

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

**OVER 300 PLACES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD COURSES AVAILABLE
FOR INAUGURAL EARLY ADMISSIONS EXERCISE (EAE)**

**EVERY SUCCESSFUL EAE APPLICANT WILL BE OFFERED ECDA TRAINING AWARD
WORTH UP TO \$40,000 EACH**

NEW UNIQUE SELECTION PROCESS TO ASSESS APTITUDE IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Singapore, 20 June 2016 – The Early Childhood Education sector is set to welcome a booming number of youth with a passion to shape young minds. Over 300 places in full-time early childhood education diploma courses will be offered by Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) and Temasek Polytechnic (TP) at the inaugural Early Admissions Exercise (EAE) commencing 22 June 2016. For the 2016 cohort, 265 out of 590 students enrolled for these courses were admitted via either Direct Poly Admission or the Joint Polytechnic Special Admissions Exercise. The total enrolment of 590 in 2016 sets a new record, marking a 74% increase over the previous year.

Record ECDA Training Award Sponsorship

The early childhood education diploma courses have been boosted by the support of the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA). The Agency has set aside more than \$10 million to sponsor the ECDA Training Awards over the next three years. The Training Award (TA), which is worth up to \$40,000 per student, includes full course sponsorship of tuition fees and an \$800 monthly allowance. The TA supports passionate individuals who are committed to a career in the early childhood sector. Students are free to take up the TA in any of their three years of study. Each year of sponsorship comes with a corresponding year of service to the early childhood sector.

ECDA will be twinning its TA sponsorship with EAE. Every successful EAE applicant will now automatically be offered a TA. Prior to 2015, students who were enrolled into the early childhood diploma courses would have to apply separately for the TA after their successful enrolment.

Enhanced Support for TA Recipients

Besides funding, the TA recipients will also enjoy enhanced support from ECDA at key stages of their early childhood education journey. These include newsletters and dialogues to keep them updated on the early childhood landscape, job emplacement programmes and various engagement platforms to learn from experts and pioneers on starting and sustaining well in the sector.

“The early childhood sector has seen rapid expansion in recent years. This presents many rewarding and meaningful opportunities for students to play a direct role in giving every child a good start in life. ECDA is happy to collaborate with our polytechnics to support our Training Award recipients and help them prepare for successful careers as early childhood professionals,” said Mr Eugene Leong, Chief Executive Officer of ECDA.

Unique Selection Process

Instead of the usual one-to-one interviews with a panel of lecturers, students invited to interviews at the polytechnics will be assessed through their participation in group interviews as well as interesting activities, to gauge their aptitude and passion for working with children.

Applications via EAE will close on 29 June 2016 and shortlisted candidates will be required to attend the interview selection from 4 July to 16 August. The three full-time early childhood education diploma courses offered by the two polytechnics are the Diploma in Early Childhood Education (NP), Diploma in Child Psychology & Early Education (NP) and Diploma in Early Childhood Studies (TP).

“We are very encouraged by the good response from the previous Direct Poly Admission and Joint Polytechnic Special Admissions Exercise. Through EAE, we hope to see more students who have the aptitude and interest in early childhood education be given priority in gaining admission to courses in this field,” said Mr Clarence Ti, Principal of Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

“In our selection process, applicants would have an opportunity to observe unobtrusively, the working environment of TP’s laboratory preschool. This sneak preview is to give applicants a better appreciation of what an early childhood profession entails, and if they have what it takes to make a positive difference in the lives of the very young ones and their families,” said Mr Ang Teck Hua, Director of TP’s Centre for Child Study.

Steady Increase in Salaries for New Pre-school Teachers

In the Graduate Employment Survey jointly conducted by the five polytechnics in 2015, the average salaries of new pre-school teachers with diplomas have increased by about 10 per cent, from a range of \$1,980 to \$1,993 in 2014 to \$2,173 to \$2,204 in 2015.

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About Ngee Ann Polytechnic

Inaugurated in 1963 as Ngee Ann College with only 116 students, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) is today one of Singapore's leading institutions of higher learning with more than 16,000 full-time students, about 2,000 part-time students and an alumni community of over 130,000. The polytechnic offers 49 full-time courses through its nine academic schools – Business & Accountancy, Design & Environment, Engineering, Film & Media Studies, Health Sciences, Humanities & Social Sciences, InfoComm Technology, Life Sciences & Chemical Technology and Interdisciplinary Studies. NP also supports Continuing Education and Training (CET) through its CET Academy, which offers a wide range of part-time programmes. NP has also established two Centres of Innovation - in Environmental & Water Technology and Marine & Offshore Technology - to work on collaborative research and technology projects. With its emphasis on broad-based learning, global exposure and character development, NP's vision is to prepare graduates with a passion for learning, values for life and competencies to thrive in a global workplace. For more information, please visit www.np.edu.sg.

About Temasek Polytechnic

Temasek Polytechnic (TP) is a significant contributor to the field of para-professional education in Singapore. TP currently offers 51 full-time diploma courses in the areas of applied science, business, design, engineering, humanities & social sciences and informatics & IT. It also offers over 20 part-time courses, up to the advanced diploma level. TP students undergo a holistic learning system that combines hands-on experience, character education and relevant life skills, in an enriching learning environment. The Polytechnic has also infused global realities into its programmes and developed a mindset on campus that embraces socio-cultural diversity. These approaches ensure that TP graduates are economy relevant, future relevant and life relevant. For more information, please visit www.tp.edu.sg