



Community

Yale-NUS participates at Singapore Writers Festival

Text and Image by Yasunari Watanabe

From 4 to 13 November 2016, Singapore's literary scene was abuzz with readings, panels and events as part of the annual Singapore Writers Festival organised by the National Arts Council.

This year, three students and two faculty members from Yale-NUS College joined in the excitement at four different events, each speaking from their experiences as writers.

"The Singapore literary scene is remarkably robust for a small island," remarked Professor Rajeev S Patke, Director, Division of Humanities, who spoke at a panel entitled 'Critical Stage: Why the Literary Critic Matters Even More Now'.

He observed that the festival presents Singapore as a showcase to international writers, while showcasing those writers to Singaporean readers.

Professor of Humanities Robin Hemley, Director of the Writers' Centre, also participated in a panel discussion at this year's Festival. Entitled 'Writing from the Diaspora', the panel focused on issues of representing people not corporally from one's culture, and explored how much immersion or distance is needed to feel comfortable writing about it.

"We talked about what it means to write about a place you don't originate from," explained

Professor Hemley, who read at the event from his essay about Singapore, his Filipino wife, and the different receptions their skin and origins evoke.

While the Festival featured writers such as Professors Patke and Hemley, who have been in the literary scene for years, it was also an opportunity for young writers.

One such student was first year student, Lesley-Anne Tan (Class of 2020), who was a speaker at two panels. 'Singapore Through Their Eyes' explored how Singapore is portrayed differently through each local writer in their fiction, while in 'Write This Way: A Guide for Teens by Teens', Lesley-Anne joined other published teen writers to give budding writers an insight to the writing industry.

When she was 16 years old, Lesley-Anne penned her first book in the five-part *Danger Dan* children's series, about a boy who explores Singapore's history. She co-authored the series with her mother, who handled marketing as Lesley-Anne balanced her writing career with academics.

Lesley-Anne has participated in numerous other literary events. She has also written a historical companion, *Secrets of Singapore*, and is now working on a second series set in the future, dealing with more

complex themes and ethical issues.

Two other Yale-NUS students, Al Lim (Class of 2019) and See Wern Hao (Class of 2020), also participated in the Festival.

Both performed a reading of twin cinema poetry with four other poets in a reading entitled 'Twin Cinema Reading' by Sing Lit Station.

Twin cinema is a poetic form that was first formally developed in Singapore. The poem is displayed in two columns — each column may be read vertically by itself, or the whole poem horizontally across both columns.

"In our session, the two parts of the poems are not only linked together by ideas, they're also linked together by readings," explained Wern Hao.

"Each half of a poem can stand on its own, but if you read them together, it conveys a third layer of meaning... the effect is really quite beautiful."

Al's interest in writing began at Yale-NUS, during a learning trip to Myanmar. The trip included reflective free-writing exercises led by writing fellows. Upon returning from Myanmar, Al compiled his writings and received encouragement from his academic advisor to continue writing.

A little more than a year later,

Al is now President of INK: Yale-NUS Literary Collective, which meets weekly to bring students with literary interests together. He has been published in the *Eunoia Review* and *Unseen the Magazine*, and was a finalist in the A3 Fresh Voices Competition 2015 for poetry.

"For creative writing, it's especially important to have a community of writers," said Al, who described INK as a place where students can be inspired by each other and are comfortable enough with each other to give constructive feedback.

For Wern Hao, his journey began a few years before entering Yale-NUS: he was inspired by a writer friend and his study of literature in junior college, where he was exposed to famous poetry works. He has since continued to write, frequenting the Writers' Centre at Yale-NUS for feedback on his work.

The Writers' Centre supports students through one-on-one consultations with instructors, creative writing workshops, and late-night writing sessions. Yale-NUS also has a writer-in-residence in each of its Residential College.

"We are trying to make writing a part of the life of the campus, in every single way, both in terms of academic and literary writing," said Professor Hemley.



Yale-NUS hosts HSSRP Symposium

Text and Image by Yasunari Watanabe

On 5 November 2016, Yale-NUS College hosted the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Programme (HSSRP) Symposium, the culmination of a seven-month research mentorship programme for secondary school students in Singapore.

The programme is organised by the Gifted Education Branch, Curriculum Planning and Development Division of the Singapore Ministry of Education (MOE).

It aims to allow Secondary Three and Four students to carry out research with the mentorship of experts in their fields of study.

Professor Jane M Jacobs (in photo), Director, Division of Social Sciences and Head of the Urban Studies programme at Yale-NUS, was the Guest-of-Honour at the Symposium and faculty members from the College also served as mentors to the budding researchers.

“Research creates knowledge... upon which other researchers can build, from which other students learn, from which policy-makers and society-makers draw,” Professor Jacobs said in her opening address in the College’s Performance Hall, citing the importance of encouraging humanities and social science research among youth.

95 participants produced a total of 53 research papers, which they first presented at a Project Review. The Symposium was an opportunity for participants to present their research findings

to a wider audience.

Three Outstanding Papers selected at the Project Review were also showcased and the students also fielded questions from the audience after each presentation.

One such paper, co-authored by Betty Lam Jia Wen and Nwe Cherry Khine, students at the NUS High School of Mathematics and Science, explored whether students’ impression of race affects their perception of peers.

“Especially in multi-racial Singapore, this will be very important,” said Betty. “If we can find a way to mitigate such bias, we can improve the social cohesion among races.”

Professor Jacobs expressed amazement at the way the students presented their projects and commented: “They were competent, they were articulate, and they fielded many questions from their peers with grace.”

Professor Jacobs also observed that the projects showed “methodological diversity”—experimental and qualitative, and “topical diversity”—from stereotype and bias, to the politics of environmental governance, to the experiences of the elderly in Singapore.

The programme started in end 2015 with the submission of research proposals by the students.

Mentors then chose proposals most aligned to their fields of research, and worked with selected students to further

refine their projects.

This year, two Yale-NUS faculty members mentored selected research projects: Dr Guillem Riambau-Armet, Assistant Professor of Social Sciences (Economics), and Dr Jean Liu, Assistant Professor, Social Sciences (Psychology) at Yale-NUS.

“For me it was very important they answer questions that haven’t been asked anywhere in the world,” said Dr Liu, “and they rose to that challenge.”

This year marks Dr Liu’s third year mentoring HSSRP participants.

But prior to being approached by the MOE to become a mentor, she was a student participant herself.

“I keep thinking of the type of support I received which led me to where I am now,” said Dr Liu.

Yale-NUS College supports a vibrant community of undergraduate researchers in the Social Sciences and Humanities through a variety of schemes.

For instance, Dr Liu coordinates the College’s Summer Social Sciences Research (SSSR) programme, which allows students to gain hands-on research experience with the supervision of Yale-NUS professors during their mid-year break.

With the multitude of prospects available at the College to gain first-hand exposure in faculty laboratories, students are also encouraged to approach professors to seek their own

research opportunities.

“Many faculty projects are very amenable to student involvement, and it just takes asking a professor,” said Dr Liu.

Dr Liu also stressed that research does not end with the conclusion of the symposium, but is instead an on-going process.

“Real-life research goes far beyond that—your project may not work out, or you want to ask something else about the same phenomenon. So you try again, and again,” she shared.

Dr Liu hopes that some of the HSSRP participants will come to the College in a few years and continue to conduct novel research in their fields of interest.

Professor Jacobs echoed the sentiment, saying that she would like Yale-NUS to become a familiar place to local students, such that they may later imagine themselves as a part of the College’s community of learning.

“I’m really delighted that Yale-NUS College could be the host for this year’s Symposium,” said Dr Jacobs.

“It’s really important too, when we have such a beautiful campus, and such excellent faculty, that we give in a wider sense to the community; this is an opportunity to do that.”



ComPact organises first community service week

Text by Daryl Yang | Image provided by ComPact

In just the second week of his first semester in college, Brandon Lee (Class of 2020) was already participating in his first community service project at Yale-NUS College. Volunteering as a befriender to a group of South Asian migrant workers, Brandon's role was to welcome them to the College and get to know them on a more personal level.

"I was involved with the hosting of and mingling with migrant workers on our very own campus. Upon their arrival, we gave them a tour of our school, after which our new friends chose between watching a movie in the lecture theatre or playing cricket and football at the Cendana courtyard," Brandon said.

"After the activities, we brought them to Cendana dining hall for dinner, courtesy of students who donated their dinner allowances for the evening."

This event was one of several activities organised as part of the College's inaugural Community Service Week by ComPact, a Yale-NUS student organisation dedicated to increasing the involvement of students in off-campus community service.

According to Clarissa Leong (Class of 2017), one of its founders, the group aims to build a service-oriented culture in the College by making opportunities for community service readily available to the Yale-NUS community.

"There are so many activities going on around campus, but

rarely do you see any related to community service, in part due to the small number of community service-related organisations," she said.

"While some students might volunteer outside campus on their own accord, it can be especially challenging for students without prior connections to service organisations to enter the service 'scene'. ComPact aims to fill this gap by making community service more accessible to everyone and building a service culture in



Yale-NUS along the way."

Community Service Week is one of the group's initiatives to foster a culture of service.

Hoa Nguyen (Class of 2017) was one of the students behind the campaign and explained that the idea was to promote such a culture "from the very start of the semester, and especially for the freshmen, the start of a four-year journey".

Hoa added: "We wanted to provide a variety of opportunities and options for Community Service Week as we wanted to enable those who participate, the international students especially, to see different sides of Singapore

that exist beyond the College compound. The opportunities included working with underprivileged children, seniors, as well as migrant workers."

For Brandon, who has been actively involved with community service even before joining Yale-NUS, he was motivated to volunteer for the event with the migrant workers because he wanted to show his appreciation to an "often-marginalised group of people who are instrumental in our lives in Singapore".

"My greatest takeaway would be an increased sense of empathy towards our migrant worker friends," the freshman shared.

He was touched by the positive attitudes of the workers who shared with him over dinner their hardships from working in Singapore.

"The long hours...their struggles with familial relationships back in their home country, the list goes on," he said. "While they were sharing all these hardships, they actually did it with a slight smile that spared my heart. They took all these grave adversities in their stride and

lived each day one at a time... To me, they are the ones with the biggest heart."

The student response was very heartwarming, says Hoa, with over 40 student volunteers participating.

"Even though these are one-off events, some of the volunteers were passionate enough about the cause to commit to volunteering for a longer period with the organisations we worked with. That was also one of our goals for Community Service Week, to spark people's interests and passion for different causes in society," she noted. "We hope that this will become a tradition, or even incorporated into Orientation week in the future."

According to Clarissa, student interest in community service has been growing and the group is also planning to reach out to faculty and staff for future events. Other events included a panel discussion on inequality and poverty in Singapore, and a blood donation and bone marrow donation drive.

Apart from Community Service Week, the group has organised a service fair where individuals share their volunteering experiences with peers and a health and fitness session with young girls from Yayasan MENDAKI. ComPact also facilitates ongoing volunteering opportunities with the national reading programme, National kidsREAD, and the Institute of Mental Health.

Students by day, artists by night

Text by Daryl Yang | Image provided by Jeremy Hu, Bandwagon

While most of his peers might be travelling over the summer break in 2017 to catch a breather from school, Lek Haokai (Class of 2018) will also be travelling – and not simply for leisure.

Aside from being a hardworking student enrolled in the Double Degree Programme with NUS Law, Haokai is the lead guitarist of Sphaeras, an instrumental band.

“I will be touring with my band to Japan and Taiwan to develop our fan base regionally,” he shared, and mentioned that the group also has plans to tour North America and/or Europe in future.

Since the band formed in 2013, there have been many significant milestones.

“We formed in 2013 with the intention of taking part in Baybeats 2014 – which was our first big milestone. Given the prestige of Baybeats as a local music festival, many performance opportunities ensued which meant a steadily increasing fan base and more recognition in the scene,” Haokai shared.

In May 2015, the band released their debut album *Moirai*, with help from a National Arts Council’s grant, which had a sold-out album release show.

Other milestones include opening for renowned international acts like Toe and Tricot.

This part-time pursuit of professional careers is not rare

at Yale-NUS College, where students are encouraged to explore and develop their passions and talents.

Another such student is Min Lim (Class of 2018). A freelance designer, Min set up her portfolio online recently and has since been approached by many clients ranging from the public service to large private companies.

Some of her previous clients include the Ministry of Education (Singapore) and the Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA). She is also an active member of the Yale-NUS Visual Arts Society (VAS).

“I’ve always been the type of person to only involve myself in things I enjoy doing, and want to improve in. VAS was an obvious option since freshmen year as I’ve always loved graphic design and have always wanted to work on my traditional art,” said Min.

One of her most memorable experiences was hosting Photoshop workshops with the group.

“It was the first time (since it began last semester) that I started teaching Photoshop, even though I’ve had nearly 12 years of experience with the software,” she shared.

“I didn’t realise how much I enjoyed teaching it, and how fulfilling it is when I see my students visibly improve in front of me. This is something I hope to explore in the future.”

Min, who says she did not

expect to be so involved in the arts as she has been at Yale-NUS, is active at VAS, The Improv Comedy Conglomerate, and INK: The Literary Collective.

“I like that I’m growing and improving this part of myself, while being able to give back to the community at the same time,” Min said.

Most recently, together with other Yale-NUS students interested in design, Min co-founded TANDEM, a designers’ guild founded under the philosophy of making quality design accessible to all.

“I’ve personally worked as a freelance graphic designer for nearly 5-6 years now. I realise that initially, it is very difficult to gain a regular client-base, especially if you’re only doing this on an ad-hoc basis without qualifications like a diploma in design,” she explained.

“As such, I wanted to create an organisation that can provide a platform for aspiring designers to gain professional exposure and experience – hence TANDEM.”

For Yee Jia Rong (Class of 2018), being in Yale-NUS has similarly contributed both artistically and administratively to his artistic endeavours as a theatre practitioner.

As managing director of Couch Theatre, a theatre company founded in 2013 together with his peers in junior college, Jia Rong is responsible for the administrative management of the company. Another Yale-NUS student, Ziyad bin Ahmad

Bagharib (Class of 2018) is also a co-founder of the company.

“Artistically, watching theatre efforts in our very own Black Box... as well as having conversations with the people involved in the artistic design of these productions, gave me fresh ideas on how to manipulate sound in newer and better ways for the projects my team was working on,” he elaborated.

Jia Rong describes the college administration as “extremely supportive” of theatre efforts, from the Arts & Media team in availing facilities and equipment for rehearsals, to funding support from the Arts Fund.

“Not to forget the Yale-NUS students themselves; many individuals who didn’t know much about theatre or who weren’t particularly drawn to it nevertheless took the time (and money) out to come to support!” he added.

Similarly, Haokai shared that being in Yale-NUS has helped in his musical career because of the chances to meet other students who are also passionate about the arts.

“For example, one of my band’s music videos was filmed by Dynn Othman, a junior who also happens to be a talented filmmaker. The Yale-NUS environment is fertile for spontaneous collaborative projects like this to occur,” he reflected.



Third Yale-NUS student government sworn in

Text by Daryl Yang | Image provided by AY2016/17 Yale-NUS Student Government

The Yale-NUS Student Government was first established in February 2015.

As elected members of the student body, members of the Student Government are the voices for the protection of student interests.

Since it was introduced, the Student Government has published various reports internally to provide student feedback on different aspects of the student body's academic and residential experience.

On 15 September 2016, the newly minted AY2016/17 Yale-NUS Student Government was officially sworn in.

Consisting of a Student Council and Judiciary, the new Student Government comprises 17 members.

At the same time, Saza Faradilla (Class of 2018) took over from Regina Marie Lee (Class of 2018) as Student Government President while Avery Simmons (Class of 2019) succeeded Scott Currie (Class of 2018) as Vice-President.

Joining the Student Government was not an obvious decision for Saza, who successfully ran in the Presidential Elections and was elected as President.

"I was one of those who was quite apathetic about Student Government when it first began and did not really see its benefits," she expressed.

"After two years, I think I do see the importance of having a government which is effective,

receptive and has a heart. I believe I am someone who is able to offer these qualities, which is why I decided to run for President."

Though Saza campaigned on three main platforms, namely 'Culture of Care', 'Tackling Tough Issues', and 'Listening to You', she explained that her central platform is "to champion a culture of care which values student welfare, effectiveness and flexibility".

"I will first listen to the students and be reactive to whatever is necessary and most urgent. More than that, I will be working proactively on things which are always significant to the student body," she said.

This includes issues around academic grading and promoting a campus culture of community service.

For Hebe Hillhorst (Class of 2020), joining the Student Government was a complicated decision as she had just begun her college experience.

"As a freshman, I was worried that I wouldn't know the College well enough to understand what the problems are and how best to solve them with the least possible conflict, but I think this can be easily overcome by listening and being very open to advice," she said.

Ultimately, it was her desire for a meaningful college experience that drove her to run for Student Government.

"I didn't want college to just

be something I experienced – instead, I wanted it to be something I actively interacted with," she explained.

As Director of External Communications, one of Hebe's main focus is the Student Government website.

"I want to improve the website by making it more of an information hub and something that students engage with," she shared.

Timothy Lim (Class of 2018) has been appointed Director for Academics and he is responsible for communicating inquiries and feedback between students and the administration.

"In my freshmen year, I was heavily involved in the discussions on what kind of student government we would want. I was interested in joining the student government as I felt that it was through student government that I would be best able to give back to the members of the community who have given me so much," Timothy shared on his motivation behind running for Student Government.

Since the elections, students have expressed great support for the newly elected representatives.

For Holly Apsley (Class of 2018), the new Student Government is well-positioned to serve the school community under Saza's leadership.

"I am excited about the new student government because

I have confidence in Saza's ability to provide leadership on sensitive and pressing issues like students' concerns with academic matters," said Holly.

For the new Student President, one of her favourite moments in college to date was during her Presidential campaign, which reminded her of the strong community spirit at Yale-NUS College.

"When campaigning began, I was pasting hand-made posters around campus, but another friend saw and almost forced me into letting her help me create new, nicer posters. She then proceeded to create 10 different posters in an hour," Saza shared.

"From online endorsements to gestures of encouragement in the dining hall, I never realised how much my friends supported me and how willing they were to really help me achieve my goals. For that, I am extremely thankful," Saza reflected.

"I really love Yale-NUS, and I honestly believe that there is no better place for me than this community."



New equipment enhances learning at Yale-NUS labs

Text by Wen Kin Lim | Images by Yasunari Watanabe

Over the past semester, new scientific equipment has been installed at the teaching laboratories on the Yale-NUS College campus.

The research-grade instruments allow students to gain hands-on experience and exposure to different methods of sample analysis.

The new equipment is generally more advanced than standard teaching tools, offering undergraduates the opportunity to conduct their own independent research studies.

With their intended dual use for both teaching and research, the laboratories are an extension to the research capabilities for both faculty and students.

Assistant Professor of Science Stanislav Presolski, who specialises in chemistry and was involved in the purchase of a Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) instrument said: “We have designed our science classes in a way that makes them fairly indistinguishable from actual research.”

NMR spectroscopy, which works on the same principle as magnetic resonance image (MRI) machines used in hospitals, allows scientists to elucidate the structure of organic molecules at the atomic level.

By providing students early exposure to such advanced equipment, the College helps them complement their theoretical learning, and gain

practical research training.

Dr Presolski teaching students in the Foundations of Science course how to use the newly acquired Magritek’s Spinolve 60 Carbon benchtop NMR spectrometer.

Isaac Lee (Class of 2019) recently took one of his classes in the newly refurbished laboratories and had the opportunity to use the NMR machine.

data without reliance on the default software,” explained Dr Presolski.

In the Common Curriculum, a set of courses which is part of every student’s Yale-NUS education, students have the opportunity to work closely with their professors in the laboratories for their first or second year classes.

Students from a range of backgrounds, including those

research.

On 5 August, the Yale-NUS@CREATE research laboratory was launched by the Science Division.

The laboratory is equipped with chemical synthesis, spectroscopic characterisation, catalyst preparation and characterisation capabilities, allowing staff and faculty of Yale-NUS to look forward to greater research opportunities.

“It’s different from learning about it and seeing how it is observed in the laboratories.”

He said: “It’s different from learning about it and seeing how it is observed in the laboratories. It really helps make the recognition that science is made in the present and not just discovered long ago. We are constantly reaffirming it.”

The small class size – fewer than 18 students per class – at Yale-NUS means that professors are able to give tailored instruction to their students and provide the key skills needed to properly use the scientific equipment.

“You are taught not only how to operate the machines, but also the physical principles behind the measurements, and ways to interpret the

without previous experiences in science, learn about scientific methods and inquiry.

This laboratory component forms an important part of the multidisciplinary approach of the Common Curriculum, which exposes student to multiple fields of academics including science, philosophy, literature, history and quantitative reasoning.

Beside teaching laboratories on the Yale-NUS campus, the College also has research laboratories located at the Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise (CREATE) in the NUS University Town and the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, where students are able to work with professors on advanced

The enhancements to the Yale-NUS teaching and laboratory facilities aim to increase the potential for engaging in laboratory work in Yale-NUS courses and for research on campus.

Students who are interested in furthering their scientific studies have a range of options at Yale-NUS, including working with professors as research assistants, majoring in Science, and participating in summer research projects.



Yale-NUS students contribute to scientific research

Text by Daryl Yang | Image by Yasunari Watanabe

While building a rocket might sound like a dream or something that one would read in a science fiction novel, Eun Jung Min (Class of 2019) had the opportunity to experiment with synthesising micro and nano-rockets as a student researcher working with Yale-NUS College Assistant Professor of Science Stanislav Presolski.

“I worked with Professor Presolski on synthesising micro/nano rockets that are biocompatible (or compatible with living tissue). Nanobots and similar delivery systems have been receiving attention lately, for their potential application in the medical and pharmaceutical fields. However, many of these studies pointed to nanobots having limited control over the motions of the systems. We hope to resolve these issues and synthesise the functioning delivery system so that this can be applied in various ways,” Jung Min explained.

“We have identified some potential compounds for the encapsulating agents and fuels. In time to come, we hope to incorporate photochromic molecules, compounds that react to light, to the rocket and achieve control over the directional motion of the nano-rocket.”

A sophomore who intends to major in Physical Sciences with a concentration in Chemistry, Jung Min had decided to take up the position as a student researcher to learn more about experimental chemistry.

Beyond that, Jung Min also learnt about how to approach and carry out his research systematically.

“Working in an undergraduate laboratory has allowed me to learn more about a systematic way of approaching research. From formulating questions to drawing out experimental procedures, I had to be more independent in my learning.”

The most exciting moment during his research was when his first micro-rocket moved in water.

“It felt so surreal and I remember banging the table in joy.”

Another sophomore who was also involved in scientific research with a Yale-NUS faculty is Nilotpal Chakraborty (Class of 2019).

hydrodynamic behaviour of graphene. Graphene is a thin layer of pure carbon and its discovery sparked huge excitement in the physics and technology community. It has properties which makes it extremely useful for a wide variety of applications. In fact, the scientists who discovered graphene were awarded the Nobel Prize,” Nilotpal shared.

“The reason this project was interesting is because hydrodynamics (the mechanics of fluid motion) is not supposed to be applicable to systems like the electrons in graphene. Yet, experiments showed that they are applicable to graphene and to understand and utilise a material, one must first understand how its particles behave. This project sprung out of the first official meeting I had with Dr Adam and his post

the programming language MATLAB, and going through papers to identify important ideas and trying to implement them in order to come up with our own theory.”

As he intends to major in Physical Sciences and is considering a career in academia, research was something that Nilotpal knew he wanted to get involved with in college but did not have the chance of doing in high school.

Hence, he decided “not to waste any time at all” and applied for the position in the first semester of his freshman year.

The most memorable moment for him was meeting renowned physicist Giovanni Vignale (known for his contributions to density functional theory) on campus.

“Working in an undergraduate laboratory has allowed me to learn more about a systematic way of approaching research...I had to be more independent in my learning.”

Nilotpal worked with Assistant Professor of Science Shaffique Adam on the hydrodynamics of graphene.

“Over the summer, I was working with Dr Shaffique Adam, his post doctorate student and a research assistant to understand certain characteristics of the

doctorate student last year and it was a very exciting project for me to work on.”

Even though he is still an undergraduate, Nilotpal was heavily engaged in many aspects of the research.

“I was mostly involved with generating code in

“I was reading a paper by this famous physicist and then suddenly Dr Adam told me that the professor was right next door and visiting his department. We then had a three-hour meeting with Professor Vignale, which was amazing!”



Students take on communications internships

Text by Daryl Yang | Image by Weave for Yale-NUS

Internships and work placements enable fresh graduates to stand out amongst their peers, by experiencing real-world situations and developing applicable skills.

It was for this reason that Sherlyn Goh (Class of 2017) decided to take up an internship with Rice Communications, a boutique communications agency, as a summer intern and spent almost three months with them from May to August 2016.

Even though she had no prior knowledge about the public relations landscape in Singapore, Sherlyn was interested to find out more about the industry and gain some workplace experience in preparation for graduation in May 2017.

“I first got interested in public relations after taking two related modules at the National University of Singapore: Principles of Communication Management and Writing for Communications Management. It made me realise that I was interested in the hands-on activities we did in class, and I wanted to explore more about the industry,” Sherlyn shared.

Having to juggle between different clients from diverse industries and work on a multitude of tasks from being a media liaison to writing, Sherlyn shared that her years of study at Yale-NUS prepared her well for the challenges in her internship.

“As we are exposed to so many

different disciplines and have to read new texts regularly in the Common Curriculum, I have learnt how to jump into new problems quickly and to produce work efficiently,” Sherlyn said. “This versatile learning experience has helped me in this industry, which similarly requires a very steep learning curve because we are always working with multiple clients at any one time and it has been a very fulfilling experience.”

Like Sherlyn, Kaushik Swaminathan (Class of 2018) also spent his summer writing – but for a journalism internship with The New York Times at its South Asia bureau in New Delhi, India.

As an intern for the Times, Kaushik’s responsibilities included pitching and writing daily news, conducting research and attending press events. He also worked closely with two Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, Ms Ellen Barry and Ms Geeta Anand.

“It’s a little intimidating to be sitting in a small office, a couple of desks away from two Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, and be expected to produce work that will run alongside theirs,” he shared.

In July 2016, Kaushik worked with Ms Barry, Ms Anand and other reporters on the ground to cover the Dhaka terrorist attacks in Bangladesh.

“For several weeks, I was involved in researching and writing profiles on the alleged

attackers, scouring through news and social media to find any hints of motive,” he related.

“Covering breaking news is surreal. You don’t have very much time to process the tragedy for what it is. You are fixated on delivering the most accurate news as quickly as possible. It’s a complicated feeling but it’s very exciting.”

Kaushik’s prior experience as Managing Editor of the Fox & Hedgehog, a publication founded by three Yale-NUS College students in 2014, was also critical in helping him prepare for the challenges in the internship.

“I learned to be quick, thorough and precise. Within my first few days [at the Times], I realised how important it was to have a good eye for the right stories, and how I could be a part of a process that transformed a short pitch into an incisive, meticulously-researched article,” he said.

Tinesh Indrarajah (Class of 2017) spent his summer on a fellowship with GovInsider, an online platform that covers government innovation and offers solutions to the many challenges faced by public servants.

Tinesh was GovInsider’s first undergraduate Fellow, where he spent three months investigating service delivery across Asia Pacific, focusing in particular on epidemic readiness across different ASEAN countries.

“My job as a Fellow was to

produce simple articles about innovations across different countries in Asia targeted at government officials in the region,” Tinesh said. “By integrating academic research with stakeholders’ interviews, I was tasked to write in a straightforward manner so that public officials can access the information quickly and efficiently.”

As one of three students in the inaugural batch of the Concurrent Degree Programme with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKY School), Tinesh is broadly interested in issues of government policy.

As a History major, the skills Tinesh has developed through his major helped significantly in his internship. “Both History and the LKY School Concurrent Degree Programme gave me the ability to navigate the statistics and content of what I had to grapple with, to ask important questions during interviews as well as in doing research for the article,” Tinesh said.

Being new to journalism, what struck him most was the access to policymakers and other important stakeholders in pursuing the news.

“It is gratifying to know that I can have a conversation with them to learn and share, and that I am treated as an equal,” Tinesh said. He added: “Most importantly, it is especially encouraging to know that I have this opportunity to share the knowledge I learn from them with the world at large through my writing.”



J Y Pillay Fellow Asst Professor Malcolm Keating

Text by Nirali Desai | Image by Aleithia Low

Established to allow Yale-NUS College to hire young academics who can help develop and participate in the College's diverse curriculum and programmes, the J Y Pillay Fellowship is part of the J Y Pillay Global-Asia Programme, which is supported by philanthropic gifts from various corporations and individuals.

learn from Dr Keating, but have the chance to be a big part of classroom discussions.

"Dr Keating strikes a very good balance between driving student-led discussions and imparting his expertise to us," she explained.

Beyond the classroom, Dr Keating's research focuses on Indian philosophy.

found the support of fellow academics who also study Indian thought, helping to facilitate an ongoing exchange of ideas and thoughts.

Based in Singapore, he also has the advantage of a convenient geographical location for his research, but emphasised that the College's unique "philosophy of being

or the default, and allows for an enriching conversation about thinkers that converge in certain conclusions, separated by different times and places," he said.

He also shared that he is grateful that the diverse academic community at Yale-NUS – both faculty and students alike – does not recognise either the East or the West as default assumptions.

"The division between the East and the West is a construct and not a very helpful one," he said.

Dr Keating's work, which looks at the links between Eastern and Western philosophy, has been well-received at the College.

"We are very glad that Dr Keating is the second recipient of the J Y Pillay Fellowship at Yale-NUS," said Professor Tan Tai Yong, Executive Vice President (Academic Affairs).

He added: "I believe that his extensive research and experience in Indian philosophy, as well as his desire to cross cultural and disciplinary boundaries, will be extremely valuable for our community of learning, Singapore and the rest of the region."

"Dr Keating strikes a very good balance between driving student-led discussions and imparting his expertise to us."

This year, Assistant Professor Malcolm Keating has been awarded the J Y Pillay Fellowship, which is named in honour of Professor J Y Pillay, a former top civil servant, corporate leader and policy maker in Singapore.

Many of Dr Keating's students have noted that he emulates the virtues of Professor Pillay, who was previously praised for being a "great teacher, sharp and analytical" by Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong.

One such student is Hansel Tantohari (Class of 2020), who shared that he appreciates Dr Keating for his patience and how he tries to make time for all his students. Kate Lim (Class of 2020) echoed Hansel's opinion, and added that students not only get to

As the J Y Pillay Fellow, he continues to work on a series of articles for the Fellowship, centred on topics that have emerged from his previous work in Indian philosophy, which was concerned with the intersection and investigation of epistemology and language, in a tradition known as *Mīmāṃsā*.

Dr Keating researches the processes of understanding the utterances that *Mīmāṃsā* is concerned with, particularly when they are elliptical (missing words), metaphorical or non-literal.

These need to be correctly and specifically interpreted, in part so that ancient Indian Vedic rituals can be performed correctly.

At Yale-NUS, Dr Keating has

intentionally global" drew him here.

"In Singapore, the context of an international faculty and student body allows for a fruitful way of doing philosophy, as it does push back on an easy categorisation of East or West, which can be far too simple," Dr Keating said, noting that the distinction between East and West is increasingly complex and not simply binary.

Speaking specifically on his discipline, he highlighted that the relationship between Indian and Western philosophy, for example, was complicated.

"Comparative philosophy, which is essentially looking at philosophy with different voices, decentres the West as the standard of comparison