Singapore, 8 March 2005

NTU to establish first-ever Ngee Ann Kongsi Professorship in Traditional Chinese Medicine

Synergising education and Chinese medicine disciplines to advance knowledge and groom leaders.

Ngee Ann Kongsi has contributed $1.5 million to the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Endowment Fund to establish the first-ever Professorship in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). When matched by the Government, the donation by Ngee Ann Kongsi will amount to a major endowment of $3 million.

Under the new professorship programme, NTU will invite eminent professors specialised in the field of TCM to conduct public lectures, give seminars and initiate research with staff. The appointed professors will also help review and develop the curriculum for NTU’s new double-degree undergraduate programme with the renowned Beijing University of Chinese Medicine (BUCM).
The programme, due for its pioneer intake in the new academic year starting July 2005, will see the conferment of two degrees – a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Biomedical Sciences by NTU and a Bachelor of Medicine, (majoring in TCM) (医学中医专业学士) by BUCM. Students will first gain fundamental biosciences knowledge and be exposed to advances in life sciences in NTU. Such a biological sciences foundation provides for an evidence-based approach towards the learning of TCM whilst the courses offered by BUCM will provide the TCM clinical domain knowledge.

Says Professor James Tam, Dean of NTU’s School of Biological Sciences, “By pairing up biological sciences and TCM, we are grooming research talent who are able to push the envelope of drug therapeutics and discovery in life sciences and TCM.”

“There is much potential for graduates of this NTU-BUCM double degree programme to make a difference in a wide variety of careers – ranging from R&D, to advancing the TCM practice, and playing key management roles in biomedical and TCM industries.”

Up to 30 students in the pioneer intake will undergo their first three years of the double-degree programme by beginning their biological sciences course at NTU. The programme then dovetails with the final two years of TCM clinical training, including hospital practise at BUCM. For greater synergy, one-third of the curriculum at NTU will focus on TCM teaching while the remaining two-thirds will focus on basic biomedical sciences.

The professorship in TCM is also timely for the Kongsi. One of the Kongsi’s primary missions is to provide a good education to members of the community, while the development of interest in TCM is another of its key areas. The professorship is able to fulfill the needs of both these areas.
NTU and its School of Biological Sciences would also accord the Kongsi’s Ngee Ann Traditional Chinese Medicine Centre with the academic expertise under the Professorship in TCM. The non-profit centre was set up in November 2000 to offer traditional medicine and acupuncture to improve the well-being of Singapore’s population.

NTU’s association with Ngee Ann Kongsi began in the 1990s when the Kongsi donated $1 million to the Chinese Heritage Centre based in NTU. Over the years, the Kongsi has awarded scholarships and bursaries to NTU students as part of its education programme.

His Excellency, Mr S R Nathan, President of the Republic of Singapore, Chancellor of NTU, and Patron-in-Chief of the NTU 21st Century Fund will officiate at the launch ceremony of the Ngee Ann Kongsi Professorship. The ceremony will be held at NTU’s School of Biological Sciences on 8 March 2005. During the ceremony, President S R Nathan will receive a donation cheque from Mr Teo Chiang Long, President of Ngee Ann Kongsi.

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About Nanyang Technological University

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) is an established international institution in tertiary education.

Our university has a distinguished lineage with roots that go back to 1955. We began as Nanyang University, a private university set up with donations from people of all walks of life, from Singapore and the region. The university grounds, Yunnan Garden Campus, was donated by the Hokkien Clan Association as part of this campaign.

We were reborn as Nanyang Technological Institute, established on the same campus in 1981 with government funding to educate practice-oriented engineers for the burgeoning Singapore economy. In 1991 we became Nanyang Technological University with the absorption of the National Institute of Education.

Today, we are a research-intensive university ranked among the top 50 universities in the world. We have a strong engineering college ranked among the best globally, a business school with one of the top 100 MBA programmes in the world, an internationally acclaimed
National Institute of Education, one of the best communication and information schools in Asia, and a biological sciences school at the forefront of Singapore’s life sciences initiative.

Undergraduate enrolment will swell from 17,500 to 23,500 with the establishment of three new schools – the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, School of Art, Design and Media, and School of Physical and Mathematical Sciences.

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 realising 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.

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