

Contact
Singapore 

SYNERGY

SEP/OCT 2009





About Contact Singapore

Contact Singapore is an alliance of the Singapore Economic Development Board and Ministry of Manpower. It aims to attract global talent to work, invest and live in Singapore.

With offices in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America, Contact Singapore is the one-stop centre for those who wish to pursue a rewarding career in Singapore, as well as individuals and entrepreneurs who are keen to invest in or initiate new business activities here. Contact Singapore actively links Singapore-based employers with global talent and provides updates on career opportunities and industry developments in Singapore. We work with private sector partners to facilitate the interests of potential individual investors in Singapore.

For more information on working, investing and living in Singapore, please visit www.contactsingapore.sg

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First Webinar Makes Waves

Contact Singapore's first ever webinar, organised in conjunction with the Singapore Management University (SMU), met an enthusiastic response from a US audience keen to explore the trends and opportunities in the financial sector. Held in July 2009, the live web-based seminar attracted 150 US-based participants and a live audience of SMU students in Singapore.

A high powered panel of four financiers and an academic spoke about their area of expertise in relation to Singapore's recovery from the financial crisis. Professor Roberto Mariano, Dean, School of Economics and Director, Sim Kee Boon Institute for Financial Economics, SMU kicked off the seminar with an overview of the current financial state of Singapore.

Ms Jeanette Wong, Group Executive, Institutional Banking, DBS Bank, Mr Ronald Ong, Chairman & CEO, SE Asia, Morgan Stanley, Mr Gerard Lee, CEO, Fullerton Fund Management, and Mr Renato de Guzman, CEO Asia Pacific, ING Asia Private Bank covered topics including the flow of bank credits to finance corporate activities in Singapore and the rest of Asia, the re-emergence of investment banking and M&A activities in Singapore and the rest of Asia, the trend of mega mergers in the money management industry and lessons learnt from the financial crisis.

Facilitator Professor Bernard Lee, Deputy Director of SMU's Sim Kee Boon Institute for Financial Economics then fielded questions from the floor and the online audience. The questions covered the financial economy, and enquiries also shifted to employment prospects in banking and finance. The speakers were generally positive about job outlook, given the signs of economic improvement, especially in sectors like wealth management.

A key point mentioned by Ms Wong was that if a person wanted to become a banker because of the tales of people receiving fabulous salaries, he would likely be disappointed as such jobs are now few and far between. But she encouraged students to pursue a career in banking for a great job that, among other things, offers a firsthand understanding of economics.

Professor Mariano, who has his hand on the pulse of employment opportunities, also confirmed that most SMU grads he knows are able to find jobs.

Contact Singapore's Deputy Director Ms Kee Ee Wah said, "The response to the webinar has been most encouraging, and is indicative of the continued interest in the finance industry. Contact Singapore looks forward to bringing more interactive and lively webinars in the near future." ●



Students From Malaysia Get Taste Of Singapore

Talks on real-life experience of working and living in Singapore as well as career opportunities opened the eyes of a group of students from Malaysian universities such as Help University College and Taylor's University College. They had come here last July for Contact Singapore's Experience@SG programme.

Mr Alfred Loh, a Malaysian, who has been working here for more than 10 years, easily allayed the fear of discrimination voiced by undergraduate Abraham Auzan.

"The only thing that stops me from working here is my fear that I will be the target of racist attacks and that I will not have the same job

opportunities as other Singaporeans," said the Indonesian student.

He was relieved to hear the senior marketing manager at Toshiba say he and his fellow Malaysian classmates at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University had not suffered any setbacks. "All of us managed to be promoted as quickly as our Singaporean counterparts. No one treated us differently just because we were not born here," he added.

Other students benefited from the networking session with a headhunter. It made Reneeta Mogan, a psychology undergraduate, aware of "all the amazing job opportunities" that Singapore can offer.

"I am very interested in applying for a job in Singapore, but I did not have any idea whether or not working and living here would suit me. Listening to the advice of the speakers and hearing their accounts about how it was like for them to move to Singapore helps to give me a good picture," she added.

Another student, 20-year-old Liew Yoong Jun, found the prospect of working and living here very appealing. The Commerce undergraduate said, "Everything is so fast paced here, and the business district is bustling with activity. The ability to immerse myself in the hustle and bustle of the finance scene here is definitely exciting."

Apart from talks, the three-day Experience@SG programme included visits to key agencies such as the Urban Redevelopment Authority and the Land Transport Authority as well as the latest Singapore icons such as the Marina Barrage. The students were also brought to Orchard Road, Singapore's premier shopping street, for a bout of retail therapy. ●



My Impressions

Engineering and technology students from China, Korea and Hungary recall the things that stand out in their minds as they ended an Experience@Singapore programme⁺ in July 2009. During their stay, they had the opportunity to interact with top management of companies and government organisations. The students also visited key infrastructural sites and revelled in the fun side of Singapore.

*Green and clean Singapore
- so many trees and so much
greenery - and no litter on
the roads!*

Qiu Zhao

*Singapore is a great city.
People here are kind*

Li Rui

*I got valuable advice on
career development from the
networking session with a
professional search firm*

Zhang Dongye

*The food! There is so much
variety and it's so different
from Korean food*

Liwon Lhoi

*The night view from the
Singapore Flyer is fabulous!*

Suh Yeon Dong



*I liked the Marina Barrage
and I'm impressed with the
HDB (Housing Development
Board) flats*

Sungsu Rhee

*My vote goes to the robot I
saw at the semi conductor
plant! Close behind are the*

*Singapore Flyer and the
visit to the pharmaceutical
plant where I got an
understanding of drug-
making*

Li Xiaofan

The multi cultural society

Liu Ling

UPCOMING EVENTS

Contact Singapore will be holding a number of events as well as participating in career fairs around the world in the coming months. Do log on to our website to find out more if you're interested to attend the events, or if you want to chat with us about working and living in Singapore.

DATES	EVENT	LOCATION
1 Oct	Ausbiotech: Career Fair for the Biotechnology Industry	Melbourne, Australia
7 Oct	Edinburgh Careers Fair 2009	Edinburgh, UK
15 - 17 Oct	University of Indonesia Job Expo	Jakarta, Indonesia
25 - 27 Oct	"Work in Singapore" session for professionals from the semiconductor industry	Shanghai, China
26 - 30 Oct	Experience@Singapore ⁺ : For MBA students from China	Singapore
29 Oct	University of Washington Science & Engineering Career Fair	Washington, US
Late Oct	Experience@Singapore ⁺ : Engineering & Technology For students from Malaysian universities	Singapore
4 - 5 Nov	Go Wales Graduate Recruitment Fair 2009	Wales, UK
13 - 14 Nov	Mapua Institute of Technology Career Expo	Manila, The Philippines
23 Nov	Oxford International Careers Fair	Oxford, UK
16 - 19 Dec	SIGGRAPH Asia, Tokyo	Tokyo, Japan

***Careers@Singapore** is an industry-specific event for Singapore-based employers and global talent, both professionals and graduating students, to network and interact. Such events are held all over the world.

***Experience@Singapore** gives selected undergraduate and graduate students exposure to Singapore as the ideal place to work, live and play. For more information: www.contactsingapore.sg/experience@singapore

Singapore: From Fishing Village To Nationhood

The Republic of Singapore can trace its roots back to Chinese texts from the 3rd century AD and its name to the 13th century legend of Sang Nila Utama. But apart from some prominence in the 15th century as a trading port, its history began in earnest in 1819 when Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, an official with the British East India Company, signed a treaty with the Sultan of Johor to set up a trading post at the fishing village.

From the beginning, Raffles decided that Singapore would be a free port and this quickly attracted Bugis, Peranakan Chinese, and Arab traders who wanted to trade without the restrictions imposed by the Dutch at Batavia (present-day Jakarta). In two years, the population reached 5,000, and the trade volume was S\$8 million. By 1825, with a population of 10,000 and a trade volume of S\$22 million, Singapore surpassed the more established port of Penang.

Sang Nila Utama names Singapore

Legend has it that a Sumatran prince, Sang Nila Utama, saw the island of Temasek while hunting deer and decided to visit it. On his way there, a storm buffeted his ship and it subsided only when he threw his heavy crown overboard.

He landed and went inland to hunt. Suddenly, he saw a strange animal with a red body, black head and a white breast. The fine-looking animal moved with great speed as it disappeared into the jungle.

He was told it was probably a lion and believing it to be a good omen, he founded a city on the island. He named it Singapura, which means lion (singa) city (pura) in Sanskrit.



Besides its free port status, its success was due, among other factors, to the opening up of China, the advent of ocean-going steamships, the production of rubber and tin in Malaya and later, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.

Jewish, Chinese, Arab, Armenian, American and Indian merchants as well as European trading firms were attracted to Singapore. They provided plenty of jobs for more Chinese and Indian immigrants who also settled here.

Singapore was ruled by the British until the Japanese invasion during the Second World War. After some heroic fighting, the British surrendered: the largest surrender of British-led forces in history. The Japanese Occupation from 1942 to 1945 changed the local population's perception of the British government's right to rule them. The fight for self-government was on.

The British were sensitive to the times and as early as 1948, Singapore had an election to fill six seats in the Legislative Council. But executive powers were still in the hands of the British and voting rights were restricted.

A new constitution in 1954 gave Singapore a greater measure of self-government. Elections in 1955 were an exciting affair and David Marshall, leader of the Labour Front, became Singapore's first Chief Minister. He immediately started negotiations for full self-government.

We, the people of Singapore

By 1860, the population had grown to 80,792 made up of Chinese (61.9%), Indians (16.05%), Malays (13.5%), Europeans (8.5%) and others.

The Chinese came in droves to escape economic hardship in southern China due to the Opium Wars. Nanyang, as Southeast Asia was called, was seen as the land of opportunity and many came to Singapore, among other places, in search of a better life.

The people of India faced a similar plight as the population increased more rapidly than the economy or food supply could cope.

Like the Chinese, some came as traders but the vast majority was labourers, many of whom were unable to pay for their passage; their first year or years of work in Singapore was to pay for their boat ride.

The Malays were the original inhabitants who worked as fishermen, craftsmen, or as wage earners. The magnet of a prosperous Singapore drew others from the neighbouring areas. The Europeans, especially the British, were merchants and government officials. Those who married Asian women and settled in Singapore gave rise to the Eurasian element in the current cosmopolitan population.

Picture courtesy of Singapore Tourism Board

From strength to strength

In the 1960s and 70s, the problem of high unemployment was solved by a massive industrialisation programme.

Spearheading this was the EDB (Singapore Economic Development Board) set up in 1961 to formulate and implement national economic strategies. Industrial estates were set up, especially in Jurong, and foreign investment was attracted to the country with tax incentives.

Singapore also attracted big oil companies to establish oil refineries. By the mid 70s, Singapore had become the third largest oil-refining centre in the world.

During the 80s, Singapore began to upgrade to higher-technology industries, such as the wafer fabrication sector. Singapore Changi Airport was opened in 1981 and Singapore Airlines was developed to become a major airline.

The Port of Singapore has become one of the world's busiest ports and the service and tourism industries have also grown immensely. Singapore has emerged as an important transportation hub and a major tourist destination.

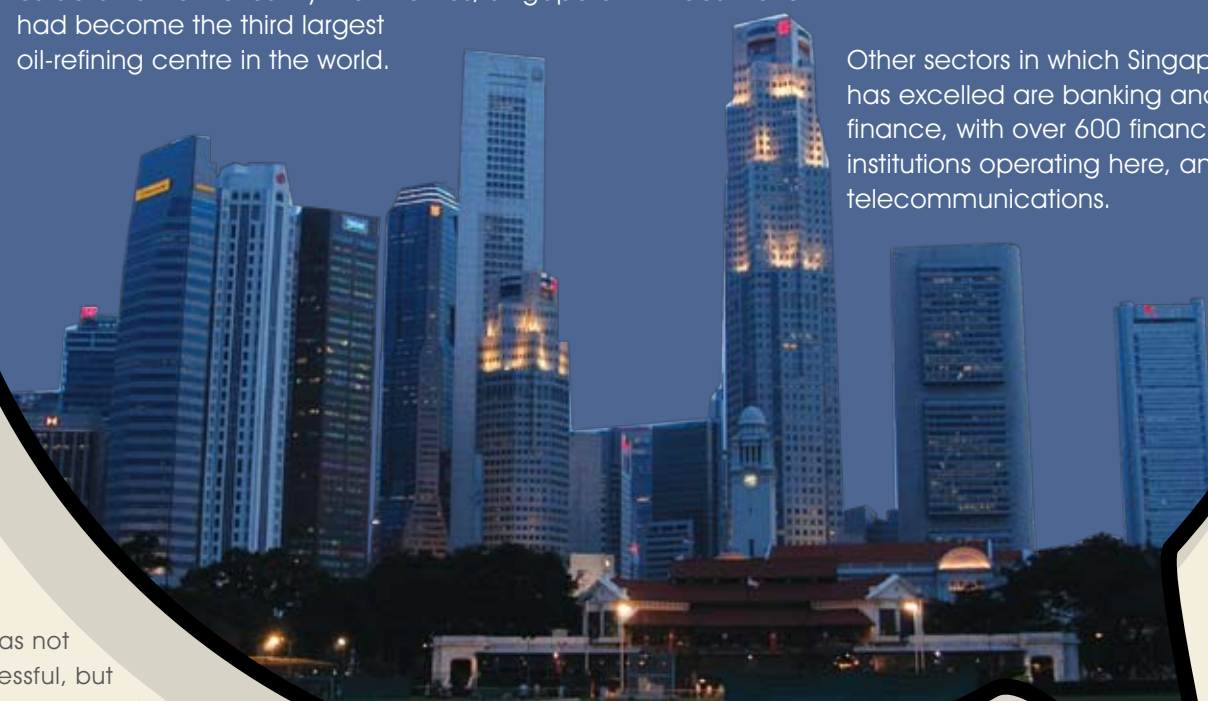
Other sectors in which Singapore has excelled are banking and finance, with over 600 financial institutions operating here, and telecommunications.

He was not successful, but others were and in 1959 Singapore achieved full self-government after the first fully democratic election. It was won by the PAP (People's Action Party) and its leader, Lee Kuan Yew, became the first Prime Minister of the State of Singapore.

The British still controlled the police, the armed forces and foreign relations until Singapore joined the Federation of Malaya, Sarawak and North Borneo to form the independent state of Federation of Malaysia in 1963.

Independence within Malaysia was short-lived. The union was rocky from the start. Besides internal differences, which led to bloody racial riots, Indonesia added fuel to the fire with its Konfrontasi (Confrontation) policy. On 9 August 1965, Singapore separated from Malaysia to become a sovereign nation on its own.

In the initial years many doubted whether Singapore could survive as it is a small country with no natural resources. Instead, its history has been one of political stability, with the PAP winning every election with an absolute majority and of economic growth. ●





National Pride



Singaporeans indulge in a show of patriotism once a year on National Day, August 9. The prime demonstration of such sentiments is the traditional National Day Parade where some of the elements of national identity are on proud display.



National Day Parade

Every year since the first anniversary of independence 44 years ago, Singapore has had the National Day Parade, fondly known as the NDP. Originally comprising a simple parade of marching contingents of the armed forces, civilians and schoolchildren, it has kept the ceremonial military display while the civilian component has evolved from floats to mass displays to the present-day multi media entertainment spectacular.

Asked recently why the NDP was held, Singapore's first Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew acknowledged it was to build up the national identity of the new, multi-racial state facing a precarious future. "But national identity takes a long time to set in. The immediate effect was to give confidence to our people – that we can and are making it on our own," he said.

Over the years, the NDP has become the biggest national event and a popular public spectacle. Demand for tickets is greater than seats available, so tickets – free of charge – have been e-balloted since 2003. This year, 50,000 people attended the event while others went to the rehearsals and the rest caught it on TV or the Internet.

The National Pledge

Written by the then Foreign Minister Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, the text was polished by Mr Lee Kuan Yew. This took place in 1966, against the backdrop of racial riots in the 1950s and 1960s. Accordingly, this oath of allegiance to Singapore stresses that differences in language, race and religion can be overcome if Singaporeans care enough about their country.

the five yellow stars on the flag of Communist China, wanted stars. The Malays wanted a crescent moon. We settled for a crescent moon with five white stars instead of the traditional one star for Islam. The five stars represented the five ideals of the country: democracy, peace, progress, justice and equality. Thus we reconciled different racial symbols and ideals."

lyrics in Malay matched our motto, *Majulah Singapura*."

The anthem was composed in the wake of nationalism during 1956-57 and was first performed as a patriotic song by the Singapore Chamber Ensemble at the opening ceremony of the newly-renovated Victoria Theatre on 6 September 1958.

It was launched, with slight amendments, as the national anthem on 3 Dec 1959, together with the National Flag and the State Crest. Meaning 'onward Singapore,' it was relaunched in a lower key in 2001 to give it a grander expression.

National Flower

Since 1981, Singapore has had a national flower: the *Vanda Miss Joaquim* was chosen from amongst



40 other flowers, including some 30 orchids. A hybrid between *Vanda teres* and *Vanda hookeriana*, it is named after a Miss Agnes Joaquim, who was the enthusiast who hybridised the plant in her garden in 1893.

Singapore adopted the national flower as part of an overall effort to foster national pride and identity. The then Minister of Culture, S. Dhanabalan, explained the choice of *Vanda Miss Joaquim*.

Its ability to bloom throughout the year was considered to reflect Singapore's continuous quest for progress and excellence in all aspects of life, and its natural resilience reflected the determination of Singaporeans to stand fast through difficult times. ●

The Singapore Flag

The flag was unfurled 50 years ago when Singapore achieved self governance within the British Empire and was reconfirmed as the national flag when the Republic gained independence on 9 August 1965.

Mr Lee Kuan Yew gave a candid account of how the flag was designed in his memoir *The Singapore Story*: "There had been much ado over the flag, for again racial sentiments had to be respected. The Chinese-speaking wanted red for good fortune, the Malays red and white, their traditional colours for courage and purity. But Indonesia already had red and white for their flag, and so had Poland. The Chinese, influenced by

The official explanation of the flag is that the red symbolises universal brotherhood and equality of man and the white, pervading and everlasting purity and virtue. The waxing crescent moon represents a young nation on the ascendant while the five stars stand for the nation's ideals.

The National Anthem

According to Mr Lee Kuan Yew in *The Singapore Story*, "The choice of state anthem had proved easier. A Malay musician, Haji Zubir Said, had composed a suitable tune. It was not a martial, stirring tune like the French *Marseillaise* or the Chinese national anthem *Arise, Arise, Arise*, the song of the revolutionary resistance. The melody was of the region and the

Global Education Hub – Opportunity

Having built a quality public education system for its citizens, Singapore is currently adding another tier of distinguished foreign tertiary institutions to give local inhabitants more options as well as attract foreign students to study here. In so doing, it also provides openings for international education providers and for global talent to serve in local and foreign institutions.

Public education, which is also open to non-Singaporeans, begins with child care centres offering educational programmes for children aged three to six and kindergartens for children aged four to six.

Next comes six years of compulsory education at primary schools. There are no school fees but monthly miscellaneous fees are collected. Students sit for the national Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) in their last year, after which they join different courses in secondary school according to how they perform at the PSLE. The different curricular emphases are designed to match their learning abilities and interests.

Four to five years of secondary education ends with GCE (General Certificate of Education) examinations that lead to pre-

university and then tertiary education for those who make the grade. The academic standard of the school system can be seen from the fact that Singapore emerged first in both Mathematics and Science in a 49-country study of Grade 4 (Primary 4) and Grade 8 (Secondary 2) students conducted in 2002-03 (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study).

At the same time, Singapore-based institutions such as Anglo-Chinese School (International) and Raffles Education Corporation have also successfully brought the Singapore education brand-name to the



Picture courtesy of Australian International School



Picture courtesy of Inseed

And Service

region. Raffles Education in particular has grown to be the largest private education group in Asia Pacific, running three universities and 26 colleges with over 60,000 students.

Singapore's school system of national and private schools, especially international schools that follow international curricula, employ global talent according to their requirements. At present, 45 pre-tertiary schools offer international curricula in Singapore. Together with tertiary institutions, they served 86,000 international students from 120 countries in 2007.

As for the number and diversity of institutions of higher education, Singapore today is a veritable hub centred on its three autonomous and one private university, with a fifth in the pipeline.

The National University of Singapore, which has 30,000 students from 100 countries, offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise. Its transformative education includes a broad-based curriculum underscored by multi-disciplinary courses and cross-faculty enrichment, as well as special programmes.

The Nanyang Technological University has been among the top 100 universities in The Times Higher Education – QS World University ranking for the last four years. In 2008, it ranked 26th place as a technological university, and 77th position overall.

The Singapore Management University, which was incorporated in 2000, offers a style of education modelled after The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Today, it hosts more than 6,000 students at its campus in the heart of the city.



Picture courtesy of Singapore Management University

Education

Singapore's only comprehensive private university, SIM University, focuses on providing working professionals and adult learners with a university education. It adopts a flexible approach to enable its learners to balance their career, family and studies. Today, its 40 over academic programmes cater to 10,000 students.

A new university, publicly funded and as yet unnamed, will open its doors to 500 students in 2011. To be distinguished by having a US and a Chinese partner, it will offer programmes in Engineering and Applied Science, Business and Information Technology, and Architecture and Design.

Singapore also has five polytechnics – Nanyang, Ngee Ann, Republic, Singapore and Temasek Polytechnics – to train middle-level professionals to support the technological and economic development of Singapore.

Since 2002, the government's Global Schoolhouse initiative has drawn world-class universities to



Picture courtesy of Singapore Tourism Board

set up operations here, thereby strengthening Singapore's position as an education hub amidst one of the world's fastest growing student markets. According to the UK Vision 2020 report, Asia is set to account for 70% of the global demand for international higher education by 2025.

Today, Singapore is home to 16 leading foreign tertiary institutions that offer specialised courses in niche areas. Among them are:

DigiPen Institute of Technology

Singapore is the first international branch campus of DigiPen where degrees in Real-Time Interactive Simulation, Production Animation and Game Design prepare students to enter the digital interactive industries.

ESSEC Business School

One of the most prestigious French business schools, its MBA (masters in business administration) programme is aimed at students with no professional experience.

S P Jain Center of Management

An off-shoot of India's S P Jain Institute of Management &

Research, one of the top 10 business schools in Asia, it offers an Executive MBA programme and a truly Global MBA programme conducted jointly from its campuses in Dubai and Singapore.

Tisch School of the Arts Asia

The school in Singapore offers the same Master of Fine Arts degree as its New York counterpart in Animation and Digital Arts, Dramatic Writing and Film Production.

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)

The hospitality school offers a fully accredited Bachelor of Science Degree in Hotel Administration as well as an Executive Masters Degree in Hospitality Administration.

This diverse range of institutions is set to increase still further. Leveraging it, Singapore plans to attract even more students, faculty, researchers and professionals from all over the world to make the city-state a global talent hub and enhance its attractiveness as a centre of educational excellence. ●



Calling Talented Professionals To A Teaching Career

Ngee Ann Polytechnic, one of Singapore's five polytechnics, caters to over 15,000 full-time students, about 1,500 part-time students and an alumni community of more than 100,000. The institution is on the lookout for talented professionals who aspire to have a teaching career in the dynamic tertiary educational sector.

Set up in 1963 by the Ngee Ann Kongsi as Ngee Ann College with only 116 students, the polytechnic has grown from strength to strength with its quality programmes and facilities. Its holistic approach incorporates broad-based learning to equip students with skills beyond their core disciplines. With its emphasis on co-curricular activities, students enjoy a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

Currently, the polytechnic offers a total of 46 full-time diplomas through eight academic schools offering programmes in business & accountancy, engineering, film & media studies, health sciences, humanities, infocomm technology, interdisciplinary studies, and life sciences & chemical technology.

Three exciting new full-time diplomas in arts business management, sustainable urban design & engineering, and veterinary bioscience will be introduced in the next academic year which starts in April 2010.

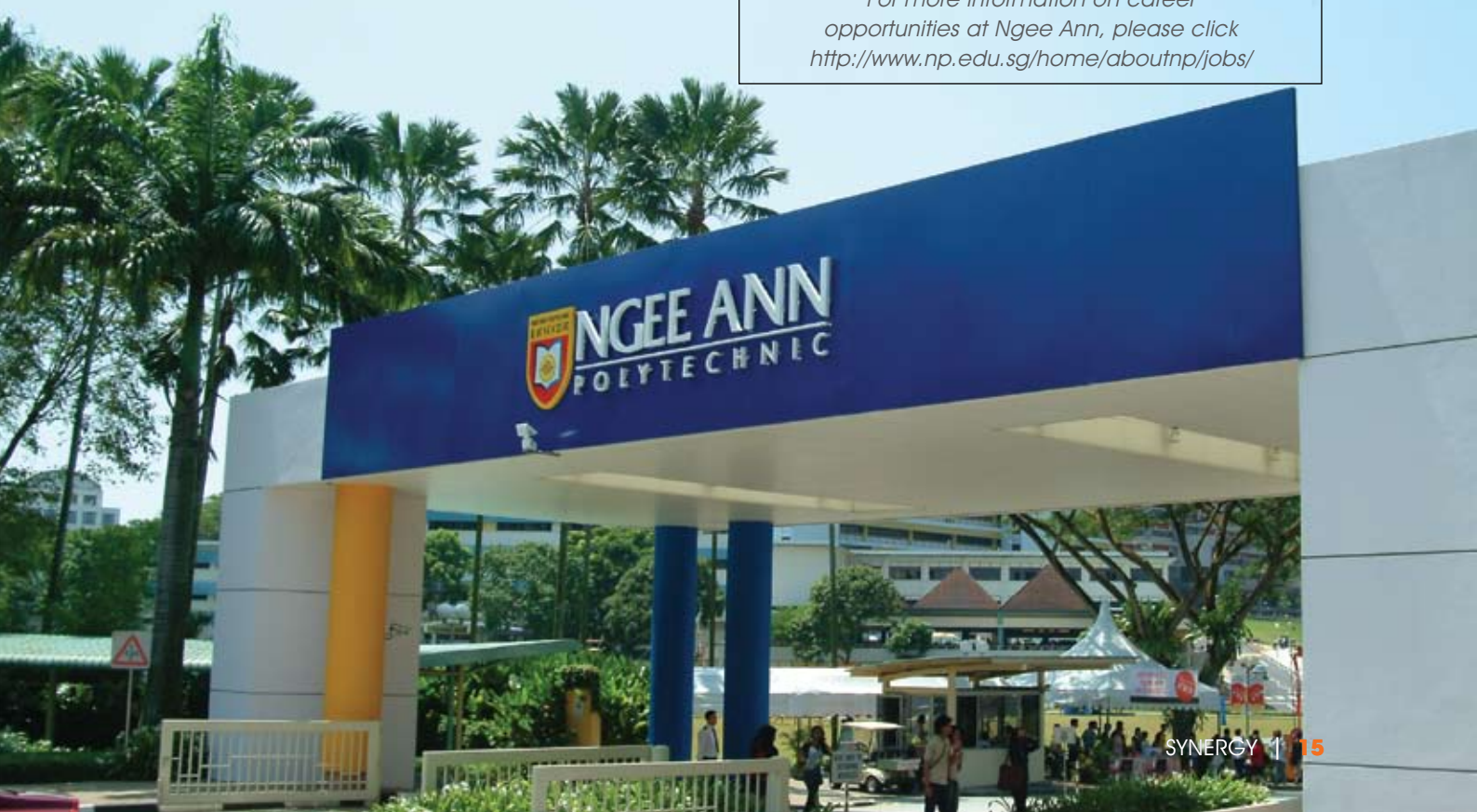


Building on the solid education acquired at Ngee Ann, many of the graduates have been inspired to obtain reputable degrees, including PhDs, and distinguished themselves in various fields.

Ngee Ann's lecturers are actively engaged in experiential and applied learning, research and industry projects, as well as field trips. Besides a passion to teach, the polytechnic requires candidates to have at least three years industrial experience and a good industry network. Prior experience in curriculum design and delivery would be an added advantage.

Successful candidates can look forward to a rewarding career with ample opportunities for professional development plus other staff benefits. For instance, non-Singapore citizens appointed on the Visiting Lecturer scheme will be given free economy class air passage, baggage allowance and a subsidised staff apartment close to the campus. ●

For more information on career opportunities at Ngee Ann, please click <http://www.np.edu.sg/home/aboutnp/jobs/>



From Three Months To Three Years

Gaylene Levesque

Director of Marketing and Communications/
Adjunct Professor

University of Nevada, Las Vegas – Singapore Campus

Originally employed on a three-month contract, Gaylene Levesque is now into her third year teaching English and working in the administration of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) in Singapore, that's how much she is enjoying both her work and her lifestyle in this country.

As Director of Marketing and Communications of the hospitality school, she is in charge of all written materials for both in-house and publication purposes. She writes ads and brochures as well as oversees their design.

At the same time, as Adjunct Professor, she uses her language skills to teach World Literature, Business Writing, Public Speaking, and Research Writing, as well as English as a Second Language courses for UNLV's international students.

"I love my job. Most of my colleagues are Singaporeans who are friendly, fun, and incredibly hard-working. In some countries I have worked in, you never feel a part of the group, but Singaporeans are very accepting – and have a great sense of humour," she says.

A Canadian, she has taught in her homeland as well as at universities in the US, China, Japan, Taiwan and Ukraine. But she deliberately chose to be stationed in Singapore, after holidaying here.

She says, "I have lived in eight countries and Singapore is the easiest place I have ever lived. People speak English! People and businesses are efficient. It is a modern city, easy to get around in, with so many interesting places to go.



"I love the variety of concerts, for example, and enjoy going to see rock concerts, the symphony, ballet, the opera – all at reasonable prices and in fabulous facilities. Coming from a small town in Canada, I am thrilled to be able to see such famous acts as Elton John and Jose Carreras, flamenco dancers, operas and ballets!

"I returned to Canada after one year in Singapore, thinking that after 15 years living abroad, it was time to return 'home'. I was wrong. I missed the people, the activities, the food, the way of life.

"I walk my dog, swim every day (a luxury I do not want to give up after enduring Canadian winters for most of my life), eat wonderful food, shop, and enjoy life.

"I sometimes feel as if I should get a job with the Singapore Tourism Board because it seems that all I do to my friends and relatives is rave about Singapore!" ●

Asia-wide Perspective Of Jobs And Talent

By expanding to nine cities in Asia, home grown search firm, HRnetOne has developed a comprehensive understanding of norms, practices and work cultures in the different parts of the region. In this way, its focus on identifying suitable regional talent for the Singapore market can be more easily met.

By doing this, it complements the mission of Contact Singapore (CS) to attract quality professionals to Singapore. Here, it focuses on the healthcare, life sciences, electronics, chemical, oil and gas and clean energy industries.

"We are actively involved in as many activities as possible to identify the market landscape for talents or clients and offer full services for job search in Singapore. We not only assist individuals looking for positions in Singapore by exploring their profile with our business networks, but also support spouses sourcing for opportunities.

"As a Singapore company with a presence in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tokyo, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Sydney, we are a preferred point of contact for overseas

Singaporeans looking to return home," said Mr Eric Yip, Business Leader, Asia.

He attributes the success of HRnet One since its start 16 years ago to the personalised and localised services it offers. On the former he said, "We customise our approach to the talents taking more than the job into discussion."

As for the latter, the company hires locals as consultants in countries that



have strong and deep cultures, such as Korea, Vietnam and India. By so doing, it is able to reduce the risk of failed placements due to cultural misunderstandings.

"Our services from the talent standpoint include assimilation and acclimatisation into the local culture and company

framework to ensure that candidates make a smooth transition into working in a foreign environment. We go in-depth in accommodating the culture and even the idiosyncrasies of the client or hiring manager."

As a bigger firm offering comprehensive services in many markets, HRnet One has the ability to take on very large projects, including start-ups and HQ transfers. Besides its reach, it can count on resources, including well-managed financials which give the company stability. It also has tried and tested processes.

Mr Yip said, "We provide the building blocks to organisations: people. We deliver not only talent, but relationships, networks and business intelligence." ●



Nursing The Nursing Profession

Prof Debra Creedy

Head of Department
Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies
National University of Singapore

After 20 years of contributing to Australia's nursing profession through academia, Prof Debra Creedy landed here to take on new challenges by doing the same thing for Singapore's nursing profession.

Recruited initially as a professor at the Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies in the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine at the National University of Singapore (NUS) in April 2008, she was appointed Head of Department five months later.

Currently, she provides strategic direction and leadership in the discipline of nursing at NUS while collaborating with the nursing profession in Singapore and the region.



In addition, she still teaches undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as supervises students doing a research project for their Doctor of Philosophy degree.

"I came to NUS, one of the top 30 universities in the world because I saw it would provide me with valuable international research and administrative experience. So far, it has been a tremendous personal and professional opportunity for me," she said.

"There is more pressure to perform than in my previous job, but I expected this. On the other hand, my role is enhanced because of the higher level of support staff available. This frees me up to think and act strategically rather than spend a lot of time on routine administration."

She has also been pleasantly surprised by the work ethic she has found here. She said, "Singaporeans have a reputation for being hard working, and I have found this to be case, but there is also a strong culture of respect and service that I really admire. As my colleagues are consistently hardworking and respectful of each other, there is less workplace tension."

As for living in Singapore, she finds it a great place, beginning with a smooth relocation, for which she gives credit to friendly and efficient government agencies and to her employer.

Unlike the typical Singaporean who craves for his own set of wheels, she is happy to do without. "I live near the university and do not require a car. As public transport in Singapore is excellent and taxis are affordable, I have no trouble getting from place to place," said the mother of three adult children who are all studying and working part-time in Australia.

She likes to chill out both among Nature at the Botanical Gardens or East Coast Park and in the man-made environment of the malls. The high humidity is a drawback but she is adjusting to the climate.

Singapore also allows her to indulge in her favourite pastimes. She said, "I like to watch movies, see new places, and travel. Singapore is a great base from which to visit many other countries." ●

Folks At Contact Singapore

Interview with Lee Puay York, Area Director for Southeast Asia



1. What are the pros and cons of being an Area Director working out of Singapore?

Although the physical distance can be a challenge at times, Singapore's connectivity to the countries I cover – Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam – provides me with easy access; I can reach the capital cities of these countries in less than four hours. In addition, Singapore's well-developed communications infrastructure allows me to keep regular contact with my counterparts. Most importantly, being based at the HQ in Singapore enables me to have direct access to our management and keep abreast of the latest policy changes.

2. In what areas do you expect talent from Southeast Asian countries to contribute to Singapore?

Southeast Asia is a unique talent pool with diverse strengths. Many of the Southeast Asian talent are strong in information technology, engineering, management and finance, contributing their efforts to Singapore's economy at various levels. As they pursue a rewarding career in Singapore, they also share the richness of their cultures and cuisines. They have unknowingly become ambassadors

of Singapore, spreading a good word about us to their countrymen. It is no wonder that many of the individuals that I met overseas have been so enthusiastic to come to Singapore!

3. How does your past experience help you to reach out to global talent?

Prior to joining Contact Singapore, I was with the International Relations Office of the National University of Singapore, responsible for its interactions with regional organisations and tertiary institutions. This experience has provided me with a head start. Understanding the Southeast Asian cultures is important. Without doubt, it has equipped me with the necessary skills to reach out to the talent pool in the language and lingo that they understand.

4. What do you like best about your job?

Interacting with people! I like my job because it allows for the exchange of ideas with people of different backgrounds and cultures. I am most happy when I see someone whom I have met land a job in Singapore. That certainly makes my day! ●



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