



## Halcyon, the Yale-NUS Mascot

Text by Jeannie Tay | Image provided by Public Affairs

Four years after Yale-NUS College started its first class, the college now has a mascot to call its own. An idea initiated by students in 2015, the work on the development of a mascot to represent Yale-NUS took place over the past two years.

While the mascot started out as a students' initiative, the whole college community eventually got involved in the process, and provided inputs on the choice of an official mascot to represent Yale-NUS.

On the idea of a mascot, Diamanta Vania Lavi (AY2015/2016 Yale-NUS Student Government) explained that in a campus-wide survey in October 2015, the majority of the student body had expressed their desire to have a mascot as part of the college identity. The students also wanted to have a mascot that could represent the College at athletic games and events.

Diamanta was involved in driving the mascot selection process, where students, faculty and staff were invited to nominate a mascot and participate in the voting process.

The kingfisher was eventually selected, and the mascot choice was ratified by the Student Government in April 2016. Design work on the

Yale-NUS mascot, Halcyon, soon followed.

Halcyon references a mythical bird, originally derived from Greek mythology and usually identified with a generic grouping of various kingfisher breeds. A carefree, untroubled creature – not unlike the halcyon days one enjoys in college – the Yale-NUS Halcyon was chosen as a representation of the ideals of the Yale-NUS community – Youthfulness, Creativity, Curiosity and an Adventurous Spirit.

These kingfishers can be found nesting in Singapore, even though they are considered rare residents in Asia. The kingfisher reflects Yale-NUS College's location and its commitment to develop a community of learning that is based in Asia, for the world.

With the passing of baton to the next Student Government, Sara Rotenberg (AY2016/17 Yale-NUS Student Government) took over as the key student representative and she was involved in getting students' inputs during the design process.

Sara was also responsible for organising and facilitating focus groups, and creating a report on the feedback for the design.

"Having a mascot creates a concrete sense of community and identity that had not been established at Yale-NUS. Mascots are very prominent at our parent institutions [Yale and the National University of Singapore], so I think many students felt it was a great way to further establish our identity," said Sara.

Sara enjoyed the collaborative process in seeing the mascot project to fruition, especially how students' feedback and ideas were taken into consideration during the revisions of the designs.

The design phase involved the Student Government and Public Affairs team working closely with a professional design agency – which was appointed to work on the final design of the Yale-NUS Halcyon.

On her experiences working on the mascot project, Diamanta said: "My biggest takeaway from this project is perhaps my realisation of how much Yale-NUS means to the community. "

"To have not only students but also staff and faculty members email me personally about the project, to hear people talk about the mascot in various parts of the campus, to have them so enthusiastically involved in the entire process really

highlighted how much the community here cares about the College. This strong sense of community really makes me feel grateful to be in a small liberal arts college like Yale-NUS," she added.

Diamanta noted that one of the greatest challenges working on the project was the tight timeline to finalise the mascot before the inaugural Class of 2017 graduates in 2017.

She added that as a member of the inaugural Class of 2017, she is excited that the mascot will be ready before her graduation in May.

"I think it would be a very meaningful closure as I end my journey here at Yale-NUS, [the mascot] is a representation of what the Yale-NUS community means and the legacy that I managed to leave behind."



## Writing Instructor Launches Debut Non-fiction Book

Text and Images provided by Yasunari Watanabe

On the evening of 19 January, the College community came together to celebrate the launch of Writing Instructor Laurel Fantauzzo's non-fiction book, *The First Impulse: Notes on Love, Film, and Death in the Philippines* in an event held at the Writer's Centre.

The book, printed by Anvil Publishing, is the culmination of Ms Fantauzzo's seven-year-long investigation into

*The First Impulse* traces the story of the young couple, from their first meeting to the development of a love which transcended cultures. Ms Fantauzzo depicts the events leading to the murder, and the ensuing hunt for a suspect, from various records and interviews with Tioseco and Bohinc's family and friends.

At the book launch, Ms

shares her experience of living in and out of the Philippines. However, she feels that Tioseco identifies more strongly with the country than she does. "He's someone I wish I could have been in a conversation with," she said.

Ms Fantauzzo gathered information about the case by talking to the families of the murdered couple.

and McDonald's chicken nuggets. The choice, said Ms Fantauzzo, was deliberate. Bohinc was fond of brown bread, while Tioseco's family had ordered McDonald's chicken nuggets when they celebrated a major break in the case. A suspect was arrested in February 2016,

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"I felt like the story kept coming to me... I wanted to bring back the context through storytelling."

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the murder of two film critics, Alexis Tioseco and his girlfriend Nika Bohinc. Tioseco, who was Filipino-Canadian, and Bohinc, who was Slovenian, were slain in their Philippine residence in 2009.

Professor Robin Hemley, Director of the Writing Programme at Yale-NUS, opened the night by congratulating Ms Fantauzzo on her transition from "writer to author". Ms Fantauzzo then read two excerpts from her book, which was followed by a question and answer session, facilitated by Kaushik Swaminathan (Class of 2018).

Fantauzzo shared that she initially felt she had no right to write about the couple, as their paths had never crossed. However, she found herself encountering mentions of Tioseco and Bohinc's case wherever she went. "I felt like the story kept coming to me," she said. "Murder eliminated the context behind their lives—I wanted to bring back the context through storytelling."

Part of that motivation comes from Ms Fantauzzo's relationship to the Philippines. As a Filipino-American, she relates especially to Tioseco, who

Tioseco's brother in Canada was particularly helpful, and embraced Ms Fantauzzo's decision to write the book. She also visited Bohinc's family in Slovenia on a Stanley Graduate Award for International Research from the University of Iowa in 2012.

As she travelled collecting information, the focus of her book shifted from gathering clues about the suspect, to narrating the deep relationship between Tioseco and Bohinc.

The book launch included a spread of bread, cheese

two months before she began writing the book in April.

After seven years following the couple's story, Ms Fantauzzo is "less nervous about starting new projects". At Yale-NUS College, Ms Fantauzzo works in the Writer's Centre, where she assists students in developing their writing skills. Outside of the College, her work has appeared in the New York Times and Esquire Philippines, among other publications. She is a 2011 Fulbright Scholar and 2014 Hedgebrook Writer-in-Residence.



## Yale-NUS Infrastructure Office exhibits new campus initiatives

Text by Wen Kin Lim | Images by Aleithia Low

On 11 January 2017, the Yale-NUS Infrastructure, Safety & Security Office held a roadshow on Safety, Security and Environment. The event was attended by over 250 guests, including representatives from the Singapore Police Force, the Central Narcotics Bureau and the Yale-NUS Safety Committee.

The Roadshow exhibited the latest campus initiatives from the Infrastructure, Safety & Security Office to improve residential living for the entire College community as well as guest speakers from the Singapore Police Force on crime prevention and safety.

One such initiative is a new fault reporting smart phone application that Yale-NUS students and staff can use to give instant feedback on infrastructure-related issues on campus. Instead of sending emails or making calls, users can simply take a photo of the problem and send it to the relevant technician via the app.

Once the issue has been resolved, the technician could close the loop with the user by replying with a photo of the resolved area on the same platform. The app is scheduled for a pilot launch in April 2017 with an initial full subscription of 100 users who had signed up at the roadshow."

Dennis Aw, Director of Infrastructure, Safety & Security Office, said:

"Throughout the process, we would be able to monitor and track feedback and whether it had been satisfactorily attended to."

Mr Aw said the app in the later part of its development



will also include a built-in data analytics engine that helps the Infrastructure team analyse pattern recognition models to develop and implement predictive maintenance strategies to prevent similar defects from occurring.

The Infrastructure, Safety & Security Office takes a proactive approach in facilities management. Mr Aw said they adopt a process "that will help to continually look at the symptom of a brewing issue and address it promptly before it morphs into a complex problem."

For the staff and students who study, work, sleep and play on campus, Yale-NUS is like a second home and the work of Mr Aw and his team play a key role in maintaining a conducive environment for

the College community. Their responsibilities range from renovation, improvement of residence and common areas to security and safety compliance.

Mr Aw added that events like

sustainability if needed."

As a 'second home' for the Yale-NUS community, the Yale-NUS campus requires immense attention and care. "Every student and staff has a role to play to

the Roadshow not only help to increase awareness in the community of the College's house rules but is also an opportunity to share recent improvement works carried out within the student suites.

The Roadshow also featured booths and games that were organised by the NUS Office of Environmental Sustainability (OES), Office of Safety, Health and Environment and Office of Campus Security.

Mr Aw said: "There are resources that we can tap from one another to leverage off synergies and create economies of scale. For example, we can share data on consumption of water and electricity with OES so that we know where we are positioned and strive to improve on areas in managing

keep our second home safe, sustainable and comfortable," Mr Aw added.

Aditya Karkera (Class of 2020) was heartened to see the Infrastructure, Safety & Security Office team respond to feedback and develop new initiatives to improve the overall college experience for faculty and students.

"It is great to see them have an active interaction with the college community. Their work behind the scenes is really essential for our campus," she said

Students should report infrastructure issues and hazards as promptly as possible and can give suggestions for improvement to the Infrastructure Office at: [infra@yale-nus.edu.sg](mailto:infra@yale-nus.edu.sg)



## Building a Culture of Nutrition and Fitness

Text by Daryl Yang | Image by Yasunari Watanabe

On 3 November 2016, students, staff and faculty were busily doing squats around the College for the inaugural Yale-NUS Mass Squat Challenge. This was organised by a new student organisation called 'BACON' as part of the first Wellness Week.

BACON loosely stands for 'Building A Culture of Nutrition (& Fitness)' and is an umbrella student organisation that aims to create a welcoming, non-judgemental and non-exclusive culture of health and fitness in Yale-NUS College. Co-founded by a group of fitness enthusiasts including Roger Ko (Class of 2019) and Jessica Fred Chang (Class of 2019), the group runs open classes and specialised training sessions geared for all levels of experience.

Roger shared that the idea for the group began came when Jessica taught him Pilates for fun.

"It all started out in the Saga Common Lounge. In a bid to procrastinate from our work, she introduced me to Pilates," he said. "From then on, a small group of us started doing it and then the group just got bigger and bigger."

"We then came up with the idea of making similar groups like this for more kinds of fitness activities because we found it to be really helpful since we keep each other motivated and

mutually accountable," Roger explained. "Personally, I love health and fitness and really wanted to introduce this culture to others too."

When the group first began, it offered circuit, strength and conditioning training and Pilates classes. Since then, the group has also worked with other students to offer Yoga and Zumba classes. Roger described the main goal of BACON as creating an inclusive fitness community.

"We welcome people of all levels and I think it's even more important we highlight this to people who want to start going to the gym or do High-Intensive Interval Trainings (HIIT) but feel intimidated," he said. "I understand this feeling as I was in a similar position six years ago when I first stepped into the gym. I want to make it different for those who want to try this out."

For another founding member, Lionel Kwek (Class of 2019), this was an integral reason for him to join BACON. Having stopped competing professionally in powerlifting recently, he found it difficult to keep a healthy lifestyle 'without the support of a strong community'.

"When I heard about BACON from Roger, I was drawn to the fact that it was about creating the type of fitness community that I wanted," said Lionel, who co-leads the strength training programme.

However, Lionel does not think of himself as a trainer but a peer to those he helped to train. "I think many people look at the team and see us as 'trainers' who know more than them and take our advice to do everything we teach. To be honest, we too are constantly learning new things. There is no better way than to have an enthusiastic group of individuals who help each other discover new things that they can share with one another."

The students response has been so overwhelming that the team has had to turn away many who were interested in their programmes to ensure all participants were given "a fair amount of attention". Nonetheless, the group tries to help them on an ad-hoc basis.

"This ties in with our vision for BACON, which is to create a large fitness community where everyone can rely on anyone for help and support," explained Lionel.

Betty Pu (Class of 2020), a participant in the strength training programme, has found it very helpful to stay committed to getting fit.

"What I enjoy most about the initiative is that it forces me to work out three times a week! Unless I have a very good reason to skip a session, I try not to as I'm in a small group and everyone knows each other well!" She added, "It is the bond within this

group that has helped me build discipline go to the gym regularly. Prior to college, I stepped into a gym maybe at most, three times a year!"

Her most memorable experience so far was on the first day of the programme, when Roger established the ground rules with his three trainees and took the time to ask them about their expectations from the programme.

On the group's future plans, Lionel shared that they aim to encourage sustaining a healthy lifestyle and create more conversations on fitness and nutrition.

Currently, BACON is led by Kristian Marc-James Paul (Class of 2019), who is serving as the President of the student organisation. In his term, Kristian has led the BACON team to organise more activities and has plans to develop new programmes to promote fitness and health on campus.

Looking back on their first semester of activities, Roger thinks he has noticed a visible change within the span of one semester.

He said: "Perhaps it's just me but I'm seeing a lot of people in the gym more regularly this semester and I'm loving it!"



## Celebrating Cultural Diversity Through Fashion and Food

Text by Daryl Yang | Images provided by YAAAS

While Yale-NUS College is situated in Asia, students at Yale-NUS College come from diverse backgrounds that span more than fifty countries from six continents. This includes students of African descent and other regions such as the Middle East and the Americas. Last October, a group of these students came together to set up the Yale-NUS African, African-American & Afro-Caribbean Society (YAAAS).

More commonly known as YAAAS, the group was established with the aim of encouraging the Yale-NUS community to discuss and engage in pertinent conversations around socio-economic issues, share cultural events and celebrate the diversity of their cultures.

“The idea for YAAS first came up in an effort to encourage the members of our community to engage the diverse Yale-NUS community with those of us who are of African descent,” shared Ahmed Elsayed (Class of 2020) who hails from Egypt and serves as the group’s Publicity Head.

“Many people have questions about people of African descent, but usually don’t ask in fear of offending others. As such, we wanted to create a platform where they can have their questions answered.”

This motivation led to a viral promotional video for the group, titled “Stuff People Say to Students with African Descent”, that touched on

various stereotypes about people of African descent in a humorous way.

“We saw the need to address some of these stereotypes and wanted to combat it in



a fun and silly way based on our personal experiences in the community and around Singapore,” explained YAAAS’ president, Waihuini Njoroge (Class of 2020) from Kenya.

The video was extremely well received, garnering almost 10 000 views. “All of us were surprised by the excitement over YAAAS when we released our promotion video last semester. This has really encouraged us because we had felt a genuine interest within the community to create a space where we can discuss issues unique to people of African descent,” reflected Waihuini.

The team has since organised a fashion show featuring different outfits from the African continent and a panel discussion on both traditional and contemporary African fashion. This was in

collaboration with the Yale-NUS Fashion Society and Engaging Africa, a group of students from NUS with focus on the African region.

“We wanted a fun way to

were of African descent. She shared that their advice were invaluable and instrumental during the group’s early days.

When asked on their plans for the upcoming semester,

show some of the beautiful things that come out of Africa, like art and fashion. We tried to have as much diversity as possible in our selection of clothing and models,” explained Director of Events, Alexia Davidson (Class of 2020) from Jamaica.

The event was well attended by a curious and engaged audience. “A memorable moment from the fashion show was the Question & Answer session. The audience were initially hesitant to ask questions, but gradually began asking the models questions about their costumes, hair, traditions, etc. This strongly resonated with us as YAAAS fulfilling its mission,” Ahmed shared.

According to Waihuini, the group was supported by the Dean of Students office as well as Dean’s Fellows who

the team plans to organise various food festivals to share African and Caribbean food cultures. There are also smaller events in the pipeline such as panel discussions and movie screenings.

“As African and Caribbean food are not easily found in this side of the world, we brought the necessary ingredients from our home countries that can’t be found in Singapore. We wanted to bring these cuisines to let the Yale-NUS community get a taste of our cultures,” Alexia revealed.



## Students Initiate Independent Study Programmes

Text by Daryl Yang | Images provided by Sherice Ngaserin, Joseph LaRose and Wayne Xu

At Yale-NUS College, students not only have the opportunity to attend a diverse range of classes with their professors but can also initiate their own independent reading and research programmes. This allows students to delve into particular areas of interest under the close supervision of a faculty member who specialises in that field.

One such student is Sherice Ngaserin (Class of 2018) who has taken two continuous independent language modules on Sanskrit with Assistant Professor of Humanities (Philosophy) and J Y Pillay Fellow Malcom Keating. Sherice decided to initiate the class after developing an interest in Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy from reading several texts in the Common Curriculum and participating in a Learning Across Boundaries (LAB) study trip to Japan on Zen Buddhist Philosophy organised by the Yale-NUS Centre for International & Professional Experience (CIPE).

“After the study trip, I was quite determined to learn everything I could about Buddhist philosophy. So I stopped by my professor’s office, and he advised me to consider learning Sanskrit and Tibetan. I was thrilled when I was told that Dr Keating would start teaching at Yale-NUS the next semester, and was willing to mentor me on Sanskrit,” said Sherice.

The two independent study modules with Dr Keating had been very fruitful, and provided Sherice with a solid foundation in Sanskrit as she plans to pursue this area of study in her capstone project and in graduate school. “Dr Keating was incredibly conscientious about making sure we were learning the language properly: no shortcuts, a lot of painstaking memorisation. The independent study format meant that we could be flexible about tailoring the course to our abilities and schedules.”

Typically a full course at Yale-NUS or the National University of Singapore (NUS) counts for 4 or 5 modular credits (MC), but Yale-NUS students also have the option and flexibility of taking smaller 2MC courses in areas of special interest to them, with close guidance of a faculty member.

For Daniel Soo (Class of 2017), it was his peers’ positive experiences that led him to pursue an independent research project with Writer in Residence Laurel Fantauzzo on Literary Journalism, which was initiated by a group of students in the previous semester.

Ms Fantauzzo is a non-fiction writer at the Yale-NUS Writers’ Centre. She completed her Master of Fine Arts in non-fiction writing as an Arts Fellow at the University of Iowa and her work has appeared in the

New York Times and Esquire Philippines, among others. The class met every week for an hour, focusing on reading other people’s writings as well as the crafting of an original journalistic piece.

“I grew up listening to podcasts, and I always love well-researched stories that touched on a human element. As I wanted to explore this form in a more formal way, I wanted to take this course,” Daniel explained. “I’m considering a career in journalism so this course was very helpful in giving me an insight to what it is like creating original pieces, as well as grappling with the ethics, the questions and the grey areas that might come into play when writing a story.”

Another student is Nur Qistina Binte Abdul Wahid (Class of 2017) who initiated a course on dance choreography and styles last semester with Elm Residential College Vice Rector (VR) Chew Suyin, a dancer by training with a BFA from Purchase College Dance Conservatory in New York. The course focused on skills in choreography and the development of different dance styles.

Nur Qistina decided to initiate the course because of her growing interest in dance after coming to Yale-NUS. “I came to Yale-NUS with a strong interest in both arts and sciences but I had decided fairly early on that I would pursue mathematics

as a major because I found it challenging and require a different kind of creativity than I was used to. On the other hand, I had started getting more involved in dance at Yale-NUS and I wanted to be able to build my skills in that area as well.”

A key aspect of such programmes is the final project that students are expected to develop throughout the course. For Nur Qistina, it was developing her own choreography. “There was a strong exploratory element in the choreography section of the class and I got to play around with the different concepts and develop the movements in a way that tells a story well. I applied what I learnt from the class in my own choreography, while referencing the style of one of my personal favourite choreographers – Jose Limon.”

The experience had been very rewarding as it gave Nur Qistina the opportunity to learn from an experienced dancer like VR Suyin. “She knows so much about dance, being trained in it herself and also having developed arts management programmes. Listening to her experiences and feedback on my work has helped me grow as a performer.”



# Refugi

## The Universality of Dance

Text by Yasunari Watanabe | Image provided by Shanice Stanislaus

Shanice Stanislaus' (Class of 2017) passion for dance drove her to capture, or archive, movements in film.

In her documentary film *Refugi*, she explored how different people express themselves through the medium of dance. The film weaved together interviews and dance pieces of people with varied experiences in dance, to express the universality of the art form. After being featured at the Evolution! Mallorca International Film Festival in Spain late last year, *Refugi* was shortlisted for three film festivals worldwide. It is currently under consideration for several others.

At Evolution! Mallorca, Shanice screened her film and engaged in a talk session with the audience, where she discussed her documentation process of dance. "I was asked a lot of questions as I was the only Singaporean director," she said.

Mallorca, an island off the eastern coast of Spain, is home to a thriving cinema scene. Since its inception in 2011, the film festival has expanded to attract a global array of filmmakers and producers.

Her independent endeavour began last summer when Shanice worked for the show *Dance to Death* in Barcelona, Spain.

She did not start out with the idea of creating a film. Her main purpose was

'movement research', which is an archival of different styles of movement without genres attached. "I hope this film will encourage more of such fieldwork and movement-based research in dance scholarship," she said.

Shanice began her research through a series of interviews, which she also saw as an opportunity to better understand the dance scene in Spain.

Her first interviewee was her 'host mother' who was part of the company that had brought her to Barcelona. Although she was not formally trained, she shared Shanice's passion for dance. She also talked to an ex-dancer from the Pina Bausch Company in Germany, her visit coordinator and the publicist for the dance space she worked at. After each interview, she would ask each person to translate what they had said about dance into movement.

"Everything you just said has to come from somewhere within that isn't verbal," Shanice would tell them. "Then, they would start dancing."

The four people she talked to came from diverse backgrounds of dance expertise. They each brought different but valuable insights on what dance meant to them. For example, her 'host mother' spoke of the ageing body and whether it can hinder dance, while the ex-dancer talked about the

harshness of the industry.

Through the dialogues, Shanice could compare the trained body to the untrained body, and see the differences in style. "I wanted to capture the universality of dance," she said. "Although we do not speak the same native language, there was something connecting us."

As she continued to document her work in between her hectic schedule of her day job at *Dance to Death*, Shanice collected many material. She eventually decided to 'immortalise' it the form of film.

She recalled attending a film festival in Singapore several years ago, where she met the director of the Thai film, *Chiang Khan Story*. The director advised her that she did not need a lot of good camera angles if she had a good story to tell.

She took the advice to heart and spent her remaining two months in Barcelona working on the film. "I'm not a very technical person," said Shanice, who edited the video clips taken with her iPhone using only the prepackaged software iMovie on her MacBook Air. "But this film is my way of encouraging my audience that dance should not be restricted to a certain kind of body. It comes from somewhere within."

The title *Refugi* means "refuge" in Catalan. As Shanice faced challenges living alone in a foreign

country, she sought refuge in dance. The title, she said, embodies her wish to capture that feeling.

She finished the film with two days left in her stay in Barcelona. A premiere held in the dressing room of *Dance to Death* was met with much enthusiasm. Shanice was encouraged to submit her piece to film festivals for consideration.

After airing her own film at Mallorca, Shanice attended networking sessions and panels. She talked to personnel involved in the film industry, and met a lot of directors who made incredible feature films.

Shanice made her directorial debut with another film created with several classmates from Yale-NUS. Titled *Duende*, the film follows a Singaporean dancer as she shares her passion for the Spanish dance, flamenco.

Film is an avenue for expression of Shanice's primary interest, which lies in the performing arts. As a graduating senior, she is now busy working on her capstone project which is a show that she writes, directs, choreographs and performs in. The project will incorporate film and elements of audience interaction. "The two films, *Duende* and *Refugi*, represent my inspirational journey that has culminated in this final performance," said Shanice.



## A Public Lecture on the Global Zika Outbreak

Text by Daryl Yang | Image by Aleithia Low

On 16 November 2016, the Yale-NUS Global & Public Health Alliance (YGPA) hosted a public lecture by Professor David L. Heymann, chairman of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Emergency Committee on the Zika virus.

Professor Heymann is a professor of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He is also Head of the Centre on Global Health Security at Chatham House, London; and Chairman of Public Health England, UK.

During the lecture, Professor Heymann shared WHO's response to the global Zika outbreak and discussed his experience from a critical public health perspective. He also talked about the local Zika epidemic and the response by the Ministry

of Health in Singapore. For instance, he observed that the local strain of Zika in Singapore is different in its makeup as compared to the strain that was causing microcephaly in infants in countries like Brazil.



of Health in Singapore. For instance, he observed that the local strain of Zika in Singapore is different in its makeup as compared to the strain that was causing microcephaly in infants in countries like Brazil.

One of the students who attended the event was Lim

Wen Kin (Class of 2020), who was interested in public health and health emergency management. He found Professor Heymann's discussion on the decision-making process that public health experts go through to be very insightful.

"What I found most interesting from the talk was how officials, doctors and experts make decisions to respond to emergencies like the Zika virus outbreak and how they form an applicable structure and series of steps to follow in order to minimise the impacts and emergencies," he shared.

"This problem solving approach was extremely interesting as it saved many lives and was made under international pressure with very limited resources."

The lecture was organised by YGPA, a new student group set up to build a relevant, supportive and professional network for students to cultivate their interest in the field of public and global health.

According to Lim Chu Hsien (Class of 2018), she and the

other co-founders decided to establish the group due to an existing gap in the Yale-NUS community.

"We do not currently have an organisation that serves to educate and discuss issues pertaining to public health. Our group will be the first in Yale-NUS College to provide exposure to the field of public health," she explained.

In addition, she noted that a health-centric perspective has often been overlooked in a myriad of academic fields, such as urban planning, global affairs, natural sciences and environmental studies.

The group hopes to rectify this.

"The Yale-NUS curriculum, particularly the Common Curriculum, has trained us to integrate different perspectives from various academic disciplines in understanding a specific issue. Such training has motivated us to seek out more perspectives from other disciplines that were not specifically covered in our curriculum."

"YGPA will serve to build on the liberal arts programme here at Yale-NUS and provide a more holistic educational experience for students," she shared.

The group aims to "put health at the forefront of the Yale-NUS community" and has four different arms: health promotion; advocacy and policy; education and

research; and community service.

The lecture by Professor Heymann is part of the education and research arm, which also aims to organise future programmes relating to public/global health and epidemiological issues by inviting relevant experts from academia, governments and the private sector.

With regard to the group's community service programmes, they plan to reach out to health-related humanitarian organisations to engage the larger community. They also want to learn more from experts and volunteers on how to be more involved in this field.

In the long run, Chu Hsien hopes to see YGPA as a home for Yale-NUS students who are interested in pursuing global and public health as a career. Other founding members of YGPA include Matthew Ware, Nyang Bing Lin (both Class of 2018), Sara Rotenberg and Vasudha Kataruka (both Class of 2019).

## Saw Swee Hock Study Award: The Start of a Ripple Effect

Text by Yip Jie Ying | Image by Ilya Katrinnada binte Zubaidi

The Saw Swee Hock Study Award at Yale-NUS College was established in 2016 through a donation provided by Professor Saw Swee Hock, who is President's Honorary Professor of Statistics in the Department of Statistics and Applied Probability at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Professorial Fellow at ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute. He is also an Honorary Professor at Xiamen University and the University of Hong Kong, and an Honorary Fellow of the London School of Economics (LSE).

Professor Saw has published 45 authored and edited books, as well as over 100 articles on statistics, demography and economics. He has given generously to promote tertiary education and social mobility among needy students. Many universities have received his support for the establishment of medals, study awards, bursaries, scholarships, endowed professorships, research centres and buildings. Recipients of his donations include LSE, Xiamen University, the University of Hong Kong, and universities in Singapore.

In recognition of his outstanding academic and philanthropic achievements, he was conferred the Honorary Doctor of Letters by NUS, the Distinguished Alumni Leadership Award by LSE, the Public Service Medal by the Singapore government,

and the Singapore President's Award for Philanthropy.

Three students from the Class of 2018 – Daniel Ng, Ilya Katrinnada binte Zubaidi and Nur Diyanah binte Kamarudin – are the inaugural recipients of the Saw Swee Hock Study Award, which has been beneficial in helping students to focus on pursuing their academic and personal interests.

"It is a big honour and privilege to be a beneficiary of this study award," Ilya shared. "It has helped to alleviate my family's financial concerns about my university education, and I can now focus on pursuing my academic interests as well as the countless opportunities that the College offers, without worrying about my school fees."

An avid photographer, Ilya is involved in the Yale-NUS Photography Club, where she hones her photography skills while enjoying the opportunity to capture various school memories through events coverage. She hopes to further her passion in the future by using photography as a tool in leading a creative life that allows her to tell meaningful stories. She also aims to make education, the arts and sports more accessible to underprivileged children and youth.

Daniel shares the same zest for pursuing his passions, most notably in developing

his expertise in military matters, particularly military law. A student in the Double Degree with Law programme, Daniel previously headed NUS Law's Military Justice Project and hopes to be involved in the military in his future career. In addition, Daniel is passionate about education and student mentorship, which he currently contributes to through various activities in the Boys' Brigade (a previous co-curricular activity), his secondary school alumni association and his church. Inspired by the Saw Swee Hock Study Award, he also hopes to give back towards education in the future to provide future students with more opportunities for development.

"In the future, I hope to start a fund, much like the Saw Swee Hock Study Award, to provide students from average schools with opportunities to pursue their interests," Daniel said. "I also hope to start a systemic form of mentorship, like that of the Boys' Brigade but on a larger scale, for students in my community."

Giving back is a common theme echoed by many study award recipients, and Diyanah is no exception. As a Saw Swee Hock Study Award recipient, she hopes to give back to the College upon graduation by assisting with alumni relations and sponsoring an annual academic prize under the

Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) major.

Now on a semester abroad at Columbia University, Diyanah was previously involved in a variety of activities at Yale-NUS, including the Cendana Residential College Activities Committee, the Mixed Martial Arts Association, and the Student Investment Group, where she helped organise the inaugural Singapore Asset Management Conference sponsored by J.P. Morgan.

"I think that being in a liberal arts curriculum and studying varied disciplines really encouraged me to go out of my comfort zone and embark on new things," Diyanah said.

Beyond alleviating the students' financial burden, the Award represents the start of a ripple effect of contributions that society can potentially witness in time to come as these students aim to pay it forward in their own ways.

"It gives me great pleasure to play a part in providing the students with access to higher education at Yale-NUS College, the first liberal arts college in Singapore that presents a unique education model with emphasis on breadth as well as depth of knowledge," Professor Saw said.