

**Address by Professor Tan Chorh Chuan
President, National University of Singapore
New Alumni Welcome Lunch 2009
11 July 2009, Shaw Foundation Alumni House**

Fellow alumni, colleagues, students and friends,

Class of 2009, Congratulations! It is with great pleasure that I welcome you as NUS alumni. You are now part of our extended family of over 196,000 alumni members spread around the world. This is a ready-made global network to which you, our alumni have automatic membership.

For our Class of 2009, the long years of study – from primary to secondary school, to junior college and then NUS – have come to a satisfying close. The next phase of your life stretches out before you.

In this next phase, you set your own course and pursue your own dreams. There will be many “ups” and highpoints, and perhaps a few “downs”. Regardless, I hope you will always see yourself as part of the NUS community, and that NUS can continue to be of service to you.

NUS and Alumni – A Life-long Relationship

First, the **HARDWARE**, this newly-built Alumni Complex.

Our Alumni Complex stands as the most visible sign of NUS’ strong commitment to ever stronger ties with our alumni. Our aim is to make the Alumni Complex bustle with activity that brings together NUS alumni, students, faculty and staff, and add to the vibrancy of the campus environment. The Complex has been jointly developed between the NUS Society and NUS. It offers a home on campus for friendship and networking, for learning and sharing, and for dining and recreation.

Second, the **SOFTWARE** – events and programmes that will allow you to network with fellow alumni, both senior and junior.

We have a diverse and talented alumni with a broad spectrum of interests, expertise, skills and strengths. This rich network can help you find friends with common interests, seniors who can provide advise and support, and colleagues who may become your partners in business or work.

We would also like to develop a few signature events which will attract alumni, students and staff to come together. We are making a big start with this year’s Rag and Flag Day. NUS alumni led by NUSS, and NUS staff have been busy designing and building a float each for Rag Day in August. As you know, Rag and Flag is a proud and unique NUS tradition. Since its inception in 1958, the annual Rag and Flag Day has been a platform for having fun, raising funds to help charities, for volunteerism and for artistic expression. This year marks the second time our alumni

will be building a float – in 2005, the Class of '72's float had a Bukit Timah Campus theme.

One of the best memories of my student days was Rag and Flag. I hope we can make the staff and alumni participation an annual occurrence, and that many of our alumni will come back to campus for the event. It will be really fun and also help build up the NUS spirit.

Third, I hope you will take advantage of the professional development programmes specially mounted for our alumni. One such course is the IV-Sigma programme which is designed to help our fresh graduates who are stepping out into the working world, to sharpen their competitive edge. Over four days, the programme will cover skills such as Strategic Communications, Strategic Negotiation, Project Management and Financial Management which employers recognize as work place essentials.

IV-Sigma is the brainchild of an active and supportive alumnus – Mr Viswa Sadasivan, CEO of communications consultancy firm Strategic Moves. I encourage our newest alumni to avail themselves to this course.

Inspiring Mentor Awards & Class Ambassadors

I see these professional development courses as part of the University's continuing service to our alumni community, in line with our educational mission.

In this spirit, we will be presenting the inaugural Inspiring Mentor Awards today. This award recognizes faculty and staff, who as mentors, have made an indelible impact on NUS alumni when they were students. Our 16 mentors have gone above and beyond their call of duty to help our students discover their latent talents and to unleash the potential hidden within. We honor these outstanding individuals today for their contributions and we take pride in them as they have made a difference in the lives of others.

This afternoon, we are also inducting 161 alumni from our 2009 cohort as Class Ambassadors. The Class Ambassador initiative, which was launched last year, reflects NUS' commitment to work closely with graduate representatives from each Faculty. Our Ambassadors have also demonstrated a high level of ability and charisma, and contributed immensely to the vibrancy of our University during their student days. We are confident that our charismatic Ambassadors will help us build strong links with their respective cohorts.

Closing

Let me close with a quote from Winston Churchill. He said: "Every day you may make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever-lengthening, ever-ascending, ever-improving path."

May NUS continue to be a part of your ever-lengthening, ever-ascending, ever-improving path. And I hope you will be a part of NUS' rich heritage and its own path, as we jointly grow our strengths and develop fresh peaks of excellence.

Thank you.