Radical Changes For A Remarkable Future
Gifts from the Lien Foundation help tackle the challenges of tomorrow and beyond

Bringing About Real Changes in Society
Lien Challenge, a ground-breaking competition, was established in 2008 with a generous donation of $3 million of term funding by the Lien Foundation. It was integrated into the capstone papers of the MVE and MPA programmes and offered a practice-based learning platform for Chinese government officials to translate innovative ideas which can be implemented in real-life solutions.

The participants of the programme, also known as the “Mayors’ Class”, submitted outstanding proposals to address the various water and sanitation issues facing China today, and to offer solutions that will protect, improve and sustain the environment and improve the quality of life for its people.

Said Mr Lee Poh Wei, Chief Executive Officer, Lien Foundation: “We are pleased to be part of the Lien Challenge with the intention of harnessing the political clout and will of NTU’s Mayors’ Class to tackle China’s water challenges. Government participation is key to the success of any water and sanitation initiative, and this programme has made good progress by fostering a cadre of water advocates among senior government officials.”

Winning Projects
Winning the grand prize of S$800,000 at the 2008 Challenge was a project geared towards an investigation into the Minjiang River, which suffered disastrous damage to its coastal area after the Wenchuan earthquake in Sichuan on 12 May 2008. The winning team used a model to solve the problem of municipal waste water from the rural area to protect the water quality of Min River. The wastewater recycling project was completed in September 2010 and has since improved the living conditions for over 1,300 rural villages. Water is now available for fish farming and irrigating agricultural land, enhancing the economic prospects of the village.

NTU’s Associate Professor Wu Wei, Director of Nanyang Centre for Public Administration said: “After learning the technical know-how from NTU and Singapore, it is important for the students to translate and apply their knowledge into practice in the real world.”

2009’s winning project explored a rainwater collection model to address the water shortage and poor water quality problems in the poor, rural and drought-prone areas in Gansu. With the funding from Lien Foundation, the winning team built 216 underground water tanks to collect and purify rainwater and provided clean water to 3,240 people in 560 households and 1,800 livestock in Luxanjun and Taipingdian villages.

Lien Challenge for Sustainable Society
With the successful compilation of Lien Challenge from 2008 to 2010, encouraged by the positive outcome, Lien Foundation has strengthened its support with an additional endowed $1.5 million gift.

Like its predecessor, the Lien Challenge for Sustainable Society aims to harness the expertise and connections of NTU’s “Mayors’ Class” alumni to help their own communities. However, the new Challenge will expand the parameters of its areas of concern beyond water and sanitation to include issues which also have a critical bearing on the socio-economic climate of the country.

The new Challenge is centered around three key topics:
1. Environmental issues in China - which extends beyond water sustainability and sanitation to air pollution, desertification and erosion, loss of habitat and biodiversity.
2. Development of a Public Service Excellence Index for 2nd and 3rd tier cities in China - to encourage students to use the Lien’s Index of Public Policy model to come up with their mini index to study their city.
3. Social Security Challenges - to encourage more studies on China’s ageing population. Through this endeavour, the Lien Challenge aims to generate a steady stream of important policy papers addressing environmental, ageing and other pertinent societal issues in China.

It is hoped that through the Lien Challenge for Sustainable Society, the findings and recommendations of the project papers could be extrapolated beyond the provincial level for use on a national level and contribute to the formulation of national policies, providing tremendous value for the Chinese government.”

Making A Mark in Public Service Excellence
From April to June 2011, NTU’s Nanyang Centre for Public Administration (NCPA) collaborated with the School of International and Public Affairs at Shanghai Jiao Tong University to conduct a nationwide telephone survey in 32 major Chinese cities, completing a total of 26,225 citizen surveys and 3,003 samples for enterprises.

Commissioned by Lien Foundation, the 2011 Lien Service-Oriented Government Index of 32 major Chinese cities is a continuation and refinement of the 2010 Lien Chinese Cities Public Service Excellence Index. Based on the original evaluation of citizens and businesses’ satisfaction towards public services, five new dimensions were introduced, namely: transparency, trust in government, government efficiency and effectiveness, citizen and business participation in the policy-making and implementation process, and information service provided by government. This has resulted in a more comprehensive and scientific index to evaluate the efforts and progress of the various Chinese cities in developing into a service-oriented government.

Championing Leadership
In February 2007, the Lien Foundation made a transformational gift of $10 million to the University that established the Lien Ying Chow Fellowship, with the aim of strengthening ties between Singapore and China through intellectual, cultural and social exchange.

Administered by the NCPA at NTU, the joint initiative between the Foundation and NTU has been a high-profile senior government officials and established professionals and academics from Singapore and China who can make an impact on policy issues in their respective fields.

In 2011, six senior Singapore Government officials were awarded the Lien Ying Chow Legacy Fellowship - twice the number of Fellows that were appointed from the inaugural batch two years ago. Mr. Wong Kian Seng, former Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, was appointed as the Chairman of the Lien Ying Chow Legacy Fellowship Council on 3 August 2011 for a three-year term, succeeding his predecessor, Mr. Ngiam Tong Dow.

The Lien Fellows will undergo a one-year customised programme that includes networking, workshops, seminars, coursework and study tours to China. Drawing on their insights, they will formulate policy recommendations to address issues and concerns and foster positive change in Singapore.
Tunnelling Towards New Knowledge

Now and fresh insight into rock tunnelling, its present industrial applications and its potential in the areas of transport and infrastructural planning, sparked an enthusiastic response among participants at the Tan Swan Beng Professorship Public Lecture held on 20 January 2012.

Entitled "Tunnelling in Rocks – Present Technology and Future Challenges," the lecture attracted more than 100 participants, including Professor Chiam Tao Soon, former President of NTU and donor-member of the Tan Swan Beng Professorship Committee; industry partners; faculty and staff of NTU; members of the public.

Professor Zhao Jian, Tan Swan Beng Endowed Visiting Professor, gave an insightful overview of the development of rock tunnelling. He commenced his lecture with a brief introduction of the history of rock tunnelling and then gave a detailed description of rock excavation and rock tunnel support technologies by examining past development and present practice. To everyone’s anticipation, the lecture also addressed the challenges and future development of rock tunneling, including its research and developmental needs.

Helping One To Help Many

Like many students receiving financial assistance at NTU, psychology major Patrick Phor psychology major Patrick Phor comes from a single family. His parents divorced when he was only two, and his family survives on the sole income of his mother, who is approaching retirement. Patrick’s father passed away in 2009 from liver cancer.

"There was some uncertainty about my future due to finances," Patrick confided. "I had to worry about financing my education and my plans to pursue postgraduate studies."

To ease the financial burden on his mother, Patrick applied for a study loan from a bank and took on a slew of part-time jobs such as doing research work for the university and giving tuition.

And despite his plight, the pragmatic final-year student kept a positive outlook and took on the challenges one at a time. Still, when Patrick received news that he was selected to receive the Tan Sri Dr Rumine Shaw Scholarship, both mother and son were overjoyed, "I felt really happy because it helped me financially and relieved me of some of the burden of worrying about finances. I was very thankful because it was entirely a gift with no strings attached," recalled Patrick.

Established through a gift from The Shaw Foundation, the Tan Sri Dr Rumine Shaw Scholarship provides ten scholarships worth $5,000 per award annually to financially deserving students.

Turning A Life Around

"Most of the time, I think ahead, in fact, many years ahead," said NTU student Samantha Lee. Samantha’s methodical forward-planning was born out of sheer necessity. "My father is the sole breadwinner of the family, and was diagnosed with several chronic diseases that require him to be on long term medication," explained Samantha, who added that a large portion of her father’s income had to be set aside for his medical expenses.

"With my brother who is studying in a polytechnic and me in university, our school fees added to the already heavy burden," the second year student added.

To ease the financial pressure, Samantha started taking on not one, but two part-time jobs in her first year at NTU.

"I had to rush for tuition after school every day, and even had to take up another part-time job at a clinic during the weekends. I was always working, and didn’t have the time to study, to rest, and to spend time with family and friends. As a result, not only did my results suffer, my health was also affected," Samantha confided.

Fortunately, Samantha received news that she was selected to receive the Yeung Ching Foundation Bursary that turned her life around for the better. The Yeung Ching Foundation Bursary was established at NTU in 2009 with a gift of $200,000 from the Foundation to award bursaries.

The bursary immediately lightened her financial burden, allowed her to concentrate on her studies, and beyond that, gave her the financial confidence to participate in the many co-curricular activities at NTU.

Patrick, enjoying some light-hearted fun with children from the village during a community assistance trip to Indonesia. For Patrick, not only did the Tan Sri Dr Rumine Shaw Scholarship provide financial assurance, it also created a multiplier effect for the aspiring clinical psychologist who was able to embark on community assistance trips to Indonesia and the Philippines. Thanking the Shaw Foundation, Patrick concluded, "Your gift helps students like me worry less about the pragmatic aspects of life in Singapore, and focus more on the broader picture of contributing to the community."

Following her graduation, Samantha looks forward to a life of sweet success ahead. She designed to provide students with an all-rounded education.

"I am intending to apply for Global Summer Studies to the Chinese University of Hong Kong to gain more exposure and learn more about the different cultures all over the world," said Samantha.

Grateful to the Yeung Ching Foundation for the bursary, Samantha concluded, "I would like to stay a very big thank you for awarding me the bursary and for helping low income students like myself."
Recognizing the strategic geopolitical importance of Southeast Asia as a fulcrum point for the vast Asian market and as home to a group of resilient, dynamic ASEAN economies, the far-sighted Bakrie Center Foundation of Indonesia in 2010 established a professorship to advance knowledge creation and deepen regional insights in the multi-faceted arena of Southeast Asia policy.

The Bakrie Center Foundation found NTU to be just the right partner for the creation of this prestigious professorship at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). Named after one of Singapore's founding fathers, the late Mr. S. Rajaratnam who held various cabinet appointments including Singapore's first foreign minister, RSIS is today a leading research and graduate teaching institution in strategic and international affairs in Asia Pacific. In an affirmation of its thought leadership, the 2011 Global Go to Think Tank Index released by the University of Pennsylvania's International Relations Program ranked RSIS among the Top 50 think tanks in the world. In the list of Top Think Tanks in Asia, RSIS was ranked 10th, and among university-affiliated think tanks globally, RSIS received 22nd placing.

With its core research domains spanning Asia Pacific Security, Conflict and Non-Traditional Security, and International Political Economy, as well as active programs on China, India, Indonesia, and the United States, the Bakrie Center Foundation found in RSIS a natural strategic partner to create a high-impact professorship to catalyze scholarship and dialogue in the area of Southeast Asia Policy, as well as to provide young academics and provide intellectual leadership to their research.

Inaugural Bakrie Professor, Ambassador Barry Desker is a seasoned diplomat who joined the Singapore Foreign Service in 1973. He served as Singapore's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York from 1982 to 1984, and was the Ambassador to Indonesia from 1986 to 1993.

In 2007, Ambassador Desker was appointed Singapore's Ambassador to the Holy See. Currently Dean of RSIS, Ambassador Desker assumes the inaugural Bakrie Professor in Southeast Asia Policy from April 2011 to September 2013. "Ambassador Desker brings with him the intellectual leadership, gravitas, as well as regional and global networks accumulated through more than thirty years of experience as a career diplomat and as a public service and academic leader. In addition, he has a special affinity with Indonesia, having served as Singapore's chief envoy to the country for seven years. As the inaugural Bakrie Professor in Southeast Asia Policy, Ambassador Desker will elevate the prestige, stature, and impact of the professorship," said Eddie Tee, Chairman of the RSIS Board of Governors.

The Bakrie Professor in Southeast Asia Policy was established through a pledge of $3 million by the Bakrie Center Foundation. With matching by the Singapore government, the core endowment will total $6 million, strengthening academic and thought leadership at the highest level within RSIS and at NTU.

Among other responsibilities, the Bakrie Professor will supervise analytical and policy briefs on Southeast Asia, host public lectures and special seminars, and engage the media on issues pertaining to developments in the region.

Inaugural Bakrie Professor, Ambassador Barry Desker is a Seasoned Diplomat and Former Ambassador to Indonesia Helms Bakrie Professorship

Sacrificing Self to Serve Others

What does a Hong Kong multi-millionaire have if he has no material ostentation to bear witness to his wealth? No majestic house nestled on Victoria Peak, no group of aides and servants to heed his beckoning, and no fancy limousine to chauffeur him to high-society banquets.

Yet, 93-year old Hong Kong industrialist Dr. Tin Ka Ping, who built his business empire on manufacturing and who received the MBE in 1956 from the British government, leads a remarkably austere lifestyle.

For one, Dr. Tin lives in a rented flat, having donated every cent from the sale of his mansion as well as all the rental income from the buildings he owns to fund philanthropic activities under the Tin Ka Ping Foundation he founded in 1982. Dr. Tin also does not own a car, preferring to travel in public taxis. Escavowing waste, he exhorts his staff to use recycled paper, and encourages well-wishers to send him electronic greetings instead of paper.

Yet, the name Dr. Tin Ka Ping today is synonymous with philanthropy and the literally hundreds of universities, schools, kindergartens, rural libraries, and countless other education facilities across Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China (PRC) that have benefited from his munificence all bear witness to his lifelong commitment to providing opportunities for advancement to all through education.

When Dr. Tin heard that NTU— whose antecedent institution Nanyang University (Nanyang) was the first Chinese-language university outside China— had established a flagship "Mayoress" Class programme comprising the Master of Science in Managerial Economics (MME) and Master of Public Administration (MPA) under the auspices of the Nanyang Centre for Public Administration (NCPA), the visionary philanthropist decided to support the cause.

In August 2010, the Tin Ka Ping Foundation gave $500,000 to establish the Tin Ka Ping Education Fund. With matching by the Singapore government, the $1 million endowment provides up to two scholarships per year valued at $50,000 per scholarship to outstanding public servants from the PRIC in perpetuity, to be awarded at the MME or MPA program.

The endowment is instrumental in NTU's ongoing endeavour to train high calibre senior officials groomed to be China's next generation of leaders, thinkers and policy-makers. In March 2011 the first Tin Ka Ping China Leadership scholarship was awarded to Mr. Wang Hai Bo, Deputy Director of the Shaanxi provincial education department after a rigorous selection process.

Said Associate Professor Wu Wei, Director of NCPA: "We are deeply appreciative of the Tin Ka Ping Foundation's support and investment in the future of the programmes. Upon graduation, these future leaders, like Mr. Wang, will contribute to the development of their homeland, bring about paradigm shifts in public service, administration and healthcare, and improve the lives of millions."

To show his immense gratitude to Dr. Tin Ka Ping for his generous gift, Mr. Wang paid a personal visit to the philanthropist extraordinary in Hong Kong on October 10, 2011. Before the visit, Mr. Wang gathered photographs and information regarding the Tin Ka Ping Foundation's donation to two universities and four secondary schools in China's Shaanxi province and printed a booklet which was personally presented to Dr. Tin.

The visit left a deep impression on Mr. Wang, who especially admired Dr. Tin's philosophy on "sacrificing self to help others." Mr. Wang further hoped that Dr. Tin's philosophy could be widely published to encourage more people to give back to society.
Wee Foundation Transforms Lives

Against All Odds
With her father as the sole breadwinner on a $1,500 per month income, life for NTU student Chia Shu Fen and her family was no smooth ride. Yet, despite growing up in a household where resources were scarce, three out of the four children made it to university—and all of them at NTU.

And while a significant portion of her father's salary went into school fees, it also had to go towards medical treatment for Shu Fen's youngest sister, who suffers from Rubinstein-Taybi Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder.

"I used to teach tuition and work part-time in a clinic," Shu Fen said, recalling how she tried to chip in financially. "However, having two jobs caused my results to drop, and that was when I decided to give up work at the clinic."

Shu Fen is ready to take a giant leap towards future success

However, the rough start in life did not turn the third-year chemistry and biological chemistry major bitter or envious towards her better-off peers.

"My situation taught me to be independent and trained me to make my own decision rationally so that my parents do not have to worry about me," Shu Fen said. Shu Fen's financial burden was lightened when she received the Wee Foundation Bursary in 2011.

"The bursary was very important in relieving my financial burdens. Without it, I would have to resort to borrowing from relatives or taking out bank loans," she stated matter-of-factly. "I was also able to spend more time with my peers, study, and have fun."

With her final year beckoning in the horizon, what does the spunky young lady look forward to after graduating from NTU?

"My aspiration is to graduate with good grades, get a good paying job, save up to let my parents enjoy their lives, and then pursue my dream of becoming an archaeologist."

Free To Focus
NTU student Al Marzuki Bin Ab Rani's world fell apart when his father passed away due to stroke when he was only 18. As the eldest son, the responsibility to shoulder his family's financial burden fell on him.

"The situation taught me to be more careful in financial management and to plan ahead," Marzuki said. To contribute to the family finances, the civil engineering student started giving tuition.

Marzuki (third from left) interacting with students from Nadzirah Al-Arabiah Al-Islamiah during their orientation camp in 2011

Despite having to balance the demands of a rigorous engineering education at NTU and having to provide tuition, giving up was never an option for Marzuki.

Nevertheless, Marzuki and his mother were most grateful when news of his award of the Wee Foundation Bursary was announced.

"The bursary helped me to be able to concentrate on school more."

shared Marzuki, now in the final year of his studies. "It also helped me in other ways, such as easing the cost of printing notes, transportation, and pocket money."

Free to focus on his studies knowing that he will not have to exhaust his family's finances, Marzuki was able to join the NTU Floorball Club, part of the wide spectrum of activities on offer at NTU. He also found time to give back to society by helping primary school students prepare for their PSLE on Saturdays.

As graduation beckons, Marzuki is looking forward to putting his education to good use. "I would like to work in the civil engineering industry, and to land a decent paying job to support my family," he concluded.

The Wee Foundation Bursary is made possible through a generous donation of $250,000 from the Foundation in 2009. The endowment of $500,000, after government matching, provides up to 4 awards of $5,000 to needy students each year in perpetuity.