Singapore, 18 February 2005

NTU AND TJC STUDENTS JOINTLY DEVELOP ‘WONDER-PLAST’

Under the guidance of Nanyang Technological University's (NTU) School of Biological Sciences (SBS), Temasek Junior College (TJC) students may have well have developed a first for medicated plasters -- one that treats and accelerates wound healing, prevents infections and minimises scarring!

‘FlexiPlast’ took three months for the TJC team to develop under the guidance of NTU’s Asst Prof Peter Cheung, whose research interest lies in the mapping of signalling pathways involved in inflammations in the body.

The innovation is one of 17 innovations in the life sciences developed by teams of students from all junior colleges and institutes in Singapore under the NTU-JC-HSA Challenge. The annual challenge adopts a different theme each year and this year's theme was 'Life's Wonders'.

Besides ‘Flexi-plast’, other fascinating projects include the use of Traditional Chinese Medicine to enhance memory, and innovative ideas to treat life-threatening diseases such as breast cancer and kidney disease. All 17 projects will be showcased at the finale of the NTU-JC-HSA Challenge 2005 today.

Organised jointly by NTU and the Health Sciences Authority (HSA), the three-month long Challenge saw some 150 students representing all 15 junior colleges and two institutes in Singapore, exploring the field of life sciences and conducting their own R&D projects with NTU professors and students. Besides the expertise rendered, NTU also gave these ‘A’ level students access to its state-of-the-art laboratories and equipment and a
taste of research on the cutting edge.

Says NTU's Asst Prof Dr Sze Chun Chau, Chairman of the Scientific Committee of the NTU-JC-HSA Challenge, "NTU is happy to offer our professors, with their in-depth and up-to-date scientific knowledge and our cutting-edge resources, to help nurture young talents in life sciences. We hope this event will spark an interest in life sciences research and application among youths, and inspire them to explore their interests further after the event, and take it to greater heights."

Dr Tan Chor Hiang, Chief Executive Officer, HSA, adds, “The students have impressed with their highly creative solutions and innovative applications of life sciences to some longstanding problems. Based on keen observations, some projects tried to replicate nature’s wonders in innovative technological applications, where the eventual solutions would bring about great benefits to society.”

The 17 teams stand to win the following awards today:

- Invitrogen-McGraw Hill Best Innovation Award
- Biomed-McGraw Hill Overall Performance Award
- Micron-McGraw Hill Best Presentation Award
- Mensa Creativity Award

**About Nanyang Technological University**

Nanyang Technological University was recently ranked by the Times Higher Education Supplement at the 50th place globally and 7th in Asia, in its ranking of the 200 best universities in the world. The campus was originally developed for a Chinese language university, Nanyang University in 1955. In 1981, Nanyang Technological Institute was established on this campus to educate engineers for the rapidly developing Singapore economy. In 1991 Nanyang Technological University was inaugurated.

The university has a strong engineering school ranked among the best in the Commonwealth, a business school with one of the top 100 MBA programs in the world, an internationally acclaimed National Institute of Education, one of the best Schools of Communications and Information in Asia, and a new (2001) School of Biological Sciences playing a leading role in Singapore’s Life Sciences initiative. The Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies is an international authority on terrorism. The university is in a major expansion from 16,000 to 22,300 undergraduate students. During this expansion three new schools are being built – the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Physical and Mathematical Sciences and the School of Art, Design and Media.

A traditional strength of the university is the high employment rate and high remuneration received by its graduates. The university is now in the process of realizing its New Undergraduate Experience initiative with a comprehensive curriculum, wide choices of options for students, vibrant campus life and international experience. Strong international relationships and collaboration programmes is a hallmark of the university. This includes the Singapore-MIT Alliance, Singapore-Stanford Partnership, Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management, Singapore – University of Washington Alliance in Bioengineering, Global Immersion Programme with Peking University,
Tsinghua University, Shanghai Jiaotong University, University of Washington and Georgia Institute of Technology, among many other programmes in US, China, India, Japan and Europe.

*About NTU’s School of Biological Sciences*

The School of Biological Sciences was established in July 2001 to provide students with a high quality university education and training in the life sciences. Graduates from its undergraduate B.Sc.(Honours) course as well as from its graduate research programmes are expected to fill the rapidly increasing demand for a talent pool of high-quality workforce and researchers for the life sciences industry.

The school has already started building its capability in the life sciences through its collaboration with the Singapore General Hospital in the field of biomedical engineering. Besides the liberty to chart new developmental plans outside the organizational structure and constraints of traditional schools of biological sciences and medicine, NTU’s technological focus will provide a good basis for developing new technologies and schools in life sciences.

*About the Health Sciences Authority*

At the Health Sciences Authority (HSA), we apply medical, pharmaceutical and specialised scientific expertise to safeguard public health and safety in Singapore. As one multidisciplinary agency, we serve as the national regulator of all therapeutic products by providing a seamless yet rigorous regulatory process to the healthcare and biomedical sciences industries. We also operate the national blood bank, Bloodbank@HSA, protecting the integrity of the nation's blood supply. As the national reference agency, we exploit specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in order to serve the administration of justice and enhance safety in our community. For more details, visit www.hsa.gov.sg