

## *Connecting Minds, Unlocking Talents & Creating Value.*

**F**rom its humble beginnings as a small college with only 116 students in 1963, Ngee Ann Polytechnic has grown into one of Singapore's leading institutions of higher learning.

Ngee Ann offers 29 full-time diploma courses through the Early Childhood Education programme and six academic schools, namely, School of Business & Accountancy, School of Engineering, School of Film & Media Studies, School of InfoComm Technology, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, and School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology.

There are now 14,000 full-time and 1,600 part-time students, and a vibrant alumni community of more than 90,000. The Polytechnic offers students a balanced and broad-based education through the Ngee Ann Learning Model (NLM), and a Mobile eLearning (MeL) environment with the use of laptops amidst a wireless campus. It maintains close industry links and devotes resources to promote entrepreneurship.

To enrich every student's heart, mind and soul, Ngee Ann offers over 80 clubs and societies, and organises varied community service projects both local and overseas.



# in conversation

Ngee Ann Polytechnic Council Chairman Mr Choo Chiau Beng (1 April 1995 to 31 December 2003) and his successor, Mr Tan Hup Foi, trade views on Ngee Ann's strengths and how it can continue to excel amidst a changing global landscape.

MR CHOO CHIAU BENG  
1 April 1995 - 31 December 2003



*Q: When Ngee Ann marked its 40th year in 2003, we reached a milestone in our development as a reputable institute of higher learning. How has NP dealt with the challenges of our ever-changing world?*

**Choo Chiau Beng (CCB):** The world – and our society is intricately tied to it – has been volatile to say the least. We've dealt with the aftermath of September 11 and the economic downturn, to name a few challenges. Ngee Ann was particularly challenged by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in April 2003. Our campus was shut down for three days, bringing into focus to students and staff how vulnerable we can be. But instead of feeling daunted, we utilised our resources so that affected students could study from home. Within days, we implemented plans to contain the risks. Advisories and updated information were disseminated via email and SMS. We were able to do so, thanks to our robust infrastructure, which our students and staff could readily adapt, utilise and maximise.

This bears testimony to Ngee Ann's open and flexible learning environment. Our push for broad-based curriculum and e-learning are primary drivers. Against this backdrop, we are able to nurture students who are able to think on their feet and operate out of the box.

I leave the Council in comfort as I have witnessed Ngee Ann's tremendous growth in the past decade. We have made great strides in moulding bright young individuals. I am glad to hand over an institution of such

calibre and repute to Mr Tan Hup Foi as his many years of corporate experience will bring Ngee Ann to the next exciting stage of excellence.

**Tan Hup Foi (THF):** Indeed, it is an exciting time and an honour for the Council and myself to steer Ngee Ann Polytechnic in its next lap. The Council will continue to dedicate time and energy to develop Ngee Ann into an excellent centre of learning. By anticipating and meeting the demands of this new globalised environment, we will expose our students to the realities of the changing world. Ngee Ann will continue to evolve and reinvent itself. A Ngee Ann education must produce nimble and adaptable individuals, able to overcome and handle all challenges that come their way.

*Q: What is the current landscape of Ngee Ann in providing an enriching learning experience for our students?*

**CCB:** The Ngee Ann Learning Model (NLM), introduced in July 2001, has established us as a leader in providing a balanced and broad-based education. We have achieved full implementation in this area – students from all levels can now select from a variety of interdisciplinary modules. I can see the significant impact of NLM. Being able to choose from 96 electives ranging from "How Rock Music Developed" to "Life Sciences Revolution" allows our students to pick up a wide range of skills and develop multiple interests. They are starting to see that the value of a Ngee Ann education extends beyond the traditional academic realm.



**MR TAN HUP FOI**  
From 1 January 2004

They see the benefits of choice that empowers them, and they have strongly endorsed this approach.

Our focus on an educational experience beyond the classroom is bearing fruit. As more of our students embark on overseas work attachments and community expeditions, they can better appreciate the need to look outward. Our student groups from over 80 clubs and societies have extended their reach by initiating multiple projects to showcase their talent, reach out to the community and help the less fortunate.

**THF:** In fact, students enrolling in Ngee Ann Polytechnic today form a very different breed. Exposed to technology from a young age as well as burgeoning educational options, they are looking for that something extra that will help them get ahead in life. To ensure that our students are equipped with competencies for the present and future, we will continue to look at how NLM can help us keep ahead of the curve. There will be increased focus on programmes that nurture and encourage innovation and enterprise across all levels and disciplines. We will introduce new offerings in design, lifestyle and technology, and emphasise active experiential learning.

We will also intensify our efforts to enrich our students' learning experience with more overseas immersion programmes and collaborations with industry partners and institutions. Similarly, we will continue to aggressively push for more overseas community expeditions for our students.

I believe this will make the difference between an academically good student and one who is creative, enterprising, and able to leverage on knowledge by transforming challenges into golden opportunities.

**Q: *How do we move forward to stay relevant?***

**CCB:** Today more than ever, entrepreneurs and risk-takers will dominate the world stage. The Council has at hand the meaningful and challenging task of nurturing our students' minds, encouraging them to take the initiative, to experiment, and not tire of working to achieve their dreams. These are exciting times ahead. Ngee Ann Polytechnic has enjoyed 40 years of amazing development in intellectual capital, and seen many of its graduates shine in the local and international arena.

Credit goes to the Ngee Ann Council and Advisory Committees for their foresight and passion, and the management and staff of the Polytechnic for their courage and dedication to see this through.

**THF:** We will continue to find new ways to inject entrepreneurship and innovation into the Ngee Ann DNA and mindset. We have taken up Acting Minister for Education Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam's challenge to "encourage enterprise and create a culture supportive of risk". It is only from experimentation and trying that we will succeed, and we will endeavour to create this environment that allows our students to blossom and excel.

# letter from the **Principal**



*Against the changing and increasingly competitive global climate, especially with the rising influence of China and India, the ability to innovate and create new knowledge is of paramount importance to Singapore's ability to thrive and excel.*

Ngee Ann Polytechnic is constantly re-inventing, anticipating and meeting the nation's needs in education and skills training. The guiding principle has always been the question: "How and what do we equip the Ngee Ann graduate with so he is a true asset to his employer, business, community and country?"

In fact, we had started answering this question in a revolutionary way in 2001 with the launch of the Ngee Ann Learning Model (NLM). With NLM fully implemented in March 2003, students can choose from 96 interdisciplinary modules that encourage innovation and enterprise, actively promote experiential learning. This interdisciplinary approach forms the cornerstone of the Polytechnic's strategy to prepare our students for the workplace of the future.

In FY2003/4, we started a new Diploma in Aerospace Technology and announced the launch of a new Diploma in Facilities Management for Business. We revised existing courses and unveiled eight part-time courses, including the Advanced and Specialist Diplomas in International Business, and Specialist Diploma in Web Technology.

We have also improved how our students learn. Our Mobile eLearning (MeL) strategy has enhanced interactive teaching and learning. In July 2003, we achieved full participation in the notebook ownership scheme for Level 1 students, and launched the MeL Studio to train and advise teaching staff in curriculum development. In FY2003/4, we launched more than 700 teaching modules on Blackboard, our e-learning platform. We are on target for full integration of our e-learning and e-services by 2005.

We have also improved our facilities to meet future needs and create a vibrant campus. The Convention Centre was opened in February 2003, and we built several study areas offering wireless connectivity around the campus. The new Teaching Hub, which promises a serene and inspirational learning experience, will open in June 2004.

The Ngee Ann learning experience is intricately linked to real industry experience and practices. Our induction as an official Microsoft IT Academy by Microsoft Singapore Pte Ltd and tie-ups with the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore, AEM-Evertch Holdings Ltd and Cisco Systems in FY2003/4 pave the way for further collaborations, and a richer learning experience.

We have also expanded the size of our "global" classroom. Our Memorandum of Understanding with Zhejiang University

City College in February 2004 adds China to our list of overseas partners, which include Australia, Canada, England, Finland, Germany, Japan and the USA.

Our students' learning frontiers and overseas exposure is further strengthened by overseas community service projects. This year, more than 1,000 students went on overseas stints – including 200 students on community service trips and 90 on work attachments. We are targeting a cohort participation rate of 40% over the next three years.

**The guiding principle has always been the question: "How and what do we equip the Ngee Ann graduate with so he is a true asset to his employer, business, community and country?"**

It is Ngee Ann's total learning package that has enabled our students to do exceedingly well. Some highlights: Our School of InfoComm Technology students won six awards at the nationwide Wireless Java Jam 2004, while our inventors won an outstanding seven Tan Kah Kee Young Inventors' Awards. Life Sciences & Chemical Technology students Joanna Tan Hwa Lay and Ginny Tan Jue Hui, collaborating with lecturer Gregory Chow, clinched the 2003 Bronze Award

in the Far Eastern Economic Review/Hewlett Packard Young Inventors Awards. Our micromouse team emerged tops at the 24th All Japan Micromouse Contest in November 2003. Our cheerleading squad, Magnum Force, clinched their fourth consecutive win at the 2004 Cheerobics competition.

The year 2003 was a particularly special year for Ngee Ann Polytechnic. To celebrate our 40th anniversary, we held a dinner at our new Convention Centre and a National Day Observance ceremony-cum-concert. We went on a heritage walk in September 2003 from Ngee Ann Kongsi at Tank Road to our Clementi campus, raising more than \$200,000 in aid of the President's Challenge. We also unveiled our very own orchid, the *Christieara* Ngee Ann.

In taking stock of all we have achieved, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation and thanks to Mr Choo Chiau Beng, who stepped down as Council Chairman on 31 December 2003. His sterling leadership brought the Polytechnic to new levels of excellence, and we are thankful for his guidance and foresight. We welcome Mr Tan Hup Foi as the new Council Chairman, and thank him for coming onboard to lead Ngee Ann in its next exciting stage of development. We will keep our focus firmly ahead, and remain resolute in our plans to provide the skills and environment for our students to realise *all* their dreams.



**Mr Chia Mia Chiang**  
Principal, Ngee Ann Polytechnic

# council members



(L - R)

**MR CHOO CHIAU BENG**  
chairman (up to 31 Dec 03)  
Chairman / CEO  
Keppel Offshore & Marine Ltd

**MR TAN HUP FOI**  
chairman (from 1 Jan 04)  
Deputy President  
SMRT Corporation



(L - R)

**MR WEE TEW LIM**  
deputy chairman  
Advisor  
LKN - Primefield Ltd

**PROF CHEONG HEE KIAT**  
member  
Deputy President & Dean  
School of Civil & Environmental Engineering  
Nanyang Technological University



**MR CHIA MIA CHIANG**  
member  
Principal  
Ngee Ann Polytechnic

(L - R)

**MR GOH KIM HOCK**  
member

Managing Director  
Chiat Si Industrial (Pte) Ltd  
(Ngee Ann Kongsi representative)

**MR RICHARD LEE SEW IAM**  
member

Director  
Ngee Ann Development Pte Ltd  
(Ngee Ann Kongsi representative)



(L - R)

**PROF ANDREW NEE**  
member  
Co-Director  
Singapore-MIT Alliance  
National University of Singapore

**BG NEO KIAN HONG**  
member

Commander Tradoc  
AFPN 1375  
HQ Tradoc



(L - R)

**MR ONG BENG LEE**  
member

Director (Housing)  
Ministry of National Development

**MR ROY QUEK**  
member

Director  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Education



(L - R)

**MR SENG HAN THONG**  
member

Assistant Secretary - General  
National Trades Union Congress

**MR SOH SIEW CHEONG**  
member

Senior Advisor  
Energy Market Authority



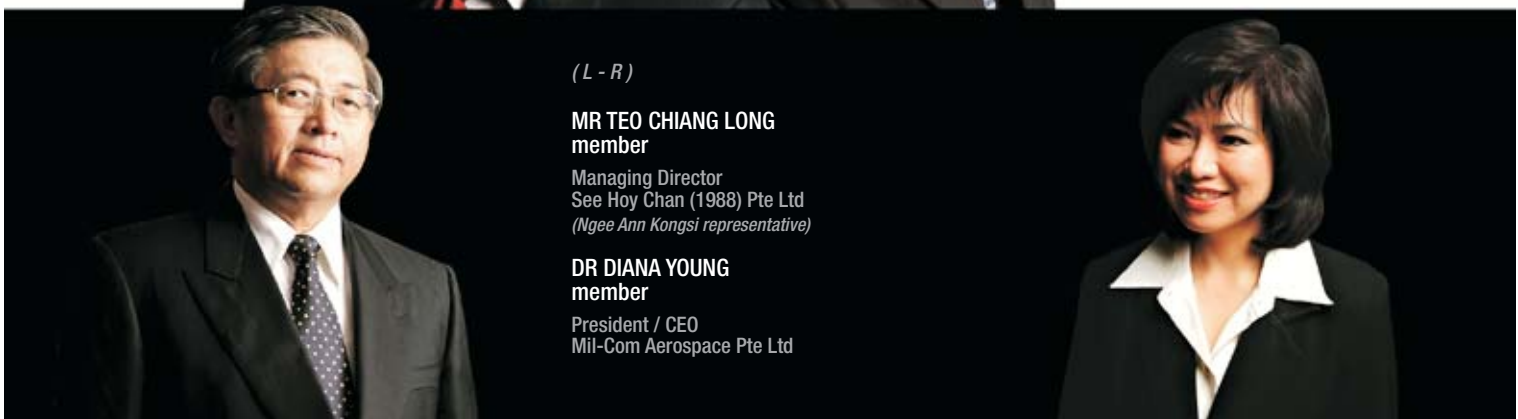
(L - R)

**MR SUHAIMI SALLEH**  
member

CEO  
SSA Management Consultants Pte Ltd

**DR WONG TAI**  
member

Chairman / CEO  
Informatics Holdings Ltd



(L - R)

**MR TEO CHIANG LONG**  
member

Managing Director  
See Hoy Chan (1988) Pte Ltd  
(Ngee Ann Kongsi representative)

**DR DIANA YOUNG**  
member

President / CEO  
Mil-Com Aerospace Pte Ltd