

**SPEECH BY NUSS PRESIDENT MR EDDIE LEE
NUSS LO HEI DINNER 2017 AT SUNTEC CITY GUILD HOUSE
9 FEBRUARY 2017, THURSDAY**

NUS Pro-Chancellors, Mr Po'ad Mattar and Dr Chan Sek Keong
Chairman, NUS Board of Trustees, Mr Hsieh Fu Hua
NUS President, Professor Tan Chorh Chuan,
Mr Wong Ngit Liong, past chairman of NUS Board of Trustees and NUSS Honorary Member
University Professor Lim Pin, NUSS Honorary Member
NUS Senior Management, Deans and Hall Masters
NUSS Past Presidents
Distinguished guests
Colleagues

- Welcome to NUSS suntec guild house, and thank you for honouring us with your presence this evening. I wish all of you a Happy, Prosperous and Healthy Chinese New Year.
- I would like to first congratulate Mr Hsieh Fu Hua on his appointment as Chairman of NUS Board of Trustees. I am sure with his wealth of experience and wisdom, he will lead NUS to greater heights.
- 3 weeks ago, a few of us attended the appreciation dinner for Mr Wong Ngit Liong. I am impressed and inspired by Mr Wong's contributions and leadership and the achievements and accolades that NUS continues to receive. It is now ranked no 1 in Asia and no 12 in the world, just last week it is recognised as the top 4th international universities with the Straits Times headlines "NUS beats Oxford and Harvard in global orientation." Congratulations to NUS! We are all so proud of NUS.
- Last month, at the welcome dinner for more than 100 NUSS new members, I reminded our members that our first love is NUS and the very first object in our Constitution is: "To promote the interest and development of NUS".
- In line with our mission to support our alma mater, I am pleased to share with you, some of the programmes and projects undertaken last year;

1. We have always looked into the various opportunities to further the interests of NUS students. One such initiative is the NUSS-NUS Mentorship Programme which was first introduced in 2012. The programme provides a platform for students to seek advice and learn from NUSS members on post graduation opportunities and possibilities. I am happy to report that we now have 400 students who have joined the programme and this number is growing.
2. In support of the NUS Alumni Bursary Fund Campaign aimed at helping financially challenged NUS students, NUSS provided the initial seed funding of \$250k at its inception in 2014, and pledged an annual gift of the same amount towards the Campaign. This evening we will be presenting another cheque of \$250k, making our total contribution-to-date and that of our benefactors to \$4 million. I am particularly encouraged by the progress of the Campaign, and have been advised by the Chair of the NUS Alumni Student Advancement Committee, Johnny Tan that the Campaign has raised close to \$12 million over the past three years. NUSS is pleased that it has played a role in the fund raising efforts to help our students.
3. Under the leadership of OAR director, Bernard Toh and NUS golf captain, KC LIM, more than \$500,000 were raised at the 25th NUS Alumni and Friends Charity Golf in October. The NUSS golf section led by golf convenor, Joseph Ng supported this meaningful event to provide additional support for financially challenged NUS students. Interestingly, KC told me that in previous years when the tournament was organised as a social event, they did not have full turn up, but last year when the organising committee decided to raise funds, the response was overwhelming and they even had to turn away some golfers.
4. The NUSS-YSTCM Music Appreciation Series: Beyond the Score is an initiative between NUSS and the NUS Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music that aims to provide participants an insight into the art of music appreciation and an avenue for intellectual discourse. So far we have had 3 series, which were all well-received by members and guests. To mark the closure of Bukit Timah Guild House, the NUS Yong Siew Toh Conservatory will perform the 4th series next Friday on 17 February 2017 and tickets have already been sold out. However, if any of you wish to attend, I am sure our CEO Roy Higgs can do something about it.

- 5 In recognition of student leaders' efforts and their contributions, we have extended complimentary membership to them to use our guild houses. We even organised a post exam party for them to de-stress. I can confidently say that it is not a distress party.
- 6 NUSS is pleased to partner NUS in its inaugural day of service event on 3 September 2016. The Chairman of the working committee is fellow NUSS MC Member, Jeremy Ee. It provided an opportunity for our members and their family to serve the community. We have our very own community care committee led by Archie Ong, their activities include visits to old age home, entertaining them with music and songs. The NUS Day of Service is on a wider scale and sends a message that more can be done for the community in Singapore.
- 7 The NUSS Professorship Lecture was established in 1996, with an endowment of \$1.5 million to fund talks by renowned visiting professors at NUS. This is part of NUSS' efforts to develop meaningful partnerships with our alma mater through academic pursuits. Over the years, we were honoured to be able to invite and host several prominent professors who were always willing to share with us their knowledge and unique insights. In our recent NUSS Professorship Lecture held on 24 January, we hosted Professor Stephen Hawkins to talk about the climate change affecting the marine environment and how we can play a role. I hope that the NUSS Professorship will continue to create a platform for an intellectual discourse among members, NUS community and the public. The next visiting professor, Professor Timothy J. Colton, who is Morris and Anna Feldberg Professor of Government and Russian Studies, and Chair of the Department of Government at Harvard University will deliver the next NUSS Professorship Lecture on 21 March. Beyond funding visiting professors, we have also signed an agreement with NUS to fund 1 full NUSS Professor annually. With strong research and internationally recognised scholarly accomplishments, the NUSS Professor is expected to contribute to the University's continued and expanding efforts to strengthen the international standing of the University. The selection of the full professor is currently underway.
- 8 We are privileged to also have Dr Gillian Koh, Deputy Director (Research) at the Institute of Policy Studies, NUS as our editor of the NUSS Commentary Volume 25

(2016) and Volume 26 (2017). The Commentary is an annual publication which focuses on hot topics close to Singaporeans' hearts. For example, the upcoming issue would be on Foreign Relations and its impact on Singapore. We are very fortunate to have onboard renowned experts in the field such as Professor Kishore Mahbubani, Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, NUS and Dr Lam Peng Er, Senior Research Fellow, East Asian Institute, NUS, both of whom have agreed to contribute to the upcoming issue and I look forward to sharing their valuable insights with members soon.

- 9 We are pleased to be able to support our alma mater and the wider graduate community through the various initiatives and hope that in the New Year ahead, we will be able to continue expanding and deepening our connections with the NUS Community. We look forward to another great year.
- 10 One of my favourite musicals is Fiddler on the Roof and I like the song Tradition very much. According to Topo, to keep our balance, we need to have tradition.
- 11 Last evening, I attended a wonderful Lo Hei dinner hosted by OAR. I initially thought that we could combine the 2 dinners, but this is Chinese New Year and the tradition is to visit each other, to extend to each other hospitality and sumptuous food, and more importantly, to bless each other with good wishes for the new year.
- 12 I hope that all of you will have an enjoyable evening and may I offer a toast to NUS.

Thank you.