Congratulations to the Class of 2009:

Emril Bin Mohamed Ali
Praju Vikas Anekal
Cheong Yujing Clara
Dai Xilei
Melissa Jane Fullwood
Ismail Muhamad Hanif
Ho Wing Long Winston
Kim Chee Wee
Ko Violane
Koh Hui Shan
Koh Yeow Nam Geoffrey
Ku Chih Yuan Sebastian
Law Bee Khuan Jaslyn
Law Yaozhang Dean Randall
Lee Ping Alison
Lee Siew Ching Joan
Lee Wei Lin Cecilia
Lim Ching Aeng
Lim Eu Jin Andy
Lim Keat Sandy
Lim Shushan Linda
Lim Siew Lay
Lim Tong Seng
Lim Wei Ying
Lim Yi Wei Stefan Sandon
Liow Tsung Yang
Lua Yan Hwee Sunny
Mar Choong Hock
Ng Kwang Loong Stanley
Ng Ping Ping Angela
Ong Siew Min
Ow Siak Wei Dave
Quek Boon Kiat
See Hai Yun
Tang Pak Kay
Tao Pey Yuen
Tay Mei Sian Yvonne
Tee Keng Peng
Teng Terk Shin
Teo Chek Sing
Teo Peili
Wee Keng Boon
Wong Kok Loon
...pub night...
A night to kick back, have a drink and enjoy good company... Sound appealing? If
so, make sure you join in at the next NGS Pub Night! Pub nights are going to be-
come regular evenings held in/around the Buona Vista area. They are open to all
NGS alumni (and friends!) and provide a laid-back atmosphere to catch up with
friends, meet new people, share in the joys and struggles of postdoc life and may
even result in possible collaboration opportunities in the future.

Pub Nights will be organized by various alumni themselves with the next one being
planned by Liu Mei Hui. If you would like to help serve your fellow alumni, volunteer
to coordinate the next pub night event!

Enjoy!

~~~ Next Pub Night: August 21st, Water & Wine, 6:30pm—8:30pm  ~~~
Organized by Liu Mei Hui

Alumni Dinner
2009

By Tang Pak Kay '09
&Teo Peili '09

The NGS Alumni Dinner on July 16th was a memorable one for the NGS graduates of
2009. It not only brought together friends and colleagues for a night of good food, some booze, fun
and laughter, it was also a wonderful occasion to celebrate the successful completion of the PhD
degree for the 2008/09 graduates. For some of us, it was a time to meet and catch up with some old
friends whom we have not met since thesis submission as we were posted to different research insti-
tutes. A few have also gone overseas for their postdoctoral fellowships so the informal dinner was a
wonderful opportunity to find out how each has been doing. Perhaps it is also appropriate that the
dinner was held at the Nexus in the NUS University Hall, which overlooks the NUS campus, Biopo-
lis and Fusionopolis- a serving reminder of the countless late nights in the labs and meticulous effort
put in throughout our candidature.

The dinner was graced by Prof. Tom Fox, Deputy Executive Director of NGS, who began
with a very informative address on the history of alumni groups. The opening address was a way to
acknowledge the wonderful accomplishments of the new alumni as well as to highlight their begin-
ing of a new phase of interactions and future contributions of many types to the NGS family.

The new alumni and guests were treated to a sumptuous spread of intercontinental and
Asian cuisine, courtesy of NGS, of course. The dinner was interlude with games, quizzes and lucky
draws consisting of attractive gift prizes and shopping vouchers. Elissa, NGS Alumni Affairs Coor-
dinator, also took the opportunity to introduce the NGS Alumni Ambassadors.

One of the best deals of the dinner has to be the sale of the NGS Alumni T-shirts and
Tank-tops, which go for a mere $5; the only pre-requisite: you have to be a NGS alumni to be able
to purchase one… sorry on that one folks.

At the end of the dinner, everyone was high in spirits. As the graduates embark on their
research careers in various fields, carrying with them the identity
of 'NGS Alumni', we wish them all the best in their future en-
deavors, 'to boldly go where no man has gone before’ (in the
spirit of Captain Kirk, The Star Trek Series) and establish new
frontiers in various fields of integrated sciences and engineering.
Alumni Focus:
Dr. Cecilia Lee

NGS Class ’09

Current position: Working on the role of RUNX3 in ovarian cancer in Professor Yoshiaki Ito’s lab, under the Cancer Science Institute of Singapore (CSI).

What is your favorite thing about doing a postdoc so far?
What I love best about being a postdoc is not having to juggle and worry about doing research and attending classes at the same time. I also enjoy the opportunities I am now given as a postdoc to take part in other activities related to science. Just last week, I participated as a judge in a Biotech fair held at the Science Centre. It was a real eye-opener to see the creative projects the students had come up with.

Tell us one memory from your NGS years that really stands out?
One of the most memorable events from my NGS years would be the trip we organised to Sibu in 2004. When we got there, it rained and rained. On the way back, we were almost stranded as the bus was unable to reach us due to bad flooding. Weather aside, we had loads of fun and really got to know each other better. We even had a singing competition where we crowned Valerie as our “NGS Idol”.

Do you think NGS prepared you for the ‘real world’?
Yes and no. Through its structured, yet flexible curriculum, I’ve had the opportunity to take a wide variety of modules that were applicable to my research, as well as modules which are totally unrelated which help to broaden my perspective. In that respect, NGS has given me a very good foundation and equipped me with the necessary skills for doing research (this includes Justine’s training in good writing skills!!!). However, science is not a static field. It’s a continual learning process. Ultimately, persistence and hard work is still what matters at the end of the day.

On a side note, can I add that the NGS staff members are simply the best!! All of them have been really helpful and patient. In addition, they are also very encouraging and are always there to provide a listening ear.

What do you do in your spare time? Hobbies?
Shopping!! Especially when there are good sales...haha.. 😊
I love to travel. My husband and I went to Maldives for our honeymoon in April. It was simply heavenly. The waters were crystal clear and the food was fabulous. We can’t wait to go back again soon. On the rare weekends that both my husband and I do not need to go to work, we plan nice lunches or dinners. One of our favourite places is Au Petit Salut (highly recommended!!).

Any personal updates?
I just got married in March this year. We do not have any children yet. I absolutely love kids so we’ll probably start planning for one sometime next year. Will keep you updated. 😊 Work-wise, I have been working on a manuscript on the role of RUNX3 as a tumour suppressor in colorectal cancer. I have handed in my manuscript to Prof Ito and I’m currently awaiting his approval for submission.

Why do you think alumni are important?
I think having alumni is important as it provides a pool of people who can provide support to current students. There will be times during your PhD when you’ll feel so discouraged that you want to give up. I think it’s nice to be able to talk to someone who has gone through it before and understands how you feel. So if anyone needs a listening ear, feel free to call/email any one of the alumni. 😊
FOR SALE:
NGS Alumni T-shirts and Tank tops
$5 each, available at NGS Office

NGS NEWS...

- There were 84 new NGS students who enrolled for the August ’09 intake. Induction Day took place on July 27th.
- The total number of current students at NGS is: 364
- NGS is now offering their own modules including: Vision & Perception, Integrative Investigation, Topics in Integrative Sciences & Engineering (TISE), Capsule courses, Mind & Brain, etc.

Newslette:

We need freelance writers. If you enjoy writing and have a topic that you would like to write about, please contact us! Reviews of Alumni events, lectures, seminars, are also welcomed. Thank you to Sebastian Ku, Tang Pak Kay, Teo Peili, Liu Mei Hui, Adrian Koh and Cecilia Lee for contributing to the first two newsletters!

Alumni-Current Student Discussion Group

A proverb says that “in the abundance of counselors there is victory.” On 25 June, a group of 19 NGS students gathered to strategize to win in their PhD career by tapping on the experiences of 4 recent NGS graduates: Liu Mei Hui, Melissa Fullwood, Ismail Hanif, and Sebastian Ku.

The Alumni – Current Student Discussion was jointly organized by NGS Alumni Affairs and NGS Scholars’ Alliance. Our newest members of the alumni were eager to share their experiences with current students in their first through fourth year of PhD candidature.

During a lively exchange, issues pertaining to research focus, relationship with supervisors, qualifying exam, thesis exam, and career prospects were discussed. The level of determination and drive exhibited by the students were highly commendable. They were encouraged to plan their research and dissertation with an end goal in mind, while remaining open about where new discoveries will lead. In addition, of particular interest was how NGS graduates compare with PhD graduates from other renowned universities around the world. The graduates noted that the reputation one has to build is both corporate and personal. While NGS is growing in its international reputation as a major center for advanced learning, each PhD student should be personally responsible for the significance, novelty, and visibility of his or her research.

With the enthusiasm shown by both the alumni and the current students, the meeting was certainly an evening well spent.

By Sebastian Ku

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By Sebastian Ku
Over the past six years, NGS has grown into a vibrant and diverse community of budding scholars, with 440 students and alumni representing 15 countries of origin! And many of our students and graduates are amazing photographers!

Send us a photo that depicts the culture of another country. Write a caption of no more than 30 words, highlighting the uniqueness of this country.

Submission guidelines:
- There is no limit to the number of entries. But each person can only win once per competition.
- The photographer must be a current NGS student or alumni.
- The longest edge of the photo should be at least 1200 pixels.
- Minimal digital post-processing (e.g. brightness/contrast/sharpness). Heavily manipulated images will be disqualified.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Violators will be sent back to GS5001.

Closing date of submission: November 7, 2009.
Email entries to Elissa (elissahorn@nus.edu.sg).

Three winners will be selected and winning photos will be published in the next issue of the newsletter!

Help Wanted:
- ★ ALL Alumni to inform Alumni Affairs of recent publications / current news.
- ★ Spontaneous, Spunky, Social Scientist to help organize NGS Alumni Pub Nights!

We’re on the Web:
http://blog.nus.edu.sg/ngsalumni/
and... Facebook: “NGS Alumni—Singapore”

CONGRATULATIONS, IVY WEE!!!
Ivy has won the Alumni Newsletter naming contest. See why she chose Alumni Niche:
“The “Niche” to refer to NGS – a place where students discover their “Niche” in life; a place where students materialize their dreams in the areas of integrative research. Alumni now have their own special niche in the NGS family!"

Thank you to all others who submitted name suggestions! :)

NUS Graduate School for Integrative Sciences & Engineering
Centre for Life Sciences · #05-01, 28 Medical Drive · Singapore 117456
Phone: 6516 1480 · Facs 6464 1148
E-mail: elissahorn@nus.edu.sg