

**SPEECH BY NUSS PRESIDENT MR EDDIE LEE
NUSS LO HEI DINNER
KENT RIDGE GUILD HOUSE
29 JANUARY 2020, WEDNESDAY**

NUS Pro-Chancellors - Mr Poád Mattar and Dr Chan Sek Keong

NUS Board of Trustees Chairman, Mr Hsieh Fu Hua

NUS President, Professor Tan Eng Chye

NUSS Honorary Members

NUS Senior Management

NUSS Past Presidents

Fellow MC members

Ladies and Gentlemen

Happy and Prosperous Chinese New Year, Xin Nian Kuai Ler!

May the Year of the Metal Rat bring good health and happiness to all of you.

On behalf of the NUSS Management Committee, I would like to extend my appreciation to everyone in making the time to attend this special event this evening and celebrate the Chinese New Year with us as one big family.

NUSS and NUS have built strong ties which become more robust over time, like wine. Indeed, NUSS' unwavering support of our alma mater – NUS, is seen through a variety of programmes and initiatives.

The **NUSS-NUS Mentorship Programme**, which started in 2012 is growing from strength to strength.

Tapping into the diverse industry experience of our members, this programme links NUSS members with undergraduates who are seeking advice on post-graduation opportunities and possibilities. What started out as a small scale programme for a select group of students has flourished into the successful programme we know of today.

With popular demand and your support, this programme is now open to all NUS undergraduates. The welcome dinner was held on 16 October 2019, and saw the largest attendance of 250 mentees from different faculties and 159 mentors and I thank Prof Tan Eng Chye for your presence and words of encouragement.

Last October, students from the NUS Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music put up a soulful jazz performance at NUSS Mandalay Guild House, just a day after its official opening. This comes under the **NUSS-YSTCM Music Appreciation Series: Beyond the Score**, a collaboration between NUSS and NUS Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music.

Every year NUSS supports NUS by pledging \$250,000 towards the **NUS Alumni Bursary Fund**. We hope that through this gift and the variety of NUSS' fundraising events, more students from disadvantaged backgrounds will get to complete their studies without financial burden.

The annual **NUS Day of Service** is another event where you will find NUSS members and staff volunteering to spend their Saturday morning accompanying underprivileged families to the supermarket for a grocery shopping trip together with the rest of the NUS community. Each family was given some money to spend on daily essentials.

The **NUSS Professorship Lecture** is another fine example of our collaboration with our alma mater. NUSS established the NUSS Professorship with an endowment of \$1.5 million to fund eminent professors from different disciplines to share their knowledge with the NUS community and the general public. This Professorship is part of NUSS' efforts to contribute to the development of meaningful interactions with its alma mater through academic pursuits.

NUSS and NUS has also maintained close relationships through our mutual interest in golf, by lending support at golf events such as **the 52nd UM-NUS Inter-University Tunku-Chancellor Golf Tournament and NUS Alumni and Friends Tournament**.

Aside from this, the Society has had an eventful past year. The highlight of 2019 was the **official opening of Mandalay Guild House**. The event was graced by NUSS Patron and Chancellor of NUS, President Halimah Yacob. The "Road to Mandalay" marketing drive that was held leading up to this exciting opening, which allowed persons to join the Society at a reduced entrance fee drew a total of 713 new members – many of whom are younger members. We are confident that this new blood would add life and a new dimension to our NUSS family.

To support our increasing membership base and provide a better club experience, NUSS has embarked on a journey to **improve and upgrade its existing facilities**. Members can now look forward to the newly re-surfaced Tennis and Squash Courts, which underwent renovations in the last quarter of 2019.

The two private dining rooms at our popular The Scholar Chinese Restaurant also underwent refurbishment. A new room was also added; bringing the total number of private dining rooms up to three. Now more families can get the chance to enjoy and share special memories together at this restaurant, just in time for the Chinese New

Year. I invite all of you to make a booking to dine at The Scholar, and do check out the new rooms when you are there.

Like NUS, **Lifelong Learning** is something that NUSS encourages among its members. In order to do so, we have a long standing partnership with the Council for Third Age (C3A) and the National Silver Academy (NSA) to organise a range of short courses to promote active ageing for members and the public in their golden years. These courses have proven immensely popular, with many courses often fully booked before the registration closing date. Since its inception, we have doubled the number of short courses offered and are always on the lookout for new and relevant courses that would benefit our seniors.

Prof Tan Eng Chye had mentioned at an informal dinner with members of the management committee last year that he would like NUS to work closely with NUSS with the Lifelong programme and we warmly welcome the collaboration.

The Society also hosts regular **Ministerial Dialogue sessions** that are of interest to members and guests to learn about the latest industry trends and issues that affect our nation. One such dialogue we organised recently was The Future of Singapore Education dialogue on 15 January. Our guest speaker – Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Mr Chee Hong Tat, and panel of industry experts shared how Singapore's education system is expected to evolve in the near future to equip students in this fast changing landscape.

The Minister shared that Singapore had an excellent education because we practice meritocracy and for meritocracy to work, the able body or fortunate should help the less fortunate, which I am glad that NUSS has been doing through paying it forward.

I was a scout and I remember a scout's rule, "Always leave the campsite better than you found it ". After four years as President, I am delighted that the relationship between NUS and NUSS had grown closer and deeper -

Mr Hsieh Fu Hua invited me and Vice President Tong Hsien-Hui to attend the regular BOT luncheon talks and I update him on NUSS matters over meals.

Prof Tan Eng Chye also attends the Society events whenever he could and keep us in the loop of what's happening in NUS.

Mr Bernard Toh, Director from OAR has included the Society in all major alumni events and functions.

As you can see, we are very well connected.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the three of you, as well as rest of the NUS

management team for your support and encouragement all these years.

I hope that in the New Year ahead and many more years to come, we will continue to expand and deepen connections with NUS and the wider graduate community.

Let's toast to another exciting year of opportunities and connections ahead!

Thank you.