

# Singapore Government **MEDIA RELEASE**

---

SPEECH BY MR GAN KIM YONG, MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, AT THE NAMING OF LIEN YING CHOW LIBRARY AND OPENING OF LIEN YING CHOW GALLERY ON WEDNESDAY, 31 JANUARY 2007, 10.00 AM AT Ngee ANN POLYTECHNIC, ATRIUM, BLOCK 1

Mrs Margaret Lien, Chairman of the Lien Foundation

Governors of the Lien Foundation

Mr Tan Hup Foi, Chairman of the Ngee Ann Polytechnic Council

Mr Chia Mia Chiang, Principal of Ngee Ann Polytechnic

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

1 It gives me great pleasure to be here today to officiate at the naming of the Lien Ying Chow Library and the opening of the Lien Ying Chow Gallery.

2 Singapore's success today is due in no small part to the vision and contribution of our pioneering leaders. It is people like them who made the difference at every critical moment in the process of nation building. They had laid the foundation and paved the way for us to establish a cohesive society and a strong economy. The early entrepreneurs have defined our work ethics and set the high standards that we strive to uphold.

3 Today, we still see the impact of our pioneers in government business, community and education. Dr Lien Ying Chow was an inspiring example of someone who had left his mark not only in business, but also philanthropic causes such as education.

4 Despite being deprived of education as a boy, Dr Lien helped to shape the landscape of higher education in Singapore. He was one of the prime movers behind the establishment of a number of educational institutions, including Nanyang University and Ngee Ann College. The Ngee Ann College later

grew into the Ngee Ann Polytechnic that we know today. Through his support for education, Dr Lien opened the door for many Singaporeans to acquire knowledge and skills, laying the foundation for our economy to grow and for our people to have a better life.

5 As a businessman, Dr Lien was ahead of his time, and had a knack for seizing opportunities. Some may call it luck, but I think it was much more than that. It took tenacity and strategy to build a banking, hotel and property empire from scratch. He came to Singapore at the age of only 14, a penniless orphan. The Chinese saying “白手起家”, aptly depicts Dr Lien’s life story.

6 Today, his legacy of helping others is kept alive through the Lien Foundation whose key areas of focus include education, eldercare and environment. I would like to thank the Lien Foundation for its staunch support for these worthy causes.

7 As a founding father of Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Dr Lien had helped the polytechnic grow. In September last year, I was pleased to learn that the Lien Foundation had made a generous donation of \$5 million to enable Ngee Ann Polytechnic to set up the “Lien Ying Chow Education Initiative”. With an allocation of another \$5 million from Ngee Ann Polytechnic’s Education Fund to match this fresh donation and a transfer of \$500,000 from the current Lien Ying Chow Endowment Fund, the “Lien Ying Chow Education Initiative” now has a fund size of \$10.5 million. This fund allows the polytechnic to give out 15 Lien Ying Chow Scholarships and more than 200 Lien Ying Chow Bursaries each year, as well as offer interest-free loans for outstanding Ngee Ann graduates to pursue their overseas undergraduate education in selected fields.

8 I am also pleased to learn of the Lien Foundation’s support for Ngee Ann Polytechnic’s latest Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) programme. This programme will transform how nursing education is traditionally delivered. The use of PDAs will provide students with instant access to huge databases on drugs, diseases, health examination techniques, and even dialects to facilitate communication with patients. A sizeable part of the nursing curriculum will effectively be in the students’ hands. This will be the first of such programme for nursing students in Asia.

9 Dr Lien’s spirit of helping others is well and truly alive. It is fitting that Ngee Ann Polytechnic is naming its library after Dr Lien Ying Chow. I am happy to learn that his inspiring life will also be remembered through the establishment of the Lien Ying Chow Gallery within the library. The gallery will serve as a constant reminder of the achievements and generosity of this remarkable man. Through this gallery, I hope the staff and students of Ngee Ann Polytechnic can be inspired by Dr Lien’s pioneering spirit, determination to overcome the odds, and discipline to succeed.

10 Let me quote from Dr Lien as I conclude,

*“Anyone who works hard like me can do the same – if he has some luck. I never gamble, but go forward step by step. And everything that I’ve planned, I’ve gotten.”*

11 I am confident that many Ngee Ann Polytechnic students will emulate Dr Lien’s good work and values, realise their own dreams and give back to society.

Thank you.