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OPENING DOORS, HELPING COMMUNITIES

Professor Tan Eng Chye, Deputy President (Academic Affairs) and Provost for the National University of Singapore (NUS), talks about the doors a bursary can open for a needy student and the impact a bursary can have on a student's life, both within and beyond the walls of the University.



Professor Tan Eng Chye with NUS Bursary recipients

“Bursary support goes a long way to making a difference to the lives and the futures of many young students, especially those from the lowest per capita income families, who are finding it a struggle to finance their education.”

Fundraising for bursaries is a priority for NUS. Why?

An NUS degree is an aspiration of many Singaporean families. NUS counts many first generation graduates in each cohort. As a public university, we want to make sure that ability, not financial circumstances, determines access to the life-changing opportunities within the NUS campus.

Bursary support goes a long way to making a difference to the lives and the futures of many young students, especially those from the lowest per capita income families, who are finding it a struggle to finance their education. For these students and their families, a university education is often a social leveller, a dream, a means to a better life ahead.

But, to make this possible, we need philanthropic support for bursaries to ensure that NUS is within reach of financially disadvantaged students.

How many bursaries does NUS award every year? Do we need more?

The number of bursaries awarded on a university-wide level has grown by more than 50 percent over the last five years. This year, we awarded over 2,400 university-wide bursaries. About 75 percent of the eligible applicants are from families whose per capita income falls below S\$720. We can do more to help these students.

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OUR CHAMPIONS, OUR AMBASSADORS

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THE WAN BOO SOW FAMILY EXTENDS HELPING HAND TO STUDENTS

The late Mr Wan Boo Sow once said, "If you always think only of yourself, you will always be unhappy."

It is by these words that the children of the late Mr Wan founded The Wan Boo Sow Charity Fund Limited in honour and in memory of their parents to give to charitable causes in their father's name. The Wan family has established

the Wan Boo Sow and Annie Tan Bursary at the National University of Singapore (NUS) to help financially disadvantaged students.

Despite his humble beginnings, the late Mr Wan always understood the importance of education. He saved whatever little income he earned and eventually saw himself through university with a degree in pharmacy. Along the way, he was also fortunate to have met generous

strangers who were kind to him because they saw that he needed their help. Understanding first-hand what it was like to struggle and never forgetting the kindness he received, Mr Wan never failed to extend a helping hand to those who needed it when he became successful.

The Wan Boo Sow and Annie Tan Bursary is awarded to financially disadvantaged students studying at the Department of Pharmacy at the Faculty of Science, the Department of Social Work at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Law. Recipients of this Bursary are also encouraged to contribute to community service. ■

Beneficiaries of the Wan Boo Sow and Annie Tan Bursary with faculty members, the Provost, members of The Wan Boo Sow Charity Fund Ltd and Ms Ang Bee Lian, the Director of Social Welfare at the Ministry of Social & Family Development.



FIVE RECIPIENTS SHARE HOW THE BURSARY HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR LIVES.



"With the help from The Wan Boo Sow Charity Fund, I can channel more of my time into planning community projects. The generosity of the donors has also made me restore faith in humankind – that there are people who are willing to selflessly help others they don't even know. I will definitely learn from them and contribute back to society in ways that I can. For now, I sincerely hope to have more opportunities to pursue volunteering work in NUS."

Emmeline Chua Xin Yan
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



"I feel really touched by the donors' generosity and I am really thankful for this Bursary, which has helped to ease my parents' financial burden. I can now focus on my studies without having to take up multiple part-time jobs to save up for my tuition fees. In the near future, I hope to become a successful social worker and make a positive impact on the community."

Ng Yu Qing
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



"The Bursary has lessened the burden of the school fees and allowed me to concentrate better on my studies. I am greatly inspired by this act of generosity and I wish to do the same in the future."

Ng Kai Ling
Faculty of Law



"Receiving this Bursary has really opened my eyes to how there are really people out there willing to help us. It gives me the feeling that I want to pay it forward and share this generosity extended to me with other people who I will meet along my life's journey. I want to do my best to contribute to society, in particular work with the elderly, whom I really believe have so many life experiences and so many things to offer."

Chelsea Cheang Jia Yun
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



"The generosity of the donors has made it possible for those from less fortunate backgrounds to obtain a university education, and in so doing, a fair chance at climbing higher on the ladder of success. Their giving without asking for compensation makes their actions all the more noble. I hope to get my degree, pass the bar exam, be a lawyer and give back to society."

Muhammad Ridhwan Bin Saifudeen
Faculty of Law



"I feel very fortunate and I appreciate the help I have received from others. I hope to contribute back to the society by helping others in the future. I realise that a lot can be done to improve the lives of the ageing population in Singapore. So, my hope for the future is to become a social worker in the gerontology field."

Fiona Ong Wee Ling
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DESERVING STUDENTS



Mr Loh Chin Hua
CEO, Keppel Corporation

Keppel Corporation has provided unwavering support to the National University of Singapore (NUS) over the years and has given generously to various initiatives including the Keppel Bursary at NUS, the Keppel Bursary for Engineering, the Keppel-NUS Vietnam Programme in Medicine, the Keppel Chair Professorship Programme, the Toh Chin Chye Visiting Professorship, Fellowships and Study Awards and the S R Nathan Professorship in Social Work.

The organisation's support across a wide number of disciplines helps NUS offer a distinctive and rich experience to students; attract world-leading faculty; roll out innovative initiatives; and contribute to the community.

"Keppel believes in strengthening the economic and social capital of communities wherever we operate. In supporting education through funding bursaries for financially needy students, we empower individuals with knowledge and skillsets to maximise their potential and contribute to their countries' growth and development. NUS is among the world's top universities, and our partnership will provide deserving Singaporean students with the opportunity to pursue an enriching and holistic education," says Mr Loh Chin Hua, CEO, Keppel Corporation. ■

GOH ZE XUN, RECIPIENT OF THE KEPPEL BURSARY, SHARES HIS STORY

How did you feel when you received the Bursary?

No words can describe how I felt when I was notified of the success of my application for the Bursary. Prior to applying to a residential college, I already knew that my family would not be able to support my accommodation expenses without substantial financial aid.

How has this Bursary helped you?

I always marvelled at the idea of living, studying, and playing under one roof. With this Bursary, I could do just what I wanted without additional financial burden to my family. Personally, the small class size and its interactive nature have made me a better speaker through the multiple presentations that students have to make. I am also able to gain a greater understanding of the issues

that I am interested in. Lastly, with a myriad of interest groups and college-wide activities to join, it has truly added colours to my university life.

How do you feel about benefiting from the generosity of those who gave without knowing you?

Many of my friends are also recipients of University Town bursaries. It is heartening to know that there are people who have the desire to help the people around them. Without their kindness and generosity, we will not be where we are today. Thank you very much!

What are your hopes for the future?

It is a great privilege to be able to study in NUS and it is a place where I can equip myself with the skills to pursue my passion in the future. I hope to use my degree to make contributions that will benefit society in future. Having benefited from the kindness of other people, I am motivated to do the same for the future generations as well.

It has encouraged me to work harder and not take my education for granted. More importantly, it has reminded me that we should always help other people within our capacity and this is the value that I will hold onto for the rest of my life. ■



Goh Ze Xun
Faculty of Engineering
College of Alice & Peter Tan
NUS University Town

HELPING STUDENTS ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL

Gifts to the National University of Singapore (NUS) have enabled bursaries for financially disadvantaged students. For many of these bright and talented students, a university education is a significant opportunity and a means to a better life ahead. Bursaries allow students to focus on their studies, instead of taking on part-time work, and enjoy the enriching and holistic education NUS offers.

Seow Chze Kian

Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine
Sylvia Goh Medical Bursary recipient

“This Bursary has helped me in a few ways. Firstly, my parents do not earn a high income and supporting my medical education is a real burden for them. I try my best to save on my expenses and to give private tuition but, as my curriculum intensifies, I am finding it hard to cope. With this Bursary, I have reduced my tuition commitments and now, I am coping better with my studies. Secondly, I do not have to give up the wonderful learning opportunity of going on an exchange programme to a rural hospital in a developing country. This Bursary has also inspired me to follow in the spirit of selfless giving to society.”



Chua Wan Ping

Yale-NUS College
Toh Chin Chye Study Award recipient

“My parents work as clerks in a construction company and I have an older brother and two younger brothers, all of whom are still schooling. When I received the Toh Chin Chye Study Award, I was working long hours as a waitress having just completed a teaching internship. My parents had very little saved up for college and I knew that I had to depend largely on myself to finance my university education so receiving the Award was a tremendous relief. It means being able to fully experience College life, from concentrating on my studies to starting a cross-country running team and a food recycling project. More than anything, it has made me a more optimistic person and taught me to cherish every opportunity I receive.”



Poh Song Yu

NUS Business School
Mizuho Bursary recipient

“Life has not been easy with my ailing father being the sole breadwinner in the family. When I received news that I was awarded the Mizuho Bursary, it was like a breath of fresh air for me. I felt rejuvenated and recharged. The Bursary will cover part of my school fees and thus reduce my tuition loans. The financial burden has been lifted to an extent. I am now even more motivated to work harder in my academic pursuits with the hope not to disappoint my esteemed donors.”



Nuramira Ahmad

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University Scholars Programme
SR Nathan Bursary recipient

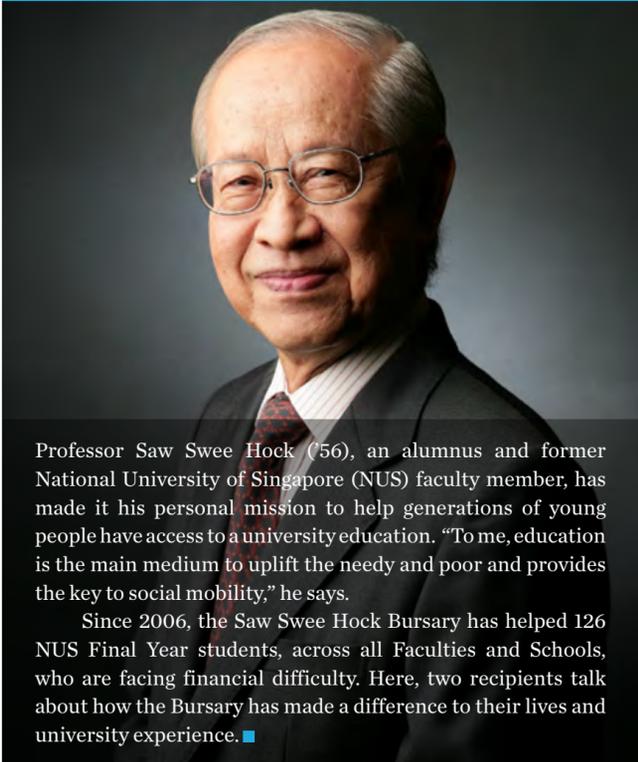
“The SR Nathan Bursary has helped me finance part of my expenses in university, enabling me to focus on my studies and participate in overseas study trips. The Bursary means a lot to me because it motivates me to do my best, knowing that someone who does not even know me has lent their help and sees the potential in me. This has strengthened my resolve to serve my community and help those in need.”



NUS and PDPA

In Singapore, the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (“PDPA”) establishes a data protection law that governs the collection, use and disclosure of your personal data. In line with this, the University has updated the Standard Terms & Conditions for Gifts to comply with the PDPA. You can find the latest version of the document on our website: www.giving.nus.edu.sg. Should you have any questions about giving to NUS, please email askdvo@nus.edu.sg or call us at 1-800-DEVELOP (1-800-338-3567).

ALUMNUS GIVES TO BURSARIES TO PROMOTE SOCIAL MOBILITY



Professor Saw Swee Hock (56), an alumnus and former National University of Singapore (NUS) faculty member, has made it his personal mission to help generations of young people have access to a university education. “To me, education is the main medium to uplift the needy and poor and provides the key to social mobility,” he says.

Since 2006, the Saw Swee Hock Bursary has helped 126 NUS Final Year students, across all Faculties and Schools, who are facing financial difficulty. Here, two recipients talk about how the Bursary has made a difference to their lives and university experience. ■



Ting Shi Min
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Saw Swee Hock Bursary recipient

“My journey in NUS would not have been possible without the help of your Bursary. My family and I are relieved of financial pressure and I am able to concentrate on my studies fully. I am also able to enjoy the countless learning opportunities on offer at NUS and to explore my interests.”

Nevaashni Eleangovan

Faculty of Science
Saw Swee Hock Bursary recipient

“Being a recipient of the Bursary has enabled me to put my worries about making ends meet to the back of my mind and concentrate on my academics, pushing me to be on the Dean’s List. Furthermore, I was able to pursue my aims and ambitions and pursue my interests, such as giving back to those in need and volunteering as a tutor for needy children.”



BURSARY SPARKS STUDENT’S BELIEF IN THE GIVING SPIRIT

When he was young, Second Year National University of Singapore (NUS) student Gavin Lu had his left eye removed due to a tumour growth in the optic nerve. As a result, he experiences fatigue in the eyes and brain whenever he studies or reads. His disability affects his self-esteem. Despite this, Gavin was determined to pursue a university education and took on a study loan.

“I had to allay my parents’ fears regarding being the guarantors for my study loan. I had to convince them that I would be able to pay off the loan upon graduation,” Gavin says. Gavin is currently studying Communications and New Media under the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) programme at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Thankfully, the Yeshua Bursary has helped to alleviate some of Gavin’s worries. Set up by an NUS alumnus who also gave towards the establishment of three other bursaries in the memory of his grandfather and parents, the Bursary is awarded once a year to financially needy undergraduate students with disabilities. The name Yeshua is Hebrew and corresponds to the English name Jesus.

Gavin says, “The Yeshua Bursary has given me more time to focus on schoolwork rather than on travelling around to give tuition. I am also freed from having to worry about burdening my dad, who is the sole breadwinner in my family.”

Grateful for the generosity he received, Gavin hopes to pass it on.



Gavin Lu

“The Bursary has reinforced my belief that people are definitely not evil by nature. I really understand how depressing it can get when you only have a few dollars in your bank account, on top of the fear of performing badly in tests and examinations. The pressure can become really unbearable at times and, if money can help, I would definitely give it away to make someone’s life much more breathable,” he says. ■

OPENING DOORS, HELPING COMMUNITIES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1:



“Financial aid opens doors for our students, allowing them to benefit from the rich opportunities for learning and discovery surrounding them.”

What is the size of a typical bursary and what does it fund?

The typical amount is about S\$2,500 and depending on the student's needs, it can fund tuition fees, exchange programmes, living expenses and residential college programmes. Some donors have generously chosen to provide full bursaries, for example, up to S\$20,000 per year for medical students.

If NUS has a “needs-blind” admissions policy, is there not already a University budget to cover bursaries? Why fundraise for bursaries when students can turn to their families, take out loans and work to cover their tuition fees?

Admission to NUS is competitive. We receive over 30,000 applications annually, but we only have places for about 6,700 freshmen. Each application is assessed solely on merit. After receiving their offers of admission, students requiring financial assistance can apply for financial aid, which includes government and NUS study plans and bursaries.

Not all students are able to turn to their families for financial support. A bursary can enable students to take on a smaller student loan and thereby decrease their debt burden upon graduation. With smaller loans to pay off, they are in a position to immediately improve the financial situation of their families upon graduation. A bursary can help the family achieve a better quality of life with improved opportunities for the entire family.

Although students have access to loans, we would like to offer students from the lowest income households more bursaries so as to reduce their debt burden. We can only provide this additional assistance with the support of gifts from alumni and friends.

Why does NUS offer bursaries to foreign students?

The majority of bursaries awarded by NUS are for Singaporean students. We do offer a small number of bursaries to international students.

Just as we have donors who want their gifts to go towards supporting Singaporean students, there are donors who ask for their gifts to go towards supporting international students.

International students are valued members of the NUS community. Diversity creates a campus environment that mimics the global operating context. We thus value the diversity of cultures, perspectives and experiences that our foreign students bring. Many of our foreign students are talented individuals of high calibre; they are admitted on a more rigorous and stringent criteria. Foreign students can set the bar high, and spur our local students to challenge themselves towards greater heights. And in the process, local students emerge stronger and better prepared to take on competition in the global workforce. Many of our foreign students will eventually contribute to Singapore in different ways. It is true that foreign students with service obligations may leave Singapore at the end of their term. Notwithstanding, they will remain as friends, associations and vital links of the NUS community (and Singapore) whom we can tap on.

How does a strong financial aid system transform the student experience and the University as a whole?

Financial aid opens doors for our students, allowing them to benefit from the rich opportunities for learning and discovery surrounding them. Students who have to take on part-time work to fund their education, may not be able to juggle part-time work with academic commitments. If a student does not need to take on part-time work, he can fully engage in academic learning and also participate in the broader educational experience that includes residential college programmes, internships and studying at our overseas partner universities. Last year,

more than 1,700 NUS students went abroad for at least a semester on overseas attachment programmes. We hope that eventually at least 30 percent of the NUS student population will benefit from these overseas opportunities that help nurture global citizens who can contribute meaningfully to our diverse communities.

A strong financial aid system also allows students to participate actively in community engagement, social and sporting activities on campus. We hope that active involvement in student life will help our students achieve their potential and develop as well-rounded individuals, equipped not only with academic knowledge, but also with the personal qualities to be able to contribute and lead in the future.

I often meet students who are the recipients of bursaries and I am always moved by the stories they tell of how these bursaries have given them opportunities to grow, to learn and to reach goals they never believed possible. We want to make this a reality for many more students. ■

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF POTENTIAL

Mapletree Investments Pte Ltd, an Asia-focused real estate development, investment and capital management company, made a gift to NUS to establish the Mapletree Bursary. Here, Mr Ho Seng Chee ('93), Group Chief of Corporate Services, explains why they chose to support students at the University.



Mr Ho Seng Chee
Group Chief, Corporate Services
Mapletree Investments Pte Ltd

HONOURING FATHER'S SPIRIT OF GIVING

With a gift to the National University of Singapore Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, alumnus and Adjunct Associate Professor Ngoi Sing Shang ('81) established the Ngoi King Chik Bursary in memory of his late father. The general surgeon tells us how he is 'instilling the spirit of giving' and helping others achieve success.



Prof Ngoi Sing Shang

What made you decide to set up the Ngoi King Chik Bursary at the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine in the memory of your late father?

We decided to do this because our father had always indicated an interest in helping more students in pursuing medicine, especially students from poorer families.

Could you share a bit more about your late father?

My father was a kind man with many friends. He was always willing to go out of his way to help someone in need. That could be in the form of financial help to his friends or relatives whenever he had funds, or merely keeping them company, whenever they were unwell.

He instilled that joy of love and giving in us and taught us to always extend a helping hand when necessary. He was a family man and would make sure that family gatherings happened regularly.

You studied in NUS and are now teaching here. What are some of your best memories studying and teaching at your alma mater?

Ask any university student who stayed at the halls of residence while studying at NUS and the answer will most likely be a positive one - of good memories with great friendship and great times together. This is the time when we enjoyed our youth, made friendships that last, and revelled in the opportunities that led to success in our later years. I also enjoyed teaching at NUS. My

best memories were watching nervous students becoming successful doctors and even teachers themselves.

What advice do you have for the recipients of this Bursary?

They should remember that someone reached out to help them achieve success in life. When they are successful, I hope that they remember to extend the same helping hand to someone deserving.

What inspires you to give back to NUS?

When someone has done something good for you and you have succeeded, it is only right that you return the good deed. ■

What inspired Mapletree to make a gift to NUS?

Education promotes thinking, and thinking promotes societal improvement and positive change. As Singapore's largest university, NUS provides an excellent platform for Mapletree to support this vision for education.

Why did Mapletree choose to establish a bursary, specifically?

There are many capable students for whom tertiary education would be unattainable if not for financial aid in the form of bursaries and scholarships. It is simply unconscionable to let the potential inherent in these students go to waste. From the beginning of our corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme, we decided to devote our resources to where we felt the greatest impact could be made - supporting students with great potential from humble backgrounds.

Why is CSR important to Mapletree?

CSR is about creating shared value between the giver, the recipient and the community in general. CSR recognises that individuals or corporate

entities cannot exist, let alone thrive, in isolation. The sustained success of any company depends critically on the positive impact that its activities can create for those within its sphere of influence. A robust and well-thought-out CSR programme sends an important signal for the company - that it is a vested stakeholder in the communities in which it operates, and that it is committed to delivering long-term value for all concerned.

What advice do you have for the recipients of the Mapletree Bursary?

The university years are ideal for testing boundaries and exploration. I would encourage students to pursue interests that extend beyond their primary course requirements. Although excelling in regular coursework is important, I trust most students would agree that life is more than just lectures, tutorials and the library. I say this from personal knowledge - my most useful and memorable experiences from NUS were gained through activities outside of my regular curriculum. ■

“I am extremely thankful for the Mapletree Bursary. It has greatly relieved the financial burden on my family and has helped me cope with the costs associated with a university education. There is so much beauty in the act of giving without expectations of receiving. The Bursary has both humbled me and inspired me to give back to the community and, in particular, my juniors at NUS. Because I know what it feels like to have to worry about expenses in university, I would like to help them when I am able to. The Bursary has also motivated me to do well in school and I have am hoping to have a career in the media and communications industry.”



Jeslyn Goh Jia Ling
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

“The Mapletree Bursary has really made a difference to my life at university. With the financial help, I am able to spend more time on my studies and excel academically while also being able to make the most of living in a residential hall at NUS. Hall life is so important because it is where you learn leadership skills, meet a diverse group of people, learn how to juggle various commitments and get involved in helping others in society. I am so grateful for all the opportunities the Bursary has afforded me and Mapletree's generosity has left a deep impression on me. I hope to have a career in real estate business development or fund management and, at the same time, be actively involved in educational causes in our society. Perhaps one day, I will be able to establish a scholarship or bursary as well!”



Lim Boon Kai
School of Design and Environment

ENCOURAGING ALUMNI TO GIVE BACK THROUGH ALUMNI-LED INITIATIVES

For some students studying at the National University of Singapore (NUS), a university education is not something that is easily afforded. That is why the NUS Alumni Bursary Endowed Fund (ABF), brainchild of the NUS Alumni Advisory Board, was set up. ABF provides financial support in the form of bursaries to the many deserving but financially disadvantaged students studying across NUS.

Chairperson of the Alumni Student Advancement Committee, Mr Johnny Tan ('82), says, "Through the NUS Alumni Bursary Endowed Fund, we hope to provide the neediest students with the same, if not better, educational opportunities that we enjoyed at NUS, as well as give these students a chance to improve their social mobility. We also hope to cultivate a sense of regular giving among alumni and broaden support for our alma mater. Giving back should be part of our community spirit."

And there are many ways in which alumni can show their support for ABF. Apart from making a gift, alumni can come together to organise class reunions and other alumni activities. These events not only provide them with opportunities to engage with each other and celebrate their past, but to do so in a meaningful way – raise funds for financially disadvantaged students. In fact, the very first gift to ABF came in the form of funds raised by alumni in an annual golf tournament organised by the NUS Society.

Yet another way alumni can give back to their alma mater is through the NUS Campus Couples Bursary Fund. Part of the ABF Campaign, the Fund encourages couples who met on campus to make a gift to bursaries in support of students who need financial support.

Ms Khalijah Masud ('92) and Mr Aznan Ghazali ('92) are one such couple who has made a gift towards the NUS Campus Couples Bursary Fund.

Khalijah, who firmly believes that education is a social leveller, says, "I had a good education at NUS and I would like to ensure that anyone has access to it, regardless of their background. I came from a poor family and can relate to the stress of having to look for money to continue studying. I received financial assistance from generous donors for my days in NUS



(L-R): Mr Johnny Tan, Mr Seah Cheng San, Mr Edgar Liao and Mr Yeo Keng Joon, members of the Alumni Student Advancement Committee.

and I am truly grateful.

"I think that the Fund is a good initiative. There are many happy couples who got together during their NUS days. Giving to this Fund is one of the ways to thank NUS, I suppose, for their love stories!"

Are you a campus couple? Would you like to support the NUS Campus Couples Bursary Fund? For more information about the NUS Campus Couples Bursary Fund, or to make a gift, please contact kjyeo@alumni.nus.edu.sg. ■



Photo credit: Emilie Lancelot-Jouno



Campus Couples: (L-R): Mr Aznan Ghazali and Ms Khalijah Masud; Mr Wong Ah Long and Ms Yang Pow Si; and Ms Kong Yuet Peng and Mr Yeo Keng Joon.