Reaching Beyond His Grasp...

First of all, I am honoured and grateful to be given a chance to contribute to this issue of the E3 World. I was asked to write something about my education thus far and my aspirations for the future. Looking back now, I am pleased and rather relieved to have made it so far in my undergraduate studies, with only one more semester to go. I am really looking forward to graduation where I can finally heave a long and satisfying sigh of relief at successfully completing my degree course in Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

The amount of anxiety I face in the process of learning and preparing for exams has been significant. I recall my secondary and high school life to be more relaxing and enjoyable. It was also during my high school when I discovered that my interests lie in the sciences. I favour objective facts and technicality to the often more subjective but artistic fields of literature and humanities.

In NTU, I was pleased to have the chance to get really technical and to learn how mobile electronics can be manipulated to create useful devices. Therefore, the faster pace of life was a small price to pay, as what I was learning was what I had always wanted to know about. Hence, my passion for engineering and basic science has matured to a point where I have decided to further my studies in Engineering. I have applied to do my graduate study at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and have been accepted (to my pleasant surprise) by their school of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.

Thinking about the future now, I am happy and hopeful. I hope first to be able to secure a scholarship and a student visa to make my dreams of studying in MIT a reality. I hope that my education so far will help me survive while I study and work with the people there. I hope to be able to find a suitable topic for research. I hope......

Eventually I know I shall still be returning to Singapore. I was asked what social and economic impact I hope to achieve in the long run - but I feel that that is too much for me to say at the moment. Like everyone else during this period of great change, I am uncertain of my future. But I do still have a dream of contributing something to society. Like most engineers I dream of developing or discovering something that would make man's daily living more enjoyable, thus improving the quality of life significantly. Yes, it is an ambitious dream, but I'm sure we all have it now and then.

Joel Yang was awarded the BEng (First Class) Honors degree. He also tops his class of 2003.