Thirty-six students from three Singapore Secondary schools, Christ Church, Woodgrove and Fuchun took part in the High Tech U program held at Chartered Semiconductor Manufacturing and NTU, at the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering on 15 - 17 March 2006. Besides NTU, the program was sponsored by Air Products, Allegro EMS, Applied Materials, Chartered Semiconductor, Hermes-Epitek, the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB), and UMC Singapore.

High Tech U Program was first launched in 2001 in the United States by the SEMI Foundation, which is a global semiconductor industry association. The program introduces high school students to the science of making semiconductors and to career opportunities in high tech industries. The curriculum includes hands-on experiments that introduce semiconductor-manufacturing concepts and explanation of microchip logic. Sessions are also given on educational pathways and career planning. Since 2001, forty-one programs have been conducted.

Although the High Tech U program was developed in the U.S., the plan has always been to make it an international program. Several locations in Europe and Asia have been considered for High Tech U programs. Possible suitable locations must be essential high tech manufacturing centres that have exhibited a high level of enthusiasm and receptivity to the program. Singapore was selected over and above other international regions because it was the first to forge the industry-education community infrastructure needed to successfully deliver the High Tech U.

Singapore is also a nation that has by succeeded by continuously preparing for the future. Representatives from the Singapore government, industry and the education community readily welcomed the idea of High Tech U when the program was first presented. "We're extremely pleased that the first High Tech U outside the U.S. was held here in Singapore," says George C.T. Lin, president of SEMI South East Asia. "In the competitive field of microelectronics manufacturing, Singapore is renowned for its highly skilled workforce. This program complements other domestic educational priorities aimed at nurturing this key competitive regional advantage."

Electronic manufacturing is a key focus of the Singapore economy. "We are constantly growing and diversifying this sector by expanding existing industries and developing new growth clusters," said Alvin Tan, deputy director of resource development at the Singapore EDB. "The High Tech U student program can help to..."