



October 2004

Invention Approved for The Enterprise Challenge Award

An invention by a team of researchers led by Associate Professors Chandra Sekhar and Tham Kwok Wai has been approved for The Enterprise Challenge (TEC) Innovator Award. The TEC is a \$29 million fund set up to provide funds for innovative proposals that have the potential to create new value or significant improvements to the delivery of public service. The approved award from TEC, which is administered by the Prime Minister's Office, is for the field trial of the Single-Coil Twin Fan innovative air-conditioning system and is a recognition of the value and enterprise potential of our research in indoor environment and energy. The \$210,000 grant is the first TEC grant to NUS, with NUS providing the University Hall and Administration Building as the test-bed in her role as Piloting Agent for the project. The TEC Awards ceremony will be held on 13 October 2004. For more information on the TEC, please go to <http://www.tec.gov.sg/>.

Academic Matters

Bachelor of Building Programme Obtains SISV Accreditation

The Bachelor of Building (Construction Management and Economics) programme has been accredited by the Singapore Institute of Surveyors and Valuers (SISV) for a five-year period. The accreditation covers all the cohorts of the programme.

Student Matters

Department hosts UIUC Student on Exchange Programme



For the first time ever, a student from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) was enrolled as an exchange student for research in the Department. Mr Han Sangwon, a graduate student from the Construction Management Program at the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, UIUC spent about two months here under the supervision of Dr Moonseo Park. Read about his experience... ([more>](#))

Graduate Student Selected for Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations Conference

From NUS, a delegation of 15 students attended the Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations (HPAIR) Conference in August this year. They were chosen from the two essays that they each had submitted for their application to HPAIR 2004. Miss Lim Jay Na, a research student at the Department, was chosen as one of the 300 delegates from a pool of more than 3000 applicants, who came from 500 of the world's top universities, to attend HPAIR this year. HPAIR is an international conference, organized by the students and faculty of Harvard University, to address the most important economic, political, social, and cultural issues facing the Asia Pacific region. Jay Na writes about her experience at the Harvard conference... ([more>](#))

Students Who Did Us Proud

Research

Research Student Goes to DTU on Joint PhD Programme

In the Strategic Partnership towards Excellence in Indoor Environment and Energy sealed through an MOU in October 2001, the Department and Technical University of Denmark (DTU) commenced a number of initiatives with substantive programmes in staff exchange, research collaboration, facilities development, joint PhD degree, international research forum and international conferences.

Mr Gong Nan, a PhD student in NUS, left for DTU in early September 2004. He is a candidate of the Joint NUS-DTU PhD programme and will spend one year undertaking research in DTU.

"I'm acclimatized to the tropical climate, hence my first impression of Denmark is the cold, when I walked on the streets of Copenhagen," Gong Nan wrote from Denmark. "But the Danish are warm and kind. I have my first class in the International Center for Indoor Environment and Energy in DTU. The class was active, and the lecturers had to stop from time to time to answer questions from students who came from different countries."



The premises of Technical University of Denmark

Miss Chen Siying (Building Year 3) received the NUS Alumni Student Exchange Programme Award. The Office of Alumni Relations presents the NUS Alumni Student Exchange Programme Awards annually to students, its future alumni, who are embarking on the NUS Student Exchange Programme.

Mr Eugene Seah's paper on "Do's and Don'ts for E-Tendering: A Quantity Surveying Perspective" was selected to receive a Special Outstanding Paper award as a runner-up paper in the Korea-vaar Outstanding Paper Award competition. This competition is organised by the International Cost Engineering Council, a Worldwide Confederation of Cost Engineering, Quantity Surveying, and Project Management Societies. Eugene is a student on the Department of Building's MSc in Construction Law and Arbitration programme. To find out more about the award, go to <http://www.icoste.org/awards.htm>.

Mr Lee Ji Hao Theophilus, a Year 3 Building student, was selected for the award of the Dr Lee Shiu Scholarship for Hong Kong and South-East Asia Academic Exchange 2004-2005. The amount of the scholarship is HK\$15,000 for one semester.

Well done, students!



Engaging China - The Asian Business Fellowship Connection

Recent Building graduate Mr Goh Chek Hong was given the opportunity to join the project management team working on the Suzhou International Exposition Center project. The Asian Business Fellowship Programme (ABF), which Chek Hong went on, is an initiative of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) that supports the training of Singaporeans or Permanent Residents in acquiring in-depth expertise, business operational knowledge and links in engaging China, India and the Asian region. Read about what Chek Hong learnt with regard to the Chinese way of working... ([more>](#))

Taking the Unconventional Route Results in an Enriching Experience in Thailand

BSc (Building) graduate (Class of 2004), Miss Mina Koh, did not try to get herself a job after graduation. Instead, she took the unconventional route of going to Chiang Mai to teach English at the local high school (Namboluang Wittayakom) as well as to the women staying in Nong Wai village. Minna found the experience enriching. ([more>](#))



Gong Nan's first dinner in Denmark was in Gregers' home. Gregers is a student of the joint NUS-DTU PhD programme. Gong Nan was received warmly by Gregers and his family.

For more information about the joint NUS-DTU PhD programme, contact Assoc Prof Tham Kwok Wai at bdgtkw@nus.edu.sg.

Seminar on Energy Performance Retrofit for Buildings

With the support of EDB's Locally-Based Enterprise Advancement Programme (LEAP) grant of about \$400,000, the Department has established the Energy and Sustainability Research Unit (ESRU).

A manager and engineer have been recruited, and a one-day



Dr Satish Kumar

seminar on "Energy Performance Retrofit for Buildings" was organised on 23 August 2004, as part of the ESRU's objectives to educate professionals, industries and financial institutions on the establishment of a measurement and verification protocol on energy utilisation for use by Energy Services Companies (ESCOs) in Singapore. The seminar was attended by some 100 participants. The speakers included Dr Satish Kumar, a scientist from Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, USA; Dr Ashok Sarkar, an Energy Specialist from the Asian Development Bank headquartered in Manila, Philippines; and Mr Ram Bhaskar, Chief Engineer (Energy Conservation) of the Resource Conservation Department, National Environment Agency.

Feedback to MND-MOM Construction Safety Review Committee

Dr Florence Ling provided feedback to the MND-MOM Construction Safety Review Committee on 26 July 2004 on ways to improve construction safety arising from two major construction accidents. The measures recommended include: (i) making contractors' safety track record available to professionals in the construction industry; (ii) making safety record a compulsory tender evaluation criterion; and (iii) rewarding contractors for adopting safe practices.

For enquiries, contact Dr Ling at bdglyy@nus.edu.sg.

Workshop on Revaluating Construction

Dr Florence Ling conducted a workshop with Professor Peter Barrett, Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University of Salford on 23 August 2004 during the latter's visit to the department. The workshop was on "Revaluating Construction: An international study". Senior industry



practitioners including the presidents of two professional institutions relevant to the construction industry participated in the workshop to find ways to add value to the construction process.

[\(more>\)](#)

Hong Kong Polytechnic University Students Visit the Department

Thirty-nine Building Engineering and Management (BEM) Year 3 students and two faculty members from Hong Kong Polytechnic University visited the Department on 18 August 2004. The visit was an opportunity for the visitors to observe the construction practices in foreign countries. Assoc Profs Willie Tan, Tham Kwok Wai and David Cheong gave presentations on the programmes offered by the Department and had academic exchanges with the visitors. The Hong Kong visitors also met our Year 3 and 4 students for a mutual exchange of information and knowledge.



The Hong Kong Polytechnic University students posing with Assoc Prof David Cheong (first row, extreme right).

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