

NUS marks 110th anniversary by helping community

THE National University of Singapore (NUS) yesterday launched a new initiative that combines its research and academic expertise on campus to address problems in the community.

Called NUS Cares (Community Advancement with Research and Education Synergies), this initiative is part of the university's 110th anniversary celebrations this year.

For a start, its faculty and students will work with three community partners to identify complex community problems and find practical solutions.

For example, NUS is working with the Central Singapore Community Development Council (CDC) to look at the problems faced by elderly and needy residents who use wheelchairs.

The feedback from the CDC is that many of the residents do not have the strength to steer their manual wheelchairs and motorised ones are costly.

Engineering students from

the university will try to design a wheelchair that is affordable, robust, and easy to use and maintain.

They will test their solutions in Kampong Glam and successful ones could be used by elderly residents in the rest of the Central Singapore district.

Said Ms Felicia Tay, 20, a student involved in the project: "This is a chance for me to use what I've learnt in school and apply it to help the community."

The other two NUS Cares projects will involve collaborations with the National University Health System and the NUS Medical Society.

Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who is also adviser to Jurong GRC grassroots organisations, said at the launch of the initiative yesterday: "I'm very happy that that spirit is so strong in NUS, that it's not just about nurturing graduates to have good careers for themselves... It's about



Volunteers with the National University of Singapore community initiative helping a resident during one of their house visits in Taman Jurong. ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

strengthening our community and strengthening Singapore for the future."

NUS president Tan Chorh

Chuan said: "NUS110 is a very timely opportunity for us to reflect, share and celebrate service to the community. We felt that

it would be most meaningful to do this in the community rather than on the NUS campus."

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