

# NTU gets \$11 million gift for endowment fund

Jolene Ang

The Nanyang Technological University (NTU) received an \$11 million gift yesterday to set up an endowment fund to further medical education and research in healthcare.

The gift came from the estate of the late Irene Tan Liang Kheng, and the Government has matched it, bringing the total for the endowment fund to \$22 million.

The fund will support the efforts of NTU's Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine to provide more opportunities to deserving Singaporean students with financial difficulties to pursue a medical education.

From next August, one scholarship will be awarded for each year's cohort in the school's five-year Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree programme.



The fund will also help in establishing two chair professorships at the school – the Irene Tan Liang Kheng Chair Professorship in Neuroscience and the Ong Tiong Tat Chair Professorship in Diabetes Research. Money will also be channelled into research on “serious games” – a genre of games not designed for

fun or entertainment – to improve population health and provide patient-centric care. Yesterday, NTU president Subra Suresh unveiled the 500-seat Ong Tiong Tat and Irene Tan Liang Kheng Auditorium – named in honour of the late philanthropic couple – at the school's Clinical Sciences

Building in Novena. Said Professor Suresh of the gift: “This is an investment in the future of young minds and the betterment of the human condition that will see ever-growing returns for years to come.” Mr Ong, who was an investment trader, and his wife, an investor, bequeathed most of their assets.

Both were diagnosed with Stage 4 stomach cancer – he died in 2013 at the age of 74, and she in 2016 at the age of 73. They had no children. Mr Tan Hsuan Heng, nephew of the late couple and trustee of his aunt's estate, said: “My aunt and uncle... strongly believed in the value of education and, hence, they have cho-



The Ong Tiong Tat and Irene Tan Liang Kheng Auditorium was named in honour of the late philanthropic couple (above). Madam Tan's estate has gifted \$11 million to Nanyang Technological University for an endowment fund. The Government has matched it, bringing the total to \$22 million. PHOTOS: KEVIN LIM, COURTESY OF TAN HSUAN HENG

sen to donate to this worthy cause.” The largest gift NTU has received was \$150 million in 2012 from the Lee Foundation for its medical school, now named the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, after the philanthropist. [jolenezl@sph.com.sg](mailto:jolenezl@sph.com.sg)