

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT



Mr Tan Kay Yong
Chairman

INSPIRING GREATNESS

As the 50th Anniversary Celebrations came to a close in August 2005, I was reminded of the good progress the Polytechnic had made over the decades and the promise of making it great in the next 50 years. 2005 was indeed an exciting year for the institution as we continued our journey from good to great.

Much progress was made in fulfilling the aims of the four strategic thrusts ie the formulation of an education model of the future, unleashing creativity, innovation and enterprise, making Singapore Polytechnic a great place to work, and creating a unique SP experience for students.

EVOLVING AN EDUCATION MODEL OF THE FUTURE

Last year, I reported the initiative to adopt a multi-curriculum model aimed at integrating the learning of values and ethics, and process and life skills with the teaching of domain knowledge to provide for a more balanced and holistic education and training of our students. During the year in review, the implementation of this new initiative saw eight diploma courses re-designed based on the Triangle of Desired Educational Outcomes or T-DEO model.

In addition, a key component of the new education model ie the General Elective Modules (GEMs) expanded in its second year of operation in 2005. The number of GEMs increased from 42 to 70 with nearly 9,000, ie more than double the number of students registering than in previous year.

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Other components of the new education model included eLearning which became widespread and more entrenched during the year with the launch of a campus-wide eLearning Week in December 2005 to enhance students' learning experiences using technology.

A Student Portfolio System was developed as part of the new education model to help students take a pro-active approach towards setting and achieving goals they find meaningful. This system would be implemented in academic year 2006 along with the following four new courses developed to meet industry needs:

- Diploma in Tourism and Resort Management
- Diploma in Bioengineering
- Diploma in Infocomm Security Management
- Diploma in Games Design and Development

Partnerships were forged with companies like Bugis Street Development, Foote Cone Belding and Nejllock Technology in 2005, facilitating a two-way flow of know-how and skills to further enhance the training offered by the Polytechnic.

NURTURING A CULTURE OF CREATIVITY, INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE

Pushing for a culture of creativity, innovation and enterprise (CIE) remained a top priority. Following the commercial success of two R&D projects last year, I am pleased to report that more innovations had been commercialised in 2005.

An agreement was signed with Ambrosia Cravings to manufacture and market the inulin-infused chocolate created by students from the School of Chemical & Life Sciences (CLS).

XO Kaya, another creation of students, made its debut on supermarkets' shelves following a successful collaboration between CLS and manufacturer Fong Yit Kaya. This low-fat version of the popular spread had since won the Health Promotion Board's Healthier Choice label.

For the Singapore Food Delight Manufacturer, staff of CLS developed a range of frozen ready-to-eat meals with special packaging which are now on sale at local, and very soon overseas, supermarkets.

A project management board game created by students from the School of Media & Information Technology was commercialised through Alpha-Plus Training Consultants.

Discoveries by the Technology Centre for Life Sciences made headlines with its research work on fighting dengue and SARS in collaboration with the China Academy of Sciences. Another breakthrough, which made news worldwide, was the creation of genetically modified plants that glow when "thirsty" or water deficient, a feature that could help save water during crop production.

The Innovation, Design & Enterprise in Action (IDEA) Centre continued to play an instrumental role in the promotion of CIE activities such as the IDEA Challenge which involved teams of students from different academic schools working together on innovative ideas for products and services.

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BUILDING A GREAT PLACE TO WORK AND PLAY

A world-class educational institution would not be complete without world-class facilities to match. Phase 2A of the campus redevelopment programme became operational during the year. The six-storey building with state-of-the-art facilities like the Technology Centre for Life Sciences enhanced the Polytechnic's already impressive list of such learning and R&D centres.

Other developments completed during the year included the upgrading of the sports complex and the reconstruction of the Polytechnic's main entrance along Dover Road.

To encourage greater interaction among students, a decision was made to convert Moberly Block into a dynamic student hub. When completed, the hub would feature facilities for activities such as karaoke, pool, gaming and jamming, among others.

A budget of \$23.1 million for Phase 3 of the campus upgrading programme was also secured. This phase would include the upgrading of swimming pools, water supply infrastructure and mechanical and electrical services.

ENRICHING THE SP EXPERIENCE

Recognising the value of co-curricular activities in bringing about a more holistic education for our students as well as in enhancing their campus experience, special efforts were made in 2005 to increase the range of student club activities. Eleven new clubs were formed during the year, bringing the total number of clubs to 79.

Participating in competitions, both local and international, provided another avenue for students to have a fulfilling experience. In the process, many brought glory to the institution. In sports, the men's and women's squash teams won first place in the Polytechnic-ITE Games, while the rugby team took home second prize at the same event. Other events included the prestigious Singapore Youth Commonwealth Photo Competition which saw two of our students winning the top prizes and a rare opportunity to meet with the Queen when she made an official visit to Singapore.

In true Singapore Polytechnic tradition, active engagement in community service was once again a key focus of the institution. Almost \$200,000 was raised for charities through events such as SP Flag Day and the Singapore River Raft Race, while another \$190,000 was raised for victims of the Tsunami disaster. In the process, students gained from the experience as they gave of their time and effort.

Students who went on overseas community service like the three-week eye-screening programme in remote China and the community development projects in Central Vietnam similarly benefited from the experience.

MAXIMISING HUMAN CAPITAL

Significant efforts and resources were spent on staff development in recognition of the key role they play in the success of the Polytechnic. A total of \$2.75 million was spent in 2005 on staff training.

The Senn-Delaney leadership programme, aimed at nurturing leaders and effecting a cultural transformation at every level of the institution, was conducted while the new performance management programme (PMP) to help staff set and track job performance goals was put in place.

As mentioned in my report last year, the new PMP would enable staff to maximise their potential for a fulfilling career in Singapore Polytechnic.

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ATTAINING GREATER HEIGHTS

All these efforts enabled Singapore Polytechnic to retain its position as the indisputable leader in polytechnic education. The institution continued to be the first choice polytechnic among most 'O' level school leavers in the 2006 Joint Admissions Exercise. Of the 22,022 students who applied to further their education in the five polytechnics, 7,600 or 34.5% chose Singapore Polytechnic as their first choice.

Better students were also attracted to Singapore Polytechnic as indicated by the mean aggregate of their 'O' level scores which improved from 16.9 in 2001 to 15.0 in 2006. The number of Junior College qualified students who joined the Polytechnic also rose from 38.2% in 2003 to 52.4% in 2006.

ACHIEVING WIDER REACH

On the international front, Singapore Polytechnic International (SPI), incorporated last year as a wholly-owned subsidiary of SP, had been making excellent progress to support the growth of Singapore as a regional education hub.

During its first year of operation, SPI generated overwhelming interests from foreign students and organisations overseas. Several international agreements were made to conduct, in full or in part, SP diploma programmes with institutions in India, Indonesia and China. And SP staff were appointed consultants through SPI in an education project in Vietnam funded by the Asian Development Bank.

MOVING FORWARD

With the CIE initiatives progressing well, I am pleased to report that much of the groundwork would be in place for us to launch the School of Design to propagate a design culture on campus and to infuse the Experiential-Design Thinking process across all diploma courses.

The setting up of the School of Design would be a major milestone as it would be the first new school to be set up in SP since the establishment of the School of Business 20 years ago. The School of Design should be operational by September 2006.

Looking ahead, to keep abreast with evolving technologies and changing trends in the global market and to continuously find new ways of fulfilling our mission, it is imperative that we now level up our effort to draw on the extensive experience and knowledge of industry partners and our huge pool of more than 130,000 alumni. To this end, I have asked several board members to lead the following three Working Groups:

- Working Group on Science, Technology & Industry
- Working Group on Internationalisation of Singapore Polytechnic
- Working Group on Human Capital Development

The strategic input of these three Working Groups would be invaluable to SP as it journeys from Good to Great in the years ahead.

On behalf of my fellow board members, I would like to thank the management and staff of Singapore Polytechnic for their passion and perseverance and for yet another successful year.

Tan Kay Yong
Chairman
Board of Governors