winning a trophy and a hamper consisting of food and stationery.

Ng Ai Qi, 19, a final-year Banking and Financial Services (BFS) student, and an orientation organiser for BA said, "We felt honoured that we can win this competition for the school [BA]."

Mr Alan Thng, Deputy Director of SDAR said that aside from the celebration, "With this event, there will also be awareness that there are needy students among us."

The funds were raised through pledges and donations from staff, who also canvassed with the alumni and industry partners.

Students did their part by setting up booths during Chinese New Year, and getting donations through red packets. The Leo club also went around school in February, to sell Valentine's Day gifts.

According to an e-mail reply from Finance Director Mrs Ang Beng Wah, staff and students raised about \$140,000, but "corporate donors, alumni and well-wishers", including the NTUC group of co-operatives and Ngee Ann Kongsi, which each donated \$100,000, brought the figure up to \$520,000.

Mr Choo Chiau Beng, Chairman and Executive Officer of Keppel Offshore & Marine, was the largest single donor. The former Chairman of NP's Council made a personal donation of \$500,000.

The polytechnic doubled both sums by matching the amounts raised dollar-for-dollar, by using their own internal funds.

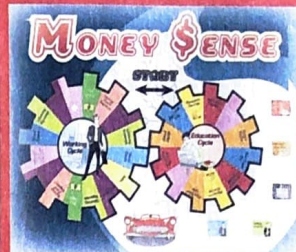
Thus, during the celebration, an exciting announcement was made regarding the set up of a \$1 million Choo and Lim Endowment Fund.

Mr Adrian Chan, Director of SDAR explained that unlike the NPSF, the whole sum of the Endowment Fund cannot be disbursed. Every year the polytechnic may generate income of an estimated four to five percent per year, and the accumulated income of about \$120,000 to \$150,000 over three years will be disbursed as part of the Student Aid Fund bursaries.

Mr Chan added that they are still getting donations, so the final figure is unknown.

Mr Chia exclaimed, "I feel [a] deep gratitude towards the staff, students and well-wishers." He also said that the fund-raising is "riding on [the] momentum created by [our] own staff".

Tasha Traazil, a first-year Mass Communication student was "impressed and shocked that such a sum was raised, but also grateful that the school is making such an effort". ■



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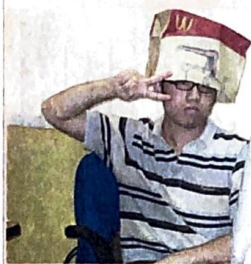


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On That Matter Of Caring



BY CHONG YIHAN
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Attending Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) recent celebration on raising \$1 million for additional bursaries was a double blessing. Not only can more students now get bursaries, but this event hit me on a more personal note.

Through my years in NP, my classmates have been telling me that it is a dog-eat-dog world out there, and that everyone is out to get each other. I was also told that if I don't look out, someone might stab me in the back. It was that scary scenario that warped my sense of reality.

I would withdraw into my shell and hide my true feelings from the world for fear of being hurt. Work became my life, and I fought for my own glory, with my own individual effort, and if everyone else failed, it was not my problem.

Needless to say, I lost many friends here, making me possibly enemy number one. People wanted to work with me on projects, but apart from that, they did not want anything to do with me. It was a lonely period in my life and just made me sink deeper into depression.

A vicious cycle had started, with me going into depression, using work as an escape, losing friends and sinking even deeper into depression.

It took a friend crying for me to snap me out of it. She cried not because I was mean or hurtful, but because after knowing me for 13 years of her life, I had clearly changed for the worse. I used to be a positive person who laughed at the smallest things, but now I was cynical and pessimistic.

Initially, I wasn't moved by her crying but as I looked back it finally hit me - I realised there are people who care for me!

Be it an old or new friend or even a lecturer hounding me for work, they all care in their own way. People do look out for themselves, but if we look deeper, we can find a strand of kindness in everyone.

That was why I saw the fund-raising as one of many signs that people in the school and, by extension, the world, do care.

From Business and Accountancy (BA) students helping girls in a drug rehab centre enter society once more with a new skill, to staff and students in NP trying to bridge understanding between the East and West to promote communication and harmony.

It is all because we care, not only for our friends but for people we barely know.

Looking at the big picture, I also saw that if everyone put their care for the same issue, the combined passion and efforts will result in far greater accomplishments.

My life has definitely changed from then. I might have some reservations still, but I have started to open up to people who I now regard as friends. Maybe that's what we need sometimes, a plea (in this case a cry) from a friend to show you that you are not alone, and that others care! ☐

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Tribune, Apr to Jun 2006

New Routes Into Polytechnic Education

BY ROBYN LEE
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Plans for next January to introduce upper secondary school students to modules in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) will benefit poly students as well.

NP Principal Mr Chia Mia Chiang explained that NP students will be involved in the rollout as tutors and mentors to the secondary school students for some projects and "this would benefit them as they will guide them through the process".

Apart from being awarded Co-Curricular Activity (CCA) points for their involvement, students may also be paid an allowance.

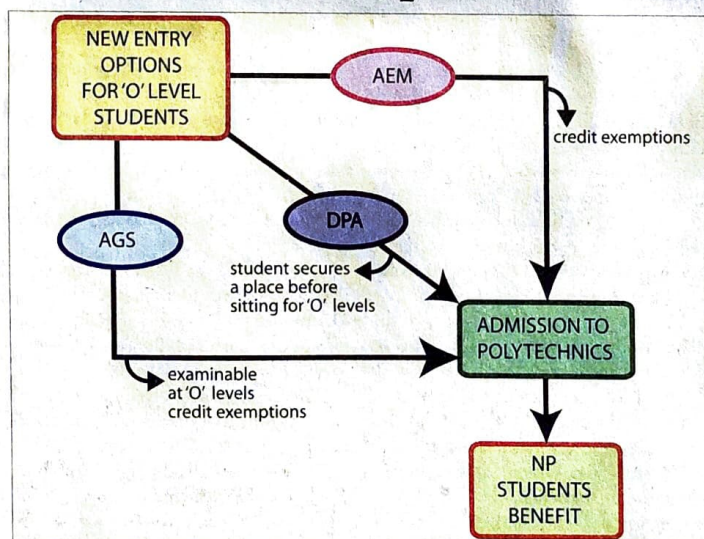
"I would go so far [as] to provide more campus jobs for our students and I'm equally open to paying our students while engaging them as paid tutors," he said.

Some upper secondary school students will soon be able to take 40-hour Advanced Elective Modules (AEM) and 120-hour Applied Graded Subjects (AGS) offered by the polytechnics. These were introduced to continue to "provide greater diversity and flexibility in [the] education system", said Minister of State for Education and Manpower, Mr Gan Kim Yong, at his 2nd Reply on Polytechnics and Private Education during the FY 2006 Committee of Supply Debate, on March 7.

Mr Chia said that he strongly supports this implementation. He added that students passionate about a polytechnic education, can get "a very definite exposure as to what they aspire to do".

Ong Soon Hua, 19, a final-year Horticulture & Landscape Management (HLM) student expressed his excitement at the prospect.

He said, "It is a good idea to be a tutor or a mentor because it provides



NEW ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: The changing educational landscape for secondary school students affiliated to NP will spell benefits for NP students. Illustration: Robyn Lee

[secondary school] students an alternative route to search for answers, rather than to approach lecturers whom they may not feel comfortable with."

Secondary schools too have welcomed this MOE initiative.

St Andrew's Secondary School's Vice-Principal, Mr Goh Boon Pin, said, "More and more of our boys have shown interest towards a polytechnic education", and he was confident that "students will benefit from the AEMs as they will learn about what NP has to offer".

The non-examinable AEMs, to be conducted over three to six months, will be offered in January in Business and Humanities, Engineering, Science and Mathematics, Media and Design and Information Technology areas. Grading will

be based on projects given to them.

Students may be granted credit exemptions for polytechnic modules relevant to AEMs they have read or be given discretionary admission when they apply to their preferred polytechnic course through the Joint Polytechnic Special Admissions Exercise (JPSAE) or the new Direct Polytechnic Admissions (DPA).

The five schools affiliated to NP for AEMs are Nanyang Girls' High School, St Andrew's Secondary School, Tanglin Secondary School, Dunearn Secondary School and Ngee Ann Secondary School.

But NP is also "actively exploring" opportunities to work with other schools such as Bishan Park Secondary School (BPSS), which has expressed interest in Journalism, shared Mr Chia.

BPSS Special Programme Coordinator, Mr Ng Joon Yong, believes the collaboration will "enrich and broaden [students'] perspectives and to give them a more hands-on approach towards learning".

Students taking NP elective modules will most likely attend classes here.

This is done "so that [students] will be reminded that [NP] is the polytechnic that they should join", said Dr Sushila Chang, Director of the School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology (LSCT) at the Staff Communication Kick-Off Session 2006 on May 4, where the initiative was announced to NP staff and student leaders.

The AGSs, likely to be offered in 2008, will be considered as GCE 'O' level subjects in addition to the five core subjects and will be in the areas of Information Technology, Media or Life Sciences.

Grades for AGSs awarded by the polys will also be recognised for admission to Junior Colleges (JC), Centralised Institutes (CI) and Polytechnics under the L1R5 and ELR2B2 scoring computation.

There will be credit exemption for relevant polytechnic modules when students apply to their preferred polytechnic course.

The DPA exercise will give final-year secondary school students an opportunity to secure a place at any polytechnic course from next May, even before they sit for their GCE 'O' level examinations.

Results of their applications will be known two months later.

Each polytechnic can accept only 2.5 percent of its annual intake, an average of about 100 students, through the exercise and the basic entry requirements remain. Successful applicants must also go through a three-month polytechnic preparatory programme before term starts. ☐

Bridging Media Waters Via Podcasting

BY DORCAS LING
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Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) has pioneered what is probably the world's first China media watch podcast, featuring news from China's media translated into English, to give those who can't read or understand Chinese a glimpse into the somewhat mysterious economic giant's perspectives.

A brainchild of Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC) staff Mr Jacky Peng, the project is aptly dubbed the *Xiao Qiao* (meaning little bridge) Podcast project.

Said the systems analyst who was from Guangzhou, "If you look at iTunes, there is no podcast that covers this area, and I'm sure the demand is very great."

Mr Peng added, "The East and West have completely different perspectives to the same issues... and that is mainly because of the way the news is reported."

He cited the example of how the West saw Saddam Hussein as a villain, but in China, he was portrayed as a hero for standing up against the Americans.

Both Mr Peng and his colleague Mr Preetam Rai are collaborating with NP's entertainment e-zine, www.theurbanwire.com, to help translate, script and voice the regular news podcasts.

Staff and students of the Diploma in Chinese Studies (CHS) have also expressed interest in collaborating later and are studying how they can best work with TLC on this.

Mr Robin Yee, the faculty advisor of www.theurbanwire.com, is excited about the project, which will tap on the strengths of his student editorial team in translation, interviewing, scripting for an audio medium, presenting and using new technology to create compelling journalism.



PODCASTING THE NEWS: Students from www.theurbanwire.com, voicing the news for their first podcasting session. (Picture: Arman Shah)

The lecturer from the School of Film & Media Studies (FMS) added, "Preetam and Jacky have been great friends of our site and were very involved in our other projects, such as S.M.A.R.T.S, our original online charity gameshow."

The 10-minute podcasts are accessible on www.theurbanwire.com, and are part of a series of 30 fortnightly episodes that will also introduce 30 provinces of China through interesting "Did You Know" facts, as well as the most discussed news topics in China.

The slant of news for the entertainment website, however, revolves more around youth and entertainment topics that UrbanWire readers have come to expect, rather than serious political matters and hard news in China that are Mr Peng's passions.

Both technical staff highlighted the use of

podcasting as a breakthrough and potential solution to communication barriers.

They said that the other reason podcasting is used is its convenience and accessibility since many youths have MP3 players that they listen to constantly.

"It is easy to catalogue files by name and subject, and to search for podcasts on the Internet," Mr Peng said, just "subscribe to the Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed. It is accessible to everyone. [Plus] you can download whatever you want from all over the world... and listen to it anywhere."

He also stressed that listeners can choose topics that interest them, and access good information from around the world.

For iPod users who have automated syncing of subscribed podcasts to their players, podcasts will be even more

Never heard of podcasting?
Here are simple definitions of some of the terms used in podcasting.

Podcasting:

The method of distributing multimedia files, such as audio programs or music videos, over the Internet for playback on mobile devices and personal computers, through an RSS feed.

RSS Feed:

Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is a lightweight XML format designed for sharing headlines and other Web content. Think of it as a distributable "What's New" for your site.

Sync:

Make synchronous and adjust in time or manner. This means that once new podcasts are available, they will be downloaded and accessible by the iPod.

Information from wikipedia.com,
podcastingnews.com and dictionary.com

convenient for them.

Podcasts are also playable on most other MP3 players. It only requires a small step of manually copying and pushing the file to the player.

Regular presenter Valerie Lim, 18, said of her experience, "It's a great opportunity, especially with a unique angle like ours."

Added the final-year Mass Communication student, "Trying to get the attention of someone you don't know [for a random global audience] is difficult, but it's a skill we all slowly acquire."

Classmate Seah Zhixin, 18, who takes care of the content, said, "I now have a more in-depth understanding of China. This gives me exposure to various aspects [of producing each capsule], from formulating the script, to translating and interviewing."

Campus Developments a Boon For Active Students



A NEW WORKOUT: Say goodbye to the old gym (above) and welcome NP's brand new lifestyle gym in the style of Planet Fitness. (Picture: Robyn Lee)

BY ROBYN LEE
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A lifestyle gym of a "similar operation standard like that of Planet Fitness" can be expected in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), said Mr Mui Cheng

Hock, Director of Estate Management Office (EM).

This is one of many enhancements that staff and students can expect as part of two exciting new campus developments in NP: a Student Hub and a Cultural Hub.

Though development costs will be confirmed by August, Mr Mui said construction should "start by the first quarter of next year, and be completed by end 2007".

Student Hub

Blocks 15, 16 and 18 near the Sports Complex will transform into a Student Hub, "an area where the basis of all student activities will evolve from", said Mr Gopinathan Retnam, the Student Development Manager from the Student Development & Alumni Relations Office (SDAR), who is involved in the development projects.

Mr Gopinathan revealed that there are plans for a healthy snack lounge or café at the gym, which should be ready by first quarter of 2007. It may overlook the swimming pool to "incorporate more of the lifestyle feel".

The gym will be equipped with treadmills and exercise bicycles to provide a greater variety of equipment, unlike the current gyms in NP which are more for body building and maintaining a good physique.

According to Mr Mui, the Student Hub is still under "conceptual planning", but will provide proper student meeting rooms, new club rooms, study areas and student lounges for the 107 clubs and societies in NP.

President of Students' Sports Council, Winston Chow Wei Jie, 23, a final-year Mechatronic Engineering (MTE) student, expressed a need for a better Sports Hall and hopes that the new one can accommodate more indoor sports such as volleyball.

Cultural Hub

The Cultural Hub, which will concentrate on drama, music and the arts, is also in the works, and the revamp will take place at blocks 71, 73 and 74, among "the oldest parts of campus", said Mr Mui.

Rehearsal rooms, practice rooms, music rooms and a black box theatre can also be expected after the renovations, and Mr Mui hopes such a change will "bring performing arts in NP to a higher level".

He added, "For tertiary students, academic excellence is important, but to excel in Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) is just as important and this Cultural Hub will help us develop this further."

Poly Stage F'Actor (PSF) president, Ng Cheng Han, 18, a second-year Film, Sound & Video (FSV) student, agreed.

"It would also raise the morale of the actors from PSF as they will feel respected and this shows that the school recognises their needs for better training facilities."

Chemical-Powered Car Competition 2006



CHEMICALLY-CHARGED CAR: Prototypes of cars like these will be powered by kitchen staples sodium bicarbonate or vinegar. (Picture: Courtesy of Joel Palamiano)

BY REZA OMAR
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Raid your kitchen and you could find fuel to power a car. That's what 400 secondary school students will be asked to do, using vinegar and sodium bicarbonate to power cars in a competition by the School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology (LSCT).

The rules are simple. Each car, no larger than 45 cm x 35 cm x 20 cm, must only use those two chemicals, and not any mechanical

force, to travel at least 10 m. The winning car will be the one that travels closest to the distance determined and will be revealed only on the day of the competition.

The first, second and third prize winners of the competition will receive a trophy each and \$150, \$100 and \$50 respectively. The team that submits the "Best Research Report" will win a \$150 cash prize as well.

Chua Ling Ling, 19, a final-year Chemical Engineering (CE) student, said that the reaction between vinegar and sodium bicarbonate will produce a force to

push the car forward.

"When you do the experiment there will be many failed attempts. You test and retest the car until you achieve the right composition and when the car moves, that's when you will get your sense of satisfaction," she said.

Discussing the rationale of the Chemical Powered Car Competition 2006 at Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) on May 27, event organiser and LSCT lecturer Mr Joel Palamiano shared, "We want to come up with an activity for secondary school students that encompasses a bit of chemistry, physics and mathematics, while staying fun at the same time, which is essentially what chemical engineering is all about."

He added that the idea of powering mini cars with chemicals has always been used at the university level, where they use more complex chemicals.

"We thought of having the competition at the secondary school level by only using simple ingredients, making it safer for participants and allowing them to test-drive their cars at home prior to the competition," said Mr Palamiano.

This is the first time LSCT is holding such an event.

Mr Palamiano shared that a similar event was planned last year, but was cancelled due to lacklustre response from the secondary schools despite many brochures going out to them. "That's why we introduced the Laboratory Enrichment Programme (LEP) this year," he added.

According to Mr Palamiano, the LEP was a prelude to the competition and encouraged participation from students who joined.

Students who have signed up for the competition come from schools like Hwa Chong Institution, Raffles Institution and neighbourhood schools close to NP.

"Close to 80 teams of five have signed up, surpassing the school's expectations. It... shows that our efforts had paid off."

Due to the overwhelming response, the event organisers, including LSCT lecturers Dr Vivien Lim and Mr Mirko Stoll, said that they will be roping in two LSCT classes to lend a hand at crowd control.

Mr Palamiano said that it is good for both the polytechnic and the secondary school students.

"We want them to have a preview of what life in NP is like and erase their misconceptions of engineering, let alone chemical engineering," he said. ■

Wheel Of Success



COMFORT & CONVENIENCE: The modified wheelchair offers massage, mobility and a smoother ride. (Picture: Lin Xuanbin)

BY CHARLOTTE CHOO
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Three Mechanical Engineering (ME) students have won the Institution of Engineers Singapore's (IES) prestigious Gold Award for their ingenious modifications to the wheelchair.

On May 5, Mohammed Jasmadi B Suparaham, Tan Loon Cheong and Hein Htike, all recent graduates, proudly received their award certificate and prize money of \$1,000 at the IES Building's auditorium for an invention they decided to name the adaptive wheelchair.

Team leader Jasmadi, 21, expressed surprise at the overwhelmingly positive attention their invention has received.

"During the project exhibition, the IES people came to visit and inspect the three or four projects. From there, I had the confidence to win, because I realised that our project had many valuable functions," Jasmadi said.

The adaptive wheelchair boasts four unique design features, one of which allows smoother travelling on uneven surfaces.

In addition, the adaptive wheelchair has a battery-operated massaging cushion that can improve the user's blood circulation, as wheelchair-bound people spend long hours in a sitting position in their wheelchairs.

The award-winning project also comes with a flexible storage compartment and a transfer board.

The transfer board acts as a plank that straddles the wheelchair and the seat of a vehicle. By connecting the two seats, a wheelchair-bound person can move to and from a vehicle to the wheelchair.

Jasmadi observed that the IES judges were most impressed with the back massage system. "Outside, it cost hundreds of dollars... but we only paid \$30 for ours," he declared proudly.

Jasmadi and his team, however, felt that they could not have done this without help from NP staff: Design Centre Staff, Mr Totong Kaya, their group supervisor, Mr Teh, and their Technical Support Officer, Mr Linus Leow.

The group also received help from Evertech Holdings Limited who sponsored \$150 for their project.

Mr Kaya reminded them that only an interview with a disabled person will reveal their true needs.

In this respect, the group worked closely with Miss Oh Laybee, a physically disabled woman, who was given the adaptive wheelchair prototype in May after some minor adjustments to improve it.

Jasmadi has already planned what he will do with his share of the \$1,000 prize money. First on his list, he said, "I would like to treat my supervisor and technical staff to thank them for their help." ■



A DIGITAL IMPROVEMENT: ECH students trying out the new digital recording system, meant to help them use their voices better, which they can access from their laptops any time. (Picture: Sylvia Lim)

ECH Goes Digital

BY SYLVIA LIM
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If you haven't seen a tape-recorder in years, you can understand the frustration of Early Childhood Education (ECH) students who used to have to learn better pronunciation using tapes.

But since May 5, Speech Training modules have gone digital.

Dialogues or speeches and extracts of films can now be accessed with laptops, recently made compulsory for all first-year ECH students, connected to the school's wireless network.

ECH lecturer Ms Pang Li Yee, who spearheaded this project, said that the advantages include lecturers controlling and recording two dialogues into one file or enabling a group conversation using the Class Management System in the new digital language laboratory (DLL), which is located at Block 52, #04-14.

The improvement, costing about \$13,000, comes with software licenses downloaded to the students' laptops, ear phones and an audio box to enhance sound

quality and reduce interference.

Ms Pang said, "In the past, because the recording was done on [a] cassette [tape], a lot of students who didn't have cassette recorders will not have the chance to practise at home."

Chen Li Shi, 20, a first-year student from ECH, hailed the new system of recording work on a laptop for its convenience.

She added, "If any practice is given as homework, there is no one to rush us [as] it can be all done according to our own pace at home or anywhere."

Dr Kathleen Walsh, Programme Director of the School of ECH, hopes the increased access will translate into better English articulation, which will help students pace their future teaching better.

Digital voice files can easily be transferred to lecturers, and Ms Pang said she "will be happy to listen and help them if they have any difficulties".

Final-year student Nur Elena Shahrudin, 19, is happy with the upgrade and said, "It's great that the school is keeping up with technology, and of course, it will be much more user-friendly." ■

NP's Young Inventors Triumph



MONEY-MINDING MAGIC: Alvin Lim's 'Money Sense' board game has won other awards besides the prestigious Tan Kah Kee Young Inventors' Awards. (Picture: Courtesy of Alvin Lim)

BY WILSON YEO
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Five inventions by teams of Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) students won Merit and Commendation awards at this year's Tan Kah Kee Young Inventors' Awards ceremony on May 27, bagging certificates as well as \$3,000 and \$1,000 in cash prizes respectively.

The annual competition, organised by the Tan Kah Kee Foundation, the Agency for Science, Technology and Research

(A*STAR) and the Defence Science & Technology Agency (DSTA) aims to "stimulate creativity among the young generation and to promote scientific and technological research in Singapore", according to its official website.

Inventors presented their ideas before professionals from the industry and academic institutions over four months at the Biopolis.

Mr Peter Tang Kwong Sing, Director of NP's Innovation & Enterprise Office (IE

Office), felt that the students "have done well" and that NP's "performance has been quite consistent".

For future competitions, Mr Tang commented the IE Office will continue to "encourage students to get up and initiate their ideas", by pro-actively contacting potential student innovators as well as working closely with the School of Interdisciplinary Studies' (IS) Innovation & Enterprise in Action module.

He is keen to form multi-disciplinary teams and said, "We must work towards that, as that is how the real world works."

He added that NP will help students and staff develop and own their Intellectual Property (IP), even footing the cost of filing patents which can run from hundreds of dollars up to tens of thousands of dollars in certain cases.

Our winners were:

1. Alvin Lim Shan Jia, 20, from the School of Business and Accountancy (BA), won a Commendation award for his invention, the 'Money Sense' Financial Literacy Board Game.

The final-year Banking and Financial Services (BFS) student said, "Singapore is a first-world country, but a lot of people are bankrupt. I felt it was important to educate the youth about financial literacy."

2. Final-year Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE) students, Lee Wenling, 24, and Wong Chi Chin, 20, worked with 14-year-old Xie Wenhan, to plan and build the prototype for a revolutionary method of polishing a bowling ball.

Wenhan met the polytechnic students through his father, Mr Chia See Pan, lecturer at NP's ECE Division. As Wenling and Chi Chin were on attachment in China when the

panel presentation was due, Wenhan had to present alone.

He said, "I was a bit nervous, but the judges were quite nice, actually."

3. Recent Mechanical Engineering (ME) graduates Teng Wei Lun, 20, Chan Chun How, 22, and Tan Marcus Royston, 21, won the merit award for their invention of the 'Independent Wheelchair', which is different from the Adaptive Wheelchair on pg 4.

It allows easier transfer of wheelchair-bound patients to a bed or sofa without help via a flip-down backrest.

4. Chan Wah Hsing, 21, who just graduated from Mechatronic Engineering, (MTE) received a Merit award in the Defence Science category. Their 'BrePulSoMeTer' allows medical workers to monitor a patient's heart rate and breathing autonomously.

With fellow MTE graduates Lin Yi Chao Kenson, 24, and Wong Zhi Wei, 19, they were commissioned by the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) to improve upon a previous team's Commendation award-winning concept.

They added a light-emitting diode (LED) display and indicators to the previous team's bare circuit board, and a new photo-diode heart-rate sensor, while reducing the size of the final product.

Wah Hsing said, "It's closer to what SCDF [might] want to buy."

5. ME graduate Edmund Goh Xin Jie, 22, won a Commendation award in the Defence Science category with the 'Pole Climbing Robot'.

This robot, controlled via wireless Radio Frequency (RF), can carry a camera and climb a metallic pole.

This makes it a useful tool for "monitoring public places" and "easily deployed where metallic lamp posts are available". ■

Apple Ups Market Share In NP

BY JOANNA JOHAN
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To be more in synch with the computer platform of the industries they serve, students from the Multimedia Animation course (MMA) and the School of Film & Media Studies (FMS) have switched to the Apple computing platform.

Since the beginning of this semester, all 280 first-year FMS and MMA students were required to buy either an iBook or other Mac notebooks, instead of PCs to use as their laptops.

The change will not cause any additional financial burden as Mac notebooks are priced close to their PC alternatives when purchased in school.

Lecturer Mr Jerome Lo, who led the team that proposed this change for FMS, said the reason behind this move was to leverage on Apple technology in media production software such as High Life, Quicktime and other video editing software.

All this original software is provided and loaded into the notebooks for free, thanks to a campus licence.

The change from Windows to Apple platform will allow students to use industry-

standard software for their modules, such as Graphic Communication, Location Video Production and Audio Technology for FMS and Digital Photo Media and Graphic Design for MMA course.

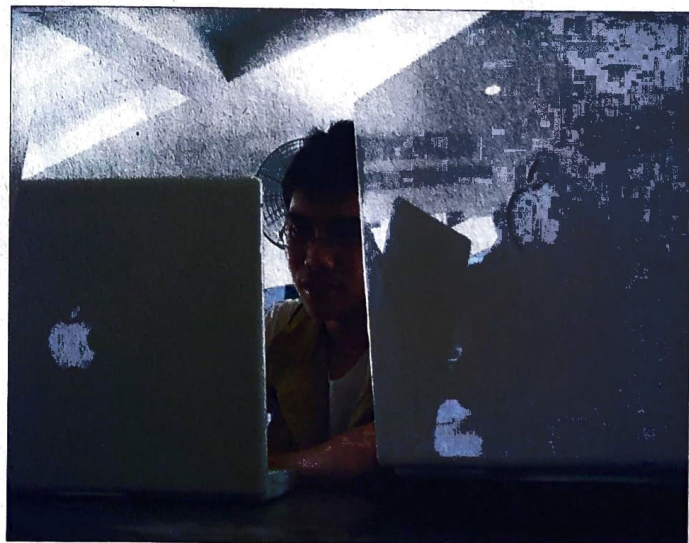
According to FMS Technical Support Officer Mr David Ng, although not many complaints have been lodged by students, some encounter technical problems due to students unfamiliarity with the Mac interface and the lack of expertise on the part of technical staff.

To alleviate the situation, FMS's Mac laboratory at Block 53, level 7, #03-02A, will be renovated and named 'Creative Media Studio'.

This studio will be a hub where students can get information on their Macs. It will be ready when the student helpers are able to secure sponsors that are willing to sponsor the makeover of the laboratory.

"They can always come to this room to find out more on how to use [their] Apple. But if it's [a] hardware issue, they should be going to Apple Care (Diversitec) or any Apple Service Centre in Singapore," clarified Mr Lo.

Course Manager of MMA Mr Agus Rahardja, explained that they had a DIY



AN APPLE EVERY DAY: Since the start of the new semester, first-year students from FMS and MMA now use iBooks to help them with their modules. (Picture: Lin Xuanbin)

session for freshmen on Orientation Day with the help of second-year students configuring their Mac notebooks and helping to install software for them.

"So far so good, our students were able to

adapt quite fast due to their early exposure to IT and they are all IT savvy," said Mr Agus, who noted that they converted quickly and "can do a lot with their Mac [now]", after a few pointers. ■

NP's China Campus Plans Unveiled

BY GRACE YAP
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When Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) Overseas Education Centre (OEC) in Shenyang, China, receives its pioneer batch of students in September, it will be a boost to NP's "student immersion and staff development", thus creating a "rich environment of academic exchange", said Mr Wang Chin Chong.

Mr Wang, the Director of Multidiscipline Engineering (MDE), part of the team spearheading this project, said that OEC has been re-christened Shenyang-Ngee Ann Polytechnic (SH-NP), combining Shenyang Institute of Aeronautical Engineering (IAE), the polytechnic's academic partner in the Liaoning province of China, and NP.

He feels that having a centre there is ideal, as it will permit NP to send more students there as part of attachments, exchange programmes and overseas exposure trips.

Mr Adrian Chan, the Director of the Organisational Development (OD) office said, "Students on exchange programme in this part of China will get to see the rapid growth of China and the myriad of opportunities available to them should they venture abroad for business or work, as well as the challenges that Singapore can face in the global competitive business arena."

Renand Lai, 19, a final-year Electronic and Telecommunications Engineering (ETE) student, thinks that the immersion programmes will "give (NP) students better exposure to the global market and also to the foreigners' culture and way of life".

Royston Choy, 19, a second-year student from Electronics and Computer Engineering (ECE) reckoned that NP's Chinese students will also get to "discover their roots".

Students keen on taking up exchange programmes at SH-NP must be within the top 20 percent of their cohort. Mr

Chan said the exact amount payable by for the programme is unconfirmed. But he assured that "it should not differ very much from that of the other Student Exchange programmes that NP has today with China colleges", which roughly translates to \$3,500 for a period of six months.

He added, "The subsidies provided to needy students are worked out on a case-by-case basis," and students with financial difficulties have an equal opportunity to be trained overseas.

Staff training and development have also been planned to include courses relating to domain modules and Chinese culture.

Mr Chan told *Tribune* that they will be sent on either a "six-month or one-year stint to teach in an overseas environment and to carry out topical research on relevant aspects of China".

NP plans to send five lecturers to teach core modules in the Shenyang campus when it opens, and more will be sent as the student population there grows.

SH-NP will start off with offering the Diploma in Logistics Management (LMGT) from MDE, which Mr Wang said is "awaiting approval from the Liaoning Education Department".

He added, "[NP's] programme will be highly sought after as it bears the mark of the Singapore-brand of education and Singapore's strong reputation in logistics."

Other courses such as diplomas in Mechatronic Engineering (MTE), Electronic and Computer Engineering (ECE) and Quality Management and Engineering (QME) are being considered.

Intake for the first-year at SH-NP is capped at 200 students and classes will be conducted only in English. Mr Wang estimates that, "School fees will roughly be in the region of \$3,000 to \$4,000 per year for each student."



CONNECTING WITH CHINA: A New China Campus named Shenyang-Ngee Ann Polytechnic, will receive their first batch of students come September. (Picture: Courtesy of Mr Wang Chin Chong)

Interested candidates from China have to undergo a rigorous selection process to size up their proficiency in English, Mathematics and Science. Mr Wang revealed that in addition to the National College Entrance Exam (NCEE), potential candidates will also have to pass SH-NP's entrance exam.

He said, "The admission criteria will be exactly identical to what we are administering to foreign students who hope to seek enrolment into NP."

The joint partnership with IAE means NP can draw on its resources and make use of its premises in China.

Students should be glad to know that the IAE's teaching and other campus facilities are on par with local standards.

Mr Chan said, "The IAE's sprawling new campus is sited in a new development zone near the city and among another three or

four new tertiary institutions. It promises to be a thriving and vibrant zone for intellectual development and cross-fertilisation."

As with any overseas venture, SH-NP has met with difficulties. The initial plan to start last September had to be postponed to its current date.

Mr Wang felt it was the process of getting approvals, which led to slight syllabus modifications to meet China's National Education system's requirements, and finding the right partners to collaborate with that took longer than expected.

He said, "When you go into an unfamiliar environment, there are challenges in terms of getting approval, understanding your partners, understanding the business conditions. Given sufficient time, we should be able to grasp [the workings of the country's education system]."

SYMC 2006: Going International



GOING GLOBAL: This year's SYMC will play host to many international visitors. (Picture: Robyn Lee)

BY AMANDA SOH
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Research papers and presenters from China, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA), India and even the Philippines will fly in to Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) for the second Singapore Youth and Media Conference (SYMC) on May 27 at the Convention Centre.

SYMC, initiated by NP's School of Film & Media Studies (FMS) last year, has gone international in just its second run, attracting 77 papers in total, out of which

25 are foreign papers.

Event organiser Mr Brian Lee explained, "When I came up with this idea of SYMC, it was ... the first of its kind, so it was held at a national level. Initially, we planned to make it international, probably around three years later."

He later added, "However, because the first was such a success, we know that this enterprising learning platform really works, so we wanted to make it international to reach out to more people, not just from the region, but even further."

The FMS lecturer is looking forward to giving youths' overseas a chance to share their opinions with our local youths', leading to an exchange of ideas and critical thinking about communication and media issues.

According to fellow organiser and lecturer, Mr Herald Bangras, the reason for going international exceeds making SYMC a platform for youths around the world to share their views and ideas.

He added, "I see SYMC, by going international, as facilitating the process of networking and interacting with foreign institutions and helping us achieve this

objective of building more links with Foreign Specialised Institutes."

Chairperson of the SYMC 2006 Committee Trina Bong Xueqin, 20, who graduates from NP in June, said, "For Singaporean students, it gives us a wider view of what is going on in the region and further, and for other students overseas, it gives them a glimpse of what is happening in Singapore and how they are affected by these issues and connected to one another."

Based on feedback received in SYMC 2005, the format of this year's conference is changing in other ways.

Mr Lee told *Tribune*, "2005 just used an overall theme which was Youth and Media. It encompasses a lot of different themes, but this time we focussed more on Popular Culture... as the participants [then] felt that Pop culture is something interesting."

Besides participants and presenters, the audience can also get involved.

The format of the conference has been changed to accommodate increased discussions and forums.

As before, this platform will also give Mass Communication (MCM) students

a chance to showcase the papers that they wrote in their second-year module, Communication Issues.

Gabriel Wong, 18, a final-year MCM student, "The lecturers discussed and found that my group's presentation was something interesting to them, and it would be good if we could translate it into a workshop for the secondary school students."

Gabriel's group wrote about Media Violence, focussing on cartoons on television, a topic secondary school students are likely to relate to and benefit from.

Not only does SYMC allow students an international platform to exchange views and build connections, it also provides students ownership of the events they host, like workshops.

Gabriel said, "We actually came up with the entire plan for our own workshop, we draw up the time chart, we do the financing, we produce the take-home items and we facilitate the entire activity."

Read about the recent launch of *Medialogues*, a book compilation of the top papers presented in SYMC 2005, in www.theurbanwire.com.

IS Trains Indo-China Government Officials

BY KHAIRIN NAZURA
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After a successful run in Cambodia, staff of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies (IS) will also teach Laotian government officials English and communication skills.

In April 2005, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) approached IS with a proposal of sending IS staff to Cambodia to teach the government officials there.

"Having discussed with the MFA and my colleagues, we realised that if we embarked on this programme with MFA, it would help expose our colleagues to invaluable regional training," said Mrs Michelle Chee, IS Deputy Director, who is in charge of overseas programmes of the school.

Mrs Chee said the school's main concern was to ensure that the programme will benefit Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) students. She said, "We look at it more from the point of what the staff can gain from teaching in these countries, so that, in turn, they can come back and pass the benefits to our students [who are our first priority]."

The first lecturers, Mr Chong Chin Liang and Ms Evelyn Ng, went to Phnom Penh, Cambodia from February 19 to March 18.

The Executive English and Communication Course, taught consecutively by Mr Chong and then Ms Ng, was held at the Cambodia-Singapore



TOASTING TO SUCCESS: Government officials in Cambodia host a farewell dinner for the IS lecturers to thank them for their help during the four-week Executive English and Communication course. [Picture: Courtesy of Evelyn Ng]

Training Centre.

According to Ms Ng, the experience was “a good and positive one”. She based her course on four main concepts – reading, writing, speaking and cross-culture. With a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours in English, she is more than qualified to conduct these classes.

Ms Ng regarded the Cambodian participants as "a warm group of people", who impressed her with their eagerness to

learn, despite being adults.

Mr Chong, who has a degree in Social Science, focused mainly on sociolinguistics, the way language is used to communicate.

He explained, "For example, I concentrated more on familiarity with accents rather than grammar."

His unconventional teaching methods includes using materials like movies, podcasts and even Skype, a peer-to-peer telephone software.

Mrs Chee explained that a programme evaluation was done and the Cambodian participants felt that they benefitted a lot from the course. She added that the MFA "was very pleased with it" and asked for a rerun of the course, which will be held in August by two other IS lecturers.

"Besides that, the MFA also offered us to conduct a similar course for Laotian officials in March 2007," said Mrs Chee.

As they did for the programme in Cambodia, IS accepted the offer after evaluating the possible benefits that could be gained not only for the IS staff, but also for the students of NP.

Mrs Chee said that MFA is financing all costs the lecturers bear, from air tickets to accommodation. In addition, the lecturers receive a fee for their work, as they did for the first Cambodian programme.

However, Mrs Chee clarified that no new or adapted modules are likely to result from these overseas programmes.

But, she added, "In terms of the experiences the lecturers gained from having taught in a regional country, they will be able to bring back this knowledge and use it as examples in their teaching, since IS offers a lot of communication modules."

Mrs Chee said that she and her colleagues welcome opportunities such as these overseas programmes as they provide "another platform for her colleagues" to expand their knowledge and views. ■

SBOTB Fires Up Band Competition In NP

BY SYED ARAFAT
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Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students who want to make it big as a band have an extra incentive to sign up for the Singapore Battle of the Bands (SBOTB) 2006.

Asrafi Asat, the project coordinator for this year's competition, told **Tribune** that NP students who produce their school identification card will receive a 25 percent discount on the registration fees of \$80, thus saving \$20.

This incentive, he said, would be so that "NP students who have dreams to make it big will now be encouraged further to sign up for the competition."

Asrafi, who is also from MindsEye Records said, "We know that there are a couple of good bands that are in Ngee Ann, and in the past, bands like Audio Breakout did well when they were given the opportunity last year."

He later added, "We would like to give that chance once again and at the same time, reach out to the younger crowd."

He also made it clear that the privilege is not just restricted to a band consisting of only NP members.

"We understand that some students have band members who are not from Ngee Ann itself. We're okay with that, as long as the one that registers for the competition is a Ngee Ann student," he assured.

Darren Tan Wen Min, 18, a second-year InfoComm Technology (IT) student who has a band of four, said, "It's a great opportunity to get our music career going."

Considering that there are up to \$25,000 worth of cash and prizes to be won and a goodie bag worth \$250 to be given for every registration, on top of the additional discount for NP students, Asrafi hopes that there are sufficient incentives for NP students to step up to the challenge.

"Every year for the past four years, I have seen the quality of bands get better and better. Last year's was the best so far, and we hope that this year will be even better."

Registration forms can be downloaded from NP's entertainment e-zine, **www.theurbanwire.com**.

Registration will close on July 1.

Log on to www.theurbanwire.com
for a chance to win 20 pairs of tickets to watch
Singapore Battle of the Bands 2006!

Your music journey begins HERE! Ready to be seen? Ready to let your music be heard? Dare to be different?
Ready to showcase your talent? Singapore Battle Of The Bands 2006 lets you be all that and more!!!

SINGAPORE BATTLE OF THE BANDS 2006

Closing Date : Mass Registration @ PLANET PARADIGM
25 June 2006 from 2pm onwards
Auditions @ PLANET PARADIGM
8 & 9 July 2006
Quarter Finals @ PLANET PARADIGM
15, 22, 29 July & 5 August 2006
Semi Finals @ DXO Colours By The Bay, ESPLANADE
20 & 27 August 2006
GRAND FINALS @ DOWNTOWN EAST, D'ENT
16th September 2006

\$25,000.00

WORTH OF CASH & PRIZES TO BE WON!

Register now & get a goodie bag worth \$250.00 : FREE Jamming Vouchers, Free Food Vouchers, FREE Drink Vouchers, FREE CD Merchandise, FREE Discount Coupons, FREE Wild Wild Wet Entry Vouchers

Proudly Presented By Co-Presenter Brought To You By Organized By Official Venue

Supporting Partners

Registration forms available : AnP Studio, Boon Studio, Beat Merchant, Alan Studio, Alvon Music Studio, TNT Studio, Blackside Studio, FocalPro Audio Solutions, EA Studio, U Studio, Film Noir Music Studio, Four Tones Music Rehearsal Studio, Garage Studios, Insound Studio, Jale Studio, Liquidize, Mueenman Studio, MYX Music Studio, Ouel Studio, Velvet Jazz, Sound Laboratory, To Weightherin, La Vanita.....
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义安文艺社公团舞台组再现光芒

谢智信报道
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除了你熟知的“Poly Stage F' Actor” (PSP), 义安理工学院也有一个每年一直在默默耕耘的中文戏剧组——舞台组。自1970年成立以来, 他们呈现过无数的舞台剧, 无论在校内或校外都受到观众热烈的欢迎。

一向保持低调的他们, 在愚人节时站上了本校LT26的舞台, 呈现一场扣人心弦的舞台剧——《给我一个理由》, 并且受到热烈的回响。

这场筹备了将近7个多月的舞台剧, 原定在去年上演。但是, 因面临人手与资金上的短缺而只好将它搁后。

《给我一个理由》的二十岁导演朱俐瑾, 目前就读于生物医药科学系, 她说: “刚开始的时候难免会感到失望... 因为毕竟我们都希望能够举办一个属于自己的演出, 让我们能够以它为荣。”

这个看似简简单单的希望, 却成了每位舞台组成员背后的推动力。他们朝向这个目标迈进, 克服了之前所面临的重重障碍, 把当晚的演出搞得有声有色。

据俐瑾透露, 《给我一个理由》的灵感来自于她一个朋友的亲身经历。经过戏剧组成员和指导老师黄奕磊先生的帮忙后, 才能够将故事画上一个完美的符号。因此, 俐瑾很骄傲地

说: “这场演出就有如我们的宝宝一样, 包含了我们每一位成员的心血与汗水。”

故事巧妙地运用了倒叙的手法, 透过在剧情里已逝世的美欣与天使的谈话过程, 了解她那不堪回首的往事。同时, 也让观众了解她如何在面临爱情与家庭上重重的波折后, 选择了人生的绝路。

剧情里的两位女主角是由一对刚毕业于会计系的二十一岁孪生姐妹, 依芹与依婷分别担任。她们在《给我一个理由》里, 饰演了在世与在世的美欣。精湛的演技让这两姐妹成为当晚备受瞩目的焦点之一, 并且在谢幕之时, 获得观众如雷般的掌声。

有一幕描述美欣的父母因听信一位“道士”的劝告, 深信美欣(依芹饰演)是他们的命中克星, 因此通过电话与当时正在美国留学的女儿断绝关系。在同一个晚上, 美欣的男友以两人性格不合的理由狠心向她提出了分手。面临双重打击的美欣, 在台上悲痛的哭号声更是赚人热泪。

但是, 如此逼真的表演不是一朝一夕得来的, 尤其在处理感情戏方面, 她们姐妹俩更是下了一番苦功。她们说, 刚开始的时候都会回想一些不开心的往事。同时, 她们也会在私底下与自己演对手戏的朋友探讨如何将角色演得更逼真, 并且互相给予对方意见。因此在经过几次的排练后, 情感



依婷深情地吹奏着歌曲, 让台上的“天使”备受感动。[Picture: Tang De Jun]

便自然地流露出来。

由于剧情里的美欣感情丰富, 因此依芹与依婷在出场前都必须培养情绪。依芹说: “(剧情里扮演的角色感情)起伏很大, 因此需要我们先全情地投入在其中。在换场的时候, 我都会先深呼吸, 给自己休息一下, 让脑子冷静下来, 才再次进场。”

除了将角色饰演得淋漓尽致, 依婷也在戏里呈现了一首悦耳动听的口琴

曲。没有音乐底子的她坦言说: “刚开始的时候, 压力会很大, 老师经常会stress我(向我‘施压’)。”

同时, 依婷也担心自己会演奏不佳。因此, 经过了四个月的苦练再加上朋友的帮忙后, 她才能够有当晚杰出的表现。

据俐瑾所知, 舞台组可能将在年底前去马来西亚上演《给我一个理由》, 一切仍在安排当中。

“非常”闪耀之星

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连串的寻星选拔赛, 见证了来自不同学校的明星诞生。继何维建以及姚懿珊后, 一颗明日之星再度在义安闪烁着一他, 就是成功打入《非常Superband》十强的Amber成员之一, 李伟铭。

毕业于机械工程系的他, 现任工程师职位, 从小就对音乐产生浓厚的兴趣。从学钢琴到电子吉他, 让他的生活似乎与音乐脱离不开关系。

现年二十八岁的伟铭, 曾同一时间在校外参加了四支不同的乐队, 而其中有一支是专门在酒廊表演。对于这四支乐队如何组成, 他说: “因为新加坡很小, (而)玩音乐的人也很多, 所以这里介绍, 那里介绍, 过了一阵子后(便会因志趣相同而决定一起玩音乐)。”

伟铭也曾在义安组织过乐队, 并且参加了一个当时的校内小型演奏会。虽然同时兼顾学业与“事业”, 足以让伟铭忙得不可开交, 但时间上妥善的安排, 让他能够两者兼并。

他透过无数的本地音乐比赛结识到志同道合的朋友, 并且组成了今天的Amber。他们成立以来都一致向中文乐坛发展。同时, 也曾以自创歌曲成功打入新加坡2003的总决赛。

多方面的才华, 让他们成为《非常Superband》十四强里备受肯定的乐队之一。不管结果如何, 让我们祝福伟铭以及Amber的成员, 愿他们能够在乐坛上找到属于自己的一片天。



[Picture: Sean Zhi Xing] 热爱音乐的李伟铭, 散发着明星魅力

有话说!

一句话, 引发了一系列的笔战。几个月前, 本地的一份报刊报道了一名初级学院的学生在玩网络游戏时, 骂了另一名理工学院的学生笨。许多读者读了这则新闻后, 为此感到忿忿不平, 便写信到海峡时报的社论版。但同时, 也有读者认同理工学院的学生比不上初级学院学生的说法。就这样, 展开了一场理工学院与初级学院学生之间的“战争”。

与理工学院学生相比, 初级学院的学生是否真的在学识上略胜一筹? Tribune决定走遍全岛, 了解下青少年对此事的看法。

“我认为这个误解的产生是因为两者的学生对彼此缺乏认识...因此若要降低彼此间的误会, 我们应该多举办一些活动让工艺学院, 理工学院, 以及初级学院的学生能够聚集在一起。”

李至薰, 17岁, 莱佛士初级学院

“我觉得初级学院的学生在学识方面比较聪明的说法, 并不是完全没有根据的, 毕竟‘O’水准说明了一切。但这也不代表他们比较能干, 因为才智是无法用成绩来衡量的。”

何庭轩, 18岁, 华中初级学院

“初级学院的学生之所以会认为理工学院的学生并不比他们聪明, 可能是因为他们对于理工学院的生活一无所知吧!”

Sunita Swiraj More, 18岁, 新加坡理工学院, 资讯科技系

“在外面社会里, 不是一切都讲究学历。因此理工学院才会采取如此广泛

的教学法, 让学生能够亲身体验到现实的工作情况。”

蓝振杰, 17岁, 华中初级学院

“进入初级学院或理工学院的决定, 除了我们的成绩以外, 也在于我们的兴趣以及将来要走的道路。”

李淑芳, 18岁, 义安理工学院, 生物科技系

“一般上, 两所学院的学生确实有不同的频率, 但这不是因为个人的能力所在, 而是在于他们的读书环境。”

钟懿慧, 18岁, 维多利亚初级学院

“我不认同这种说法...因为也有不少的成功人士毕业于理工学院...”

陈锦华, 17岁, 新加坡理工学院, 会计系

“初级学院的学生在学业方面会显得比较优秀, 但理工学院的学生在创新方面会略胜一筹。”

慕容玉敏, 16岁, 先驱初级学院

“我认为理工学院学生的EQ会比较高, 智商方面, 在现今的社会, 双方应该不会有太大的落差。”

江澄璇, 18岁, 淡马锡理工学院, 酒店与旅游管理系

Going Mad Over Mad Jack



Redeem your privilege card at Mad Jack Café or Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Blk 52, #07-01, to enjoy a special discount of 30% on weekdays, and 10% on weekends and public holidays.

Those Australia.com ads, where kangaroos bound off a golf course, fireworks equal turning on the lights, and a waterplane is your taxi waiting, must have made you yearning to go Down Under.

Dreams such as these may seem unreal, given your time and budgetary constraints, but there's an alternative that's just as great. Say G'day Mate! to Mad Jack Café, where you'll surely find the most mouth-watering Australian Fish & Chips.

Dubbed 'Aussie's Best Fish & Chips', the dish uses a secret recipe that will make your stomach do the Waltzing Matilda at just a whiff of this tantalising dish. The good thing about Mad Jack's Fish & Chips is the absolute absence of a strong fishy smell. Plus, their batter is thin, light and not oily, making it a healthier choice. Pay only \$6.90, for a nice big Aussie-sized serving, making it a definitely delicious deal.

Apart from their fantastic Australian Fish & Chips, Mad Jack also serves a wide range of Western dishes, such as Pasta and Steak, which promise to leave you craving for more.

If you're a health-conscious diner, this café will be a great choice for you. Firstly, the food has no MSG, and secondly, they serve a wide range of health juices, made from ingredients like cucumbers or tomatoes. Just in case it isn't clear what they can do for you, the juices come in names such as "Weight Watchers" and "Complexion Enhancer".



And now that you've been so good, your body can afford to indulge in their scrumptious desserts, which are also to die for.

Sample their banana crumble topped with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, and you will feel an ecstatic rush go through your taste buds, as both the vanilla and banana melt together to create a

cosmic collision in your mouth.

Chocolate cake lovers must surely try the Chocolate Delight. The cake is so rich that in one bite, you will feel like you're swimming in a pool of chocolate fondue.

Apart from Mad Jack, Mr Jack Chin also owns five different PK Xpress outlets. PK Xpress also sells Fish & Chips and other great dishes, and it was from here that Jack formulated the recipe for Mad Jack's version of their Australian Fish & Chips.

Expect to spend between \$4 and \$10 at both Mad Jack's and PK Xpress.

But, just for NP staff and students, you can redeem your privilege card and present it at Mad Jack Café to enjoy a special membership discount of 30% on weekdays, and 10% on weekends and public holidays.

And if that's not enough to entice you, Jack believes in the standard of his food so much, he says that if you're not happy with it, you can get your money back, guaranteed.

So why wait for the next vacation to travel down under, when you can find Australia in Mad Jack?

Mad Jack Café

Mad Jack Café is a 10-minute bus ride from Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) bus stop, with buses like 74, 151, 154, conveniently arriving every few minutes.

- 1) Mad Jack Café**
6 Duke's Road
(along Bkt Timah Rd before Coronation Plaza)
Tel: 64624300
- 2) PK Xpress at Clementi Central**
Blk 450, #01-271
Clementi Ave 6
(Kopitiam Foodcourt)
Tel: 91376911
- 3) PK Xpress at Choa Chu Kang**
Blk 624, Choa Chu Kang St 62
(Family Foodcourt above Yew Tee MRT)
Tel: 97669836
- 4) PK Xpress at Ang Mo Kio Central**
Blk 727 #01-4236
Ang Mo Kio Ave 6
(Seafood Junction next to Courts Furniture)
Tel: 97696016
- 5) PK Xpress at Serangoon Garden**
Stall 23, Serangoon Garden Way
(Hawker Centre next to Shell petrol station)
Tel: 91379722
- 6) PK Xpress at Changi Village**
Blk 5, #01-2035
Changi Village
(Millie's Coffee House)
Tel: 93870350

1 Fish & Chips \$6.90 per set Aussie's Best ✓ Crispy Batter Outside ✓ Fresh & Juicy & Chunky Fish Fillet ✓ Spicy Mix Fries	2 Beef Chicken Burger only \$3 Beef Chicken Burger & Chips \$5 ✓ Special Home-made Patties ✓ Fresh, Tasty & Juicy	Wine Beer Cakes/Pies Ice-Cream Pancakes Pizza Local snacks Doctor Juice	3 Golden Brown Cheese Fragrant Butter & Mushroom Rice ✓ Chicken / Fish Baked Rice	4 Lamb Chop / Cutlet Black pepper sauce Brown sauce ✓ 100% Aussie Lamb ✓ Tender & Juicy	5 \$7.90 6 \$4.50 7 \$11.90 8 \$4.50 9 \$4.80 10 \$4.50 11 \$3.90 12 \$3.90 13 \$3.90
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NP-wide Search For New DJs



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: A campus-wide search by Radio Heatwave was conducted to find the best DJs NP has to offer. (Picture: Courtesy of Rozana Mustafa)

BY WILSON YEO
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If you've ever heard presenters on Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) campus radio station and thought you could do better, here's your chance to prove it.

As many as 34 students signed up for 'Spotlight', Radio Heatwave's hunt for student Disc Jockeys (DJs), in hope of becoming one, according to promotions executive Norafiqin Hairoman, 21.

The station's first DJ search in 2004 attracted less than 20 contestants.

The final-year Mass Communication (MCM) student added, "Surprisingly,

response was really good. We had people e-mailing and calling as soon as the posters went up."

Prizes include three Swatch watches and vouchers worth \$300.

The top two students will also get to co-host shows on Heatwave with its DJs and possibly win free passes to movies, concerts and parties. This is on top of CCA points and a certificate they will get.

The station's general manager, Premmlatha, 19, said, "In the past, there was the idea that to be a DJ for Radio Heatwave, you had to be in Mass Communication (MCM). The truth is, you might find good

DJs in BA (Business and Accountancy) or even Engineering."

The final-year student said some students did not sign up as, "There's the misconception that it's a media student event."

She cited well-known Mediacorp Radio DJ Daniel Ong as someone who did not study media before entering the industry.

Mr Yokanathan Ramakrishnan, the station's lecturer-in-charge said, "It's a good effort on the part of Radio Heatwave to spot talents from other schools."

'Spotlight' was open to all English-speaking NP students. Besides good elocution skills, Premmlatha said, "We're looking at on-air personality. The X-factor."

Prospective DJs were auditioned on May 20. They were tested on their diction and speaking skills while using a microphone, and attended a radio skills workshop.

10 shortlisted students then co-hosted programmes with Heatwave DJs, which were broadcasted in Canteen one and two and the Atrium.

Norafiqin said all students can vote for their favourite DJs via e-mail or SMS.

The five participants with the most votes will face off in the finals at the Atrium on June 2, from 1 pm until 2 pm, when bands performing in Hard Rock Cafe's Rock D'Fort music festival will perform.

Premmlatha said they will showcase the DJs with good potential outside of the two winners as part of their goal to "become a more campus-friendly radio station". ■

NP Catches Idol Fever



GRAB THE MIC: The Idol fever has caught on in NP, giving students a platform to show off their vocals. (Picture: Robyn Lee)

BY SYLVIA LIM
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Just before auditions from the second season of Singapore Idol were telecast, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) started the hunt for its own NP Idol with auditions on May 19.

Film & Media Studies (FMS) lecturer Mr Jonathan Foo has jumped on the bandwagon of talent competitions because he feels that "there should be an 'official' and 'proper' competition event done with good publicity in this campus ... [and the Idol series] is still a very hip programme".

Former writer/producer for MediaCorp TV added, "I believe the show will show people what students here can... achieve, and prove their talents in different ways..."

Mr Foo is part of the judging panel that will be made up of Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) staff and, hopefully, local celebrity JJ Lin and Taiwanese singer Tank. He also said, "I hope to see more miracles in their vocal and stage performances... I actually hope there will be original songs composed [by] students that has never [been] publicised before, to allow contestants [to] perform in their own way, to prove their genuine skill and talent."

Host of NP Idol, Valerie Lim, 19, said, "I don't think I'll be surprised at the talent that NP has, because we've seen from other contests like Singapore Idol, and Power 98's JamX the numbers of our students who've made their name in the industry."

The final-year Mass Communication (MCM) student added, "It's opportunities like these that... push people to do more than they thought they could," she said.

Mr Foo is looking at a top prize of \$1,000 cash and a CD recording in campus for the winner, which he hopes will be out by Christmas. This will be sold and promoted on campus and eventually to music labels outside as well.

Mr Foo added that the value of the prizes may change depending on which other sponsors come in before the finals at the Convention Centre on Aug 4.

Second-year Biomedical Engineering student, Gracielynn Encio Flores, 18, who clinched the title of ECE Idol last year and was crowned second runner-up for SOE Idol in January, advises contestants that one must "be confident because confidence is one thing that can easily be seen..." ■

The Rebirth of Jeevagaanam

BY HAFIZAH OSMAN
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The staging of a musical after a two-year hiatus garnered Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) Indian Cultural Society's (ICS) \$21,000, one of the highest incomes a Co-Curricular Activity (CCA) group has ever received.

"It was a very difficult process but we had a good new team that generated new ideas from the start," said T. Uma Mageswari, 20, producer of the show.

"We targeted our families' companies and those in Little India. We also newly established increasing sponsorship through donation cards, as the smallest contribution enlarged our funds," he added.

Some \$15,000 was received from sponsors including NTUC, while donation cards brought in \$1,000. Another \$5,000 was obtained through ticket sales. Shangari Mogan, 19, a final-year Business Studies student who took care of sponsorship, said, "We went for smaller amounts which added to the whole lot."

The hard work was necessary as the production, titled *Marupiravi - Rebirth or Is It*, cost an unprecedented \$16,000 to produce and stage on April 29. It played at Kallang Theatre with the message of being content with one's life. Instead of using Shakespeare adaptations to showcase the lessons, as was the ICS tradition, this year's Jeevagaanam used abstract concepts to convey their messages. But it was not just the new concept that saw jaws dropping.

The 'accident' scene, where an actual car and motorcycle were placed on stage with



BACK ON STAGE: Jeevagaanam, a regular musical series by NP ICS, had a contemporary facelift and a \$16,000 production tab after a two-year hiatus. (Picture: Courtesy of T. Uma Mageswari)

other props, wowed many.

Viewer R. Suhasini, 21, who studies in the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), said, "It's a very interesting and new idea. It's the first time I've seen an Indian school show stage a prop this massive."

The musical was also revolutionary in staging a club scene, traditionally considered somewhat taboo within the Indian community, as it is unethical to promote boozing.

Since the musical's concept itself had departed from the old Shakespearean tradition, the production team decided that nightlife, now a part of the contemporary young person's lifestyle, need not be something that could not be depicted.

Co-incidentally, three weeks before

Jeevagaanam, the National University of Singapore (NUS) staged the first club scene by a tertiary institution in Singapore.

Unfortunately, despite its scale, strong finances and innovation, ticket sales were unsatisfactory as less than a third of the expected 1,200-strong audience turned up.

Likely reasons for this were the inaccessible venue and the fact that on that same day, Tampines Junior College (TPJC) ICS was staging its show and election rallies were going on.

Though a full-house was not achieved, those who attended gave it two thumbs up. T. Muthu Kumar, 21, who's serving his National Service, said, "The effort by them could be seen; from the props to the technical aspects, they tried their best." ■



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ONE HAPPY FAMILY: A record-breaking number of freshmen attended the recent annual Primers Orientation Camp. (Picture Courtesy of BB Primers)

Great Turnout For BB Camp

BY JULIAN LOW
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The Boys Brigade (BB) Primers recruited an extra 10 percent of participants this year for their annual Primers Orientation Camp, though there was a lack of participation from two other polytechnics.

In previous years, Nanyang and Temasek polytechnic were involved in this annual camp. However, this year, both pulled out, resulting in a lack of manpower and support. Despite this setback, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) and Singapore Polytechnic (SP) made the event a greater success.

According to camp commander Tay Wei Yuan, 18, the gifts and entertainment led to great response for the three-day camp, which began on May 5 in NP.

"We gave out freebies and goodie-bags this year, and decorated our booth with an Xbox 360 theme," said the final-year student from NP's Electronic and Computer Engineering (ECE) course.

"I think that was what attracted many

people. Last year, together with Nanyang Polytechnic and the [other] polytechnics, BB Primers fielded 200 plus freshmen. This year however, with just us NP and SP primers, we managed to get a total of 225 freshmen!"

He hopes the impressive camp attendance will "enhance the image of the BB Primers".

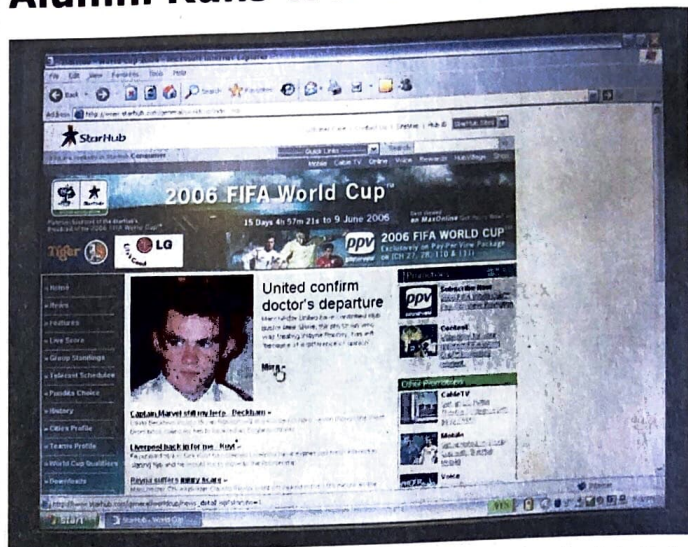
Captain of the NP BB Primers, Daniel Kalaiselvan, 29, was just as encouraged to see many recruits this year.

"In my three years here, I've never seen this many freshmen joining the Primers, so it's good to see that the... year threes have used their creativity well," he said.

Toh Wen Ya, 17, one of the freshmen campers, thoroughly enjoyed her time during the camp.

"When my senior pulled me in, I thought it was a very carefree CCA. But after joining, I was proven wrong. The camp has made all of us [freshmen] closer and I'm very enthusiastic about future activities such as outdoor camping," said the first-year nursing student. ■

Alumni Runs World Cup Website



RESULTS ON DEMAND: Starhub's World Cup site, run by NP alumni, with stories written by students, is a local first for live news and updates. (Picture: Arman Shah)

BY CHONG YI HAN
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World Cup starts on June 9, but a Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) alumni has been fanning the fever in Singapore for almost half a year.

Mr Mark Chew, 28, who graduated in 1999 with a Mass Communication (MCM) diploma, runs the football site for Starhub, the cable operator which offers Singapore's World Cup coverage exclusively.

According to Mr Chew, the website is the first in Singapore to have "live news and live scores" during the World Cup. It updates soccer scores as frequently as the biggest sites in Europe.

www.starhub.com/worldcup was an idea birthed to help local soccer fans get the scores almost immediately. Mr Toh Da Sheng, Director of Starhub's Multimedia Solutions Unit, passed the task of handling the site to Mr Chew.

As an NP student, he was sent to Bangkok to cover the Asian Games in 1998, and he did interviews with athletes

from different parts of Asia, getting these published in several regional media outlets. It was this opportunity that got him hooked on to sports journalism.

With a degree in sports media from the University of Canberra, Mr Chew gladly took on the challenge of creating the football website from scratch.

Much of the content is written by MCM students. Four final-year MCM students, all reporters for NP publications **Tribune**, **hype** and **theurbanwire.com**, are paid to write for Starhub's football website regularly.

One of them, Gerald Goh, 23, said, "I am extremely happy to be given such an opportunity, as it does not only hone my writing capabilities but also allows me to showcase my passion for football."

The other three writers, Syed Arafat, Julian Low and Ethan Leong, are all 19.

Mr Chew, who had originally wanted only two student writers, is very pleased that the students have been doing good work and said he will surely come back to NP if he needs more writers. ■

NP Aquathlon Team Eyes International Glory



NEXT STEP, WORLD: NP's Aquathlon team building up for international competition. (Picture: Courtesy of Tri-Elite)

BY ETHAN LEONG
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Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) Aquathlon team's second-place finish in an aquathlon was a boost in their bid to become the first school team to represent Singapore at an international event next year.

Held on April 29 at Tanjong Beach, Sentosa Island, the New Balance Inter-Collegiate and Schools Aquathlon Challenge

2006 drew more than 100 of the best triathletes from various secondary and tertiary schools.

The schools involved include National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Temasek Polytechnic (TP) and Anglo-Chinese Junior College (ACJC).

The Aquathlon involved a combination of 400 metres swimming and 800 metres running, challenging the fitness and performance of the members.

For many members of NP's Tri-Elite team, the biathlon was a maiden experience.

Mr Edmund Oh, lecturer-in-charge of Tri-Elite, said the club's training had paid dividends in the development and wellness of the team.

He added, "We're planning to take part in the Langkawi full Iron Men triathlon next year, so all this [participation] is to prepare for it."

According to Mr Oh, this was their third

competition, as they had participated in the NUS Biathlon in February at Tanjong Beach and the Singapore Biathlon in March held at East Coast Park.

They will also be going for the Bintan Triathlon in May, and the OSIM Singapore Triathlon in July.

The team decided to take on smaller scale triathlons to ensure that their members will not lack stamina when the Iron Men Triathlons arrive next March in Langkawi and New Zealand, according to the international schedule posted in the Triathlon Association of Singapore's website, www.triathlonsingapore.org.

The Iron Men Triathlon spans a distance of more than 200 km, including a 3.8km-swim, a 180km-cycle and a 42km-run in both countries.

Tri-Elite will face stiff competition from the best tri-athletes around the world, including those from Australia, France, the United States and Brazil.

"I'm really pleased with how the students are coping with the physical stress and mental tiredness," said Mr Oh, who was thrilled to see the determination and hard work of the students.

Mr Oh said that he is extremely encouraged by their improvements.

He commented, "I believe that they are improving, and [this is] very encouraging because we are basically in the preparation stage [for the iron men triathlons] which started in January."

Keith Hsu, a second-year Banking and Financial Services (BFS) student, and president of Tri-Elite, said that he had managed to "hit the peak" of his performance at the recent Aquathlon.

He added, "I think the full Iron Men competition in Langkawi will be tough, but it will be a good challenge."

"The distance is very far, but with enough training, we should be able to tackle it," he said confidently. ■