

NTU launches new series of public talks as part of efforts to engage community



Facade of The Hive, Nanyang Technological University's new learning hub. PHOTO: ST FILE

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SINGAPORE - Nanyang Technological University (NTU) launched a new series of public talks on Thursday (July 27), where academics will talk about the hottest research topics of the day.

The series, called Did You Know, will also address the latest trends affecting society, and on how people can prepare for the jobs of tomorrow.

Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who is also Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies, was the guest of honour at the event, which was part of the inaugural NTU-South West CDC Networking Session.

The first talk of the series on Thursday was by geologist Kerry Sieh, who is the director of the Earth Observatory of Singapore at NTU.

Professor Sieh's talk was titled The Sustainability Of Singapore And Its Neighbours In The Face Of Earthquakes, Tsunamis, Volcanoes And A Changing Climate.

About 100 people, including grassroots leaders and staff from the People's Association and South West CDC, as well as NTU staff and faculty attended the talk.

NTU president Bertil Andersson, who spoke at the event, said: "NTU is making a concerted push towards community engagement, and the series of public talks is just one of a slew of community-based initiatives that the university has planned."

The initiatives will be slowly rolled out in South West District housing estates like Jurong, Choa Chu Kang and West Coast.

Professor Andersson said: "Our decision to ramp up our engagement activities in our neighbourhood is aimed at better serving the needs of those around us, by leveraging NTU's resources, expertise and research capabilities."

He added that a university is defined by its ties with those around it.

"This would help us ensure our research and programmes stay relevant to the community," he said.

Other NTU community initiatives in the pipeline include customised public talks by members of its faculty, on issues such as food safety, health and wellness.

There will also be events to showcase NTU's research projects and the kind of benefits they can help bring about.

For instance, NTU students are working on designing a ramp for easier wheelchair access to ground-floor Housing Board units in Boon Lay that have a small flight of steps at the door.