



Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

PRESS RELEASE

1 September 2010

EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER 7PM

PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR TEACHERS 2010

1. Four exemplary teachers received the 2010 President's Award for Teachers from President S.R. Nathan at the Istana during the Teachers' Day reception on Wednesday, 1 September 2010. They are:

- Mdm Emelyn Soon Bee Hong, CHIJ Kellock;
- Mr Devindra Sapai s/o Indrasapai, Seng Kang Primary School;
- Miss Teh Wan, Townsville Primary School, and;
- Mrs Mohana Eswaran, Regent Secondary School

2. More information on the award recipients is in [Annex A](#).

3. The annual President's Award for Teachers recognises the commitment of teachers towards the total development of students and to nation-building. This year's recipients are inspiring teachers who have demonstrated passion, innovation and dedication in teaching. From developing students into civic-minded citizens and going beyond the call of duty, to affirming and motivating students to achieve exceptional success, these teachers played multiple roles of educating, leading, caring and inspiring to prepare their students for the future.

4. More than 9,700 nominations for the Award were received from principals, teachers, students, parents and former students, a record high since the Award was introduced in 1998. The nominees included 2,601 teachers from 246 schools. A Selection Panel, chaired by Mrs Josephine Teo, Chairperson for the Government Parliamentary Committee for Education, and comprising prominent members of the community and senior officers from the Ministry of Education, selected the four recipients. The members of the selection panel are listed in [Annex B](#).

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Mdm Emelyn Soon Bee Hong
CHIJ Kellock

Mdm Emelyn Soon is a caring and dedicated Lead Teacher in CHIJ Kellock. She believes in the importance of nurturing the social-emotional growth and character of the young, as well as equipping them with 21st century competencies to thrive in a fast-changing and highly-connected world.

Mdm Soon recognises the importance of developing pupils who are not only concerned citizens with a strong sense of civic responsibility but who are also keen contributors who take on an active role in improving the lives of others around them. Beyond the school level, she involved pupils in performing a prize-winning skit for the 'Children for Children' @ Flyer programme in 2008 to reach out to 1000 underprivileged children on Children's Day. The pupil volunteers reflected that their involvement gave them a sense of pride and achievement as they were able to contribute to the community by educating the public on crime prevention.

Mdm Soon uses a wide repertoire of teaching strategies to develop her pupils' interest in learning. These strategies include the use of songs, role-play and co-operative learning in her class.

A strong believer in growing and mentoring teachers, Mdm Soon designed and demonstrated how to meaningfully infuse Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies into her pastoral care lessons. The SEL lesson, which she had developed for her Primary 6 pupils, was filmed and used in training teachers in her cluster as a model lesson. The teachers benefitted from watching the video of her SEL lesson as they were able to plan good pastoral care lessons to impact a greater number of pupils.

Mdm Soon's commitment to teaching and learning and her deep care and concern for her pupils' development make her a truly inspiring teacher.

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**Mr Devindra Sapai s/o Indrasapai
Seng Kang Primary School**

Mr Devindra Sapai is the Dean of Pupil Development in Seng Kang Primary School. He cares passionately about the character and moral development of all his pupils and plays a key role in ensuring that the teaching of values is embedded across all disciplines.

Mr Devindra was instrumental in starting the Daily Physical Education (PE) Programme in 2008. Enhancements in assessment, new skills development and social-emotional learning competencies were infused into the PE lesson. The Daily PE Programme received endorsement from MOE and has been shared with many local institutions, such as schools, the National Institute of Education and Singapore Sports School, as well as with foreign delegates.

Mr Devindra is personally involved with his “at risk” pupils and works with his colleagues, parents, educational psychologists and the community to improve their lives. His selfless commitment and drive are admired by his pupils, peers and parents.

Mr Devindra also encourages his teachers to take ownership of their professional development. He is an excellent role model and has been conferred the Associate of Teachers Network for his contributions in sharing extensively with the teaching fraternity. He has shared on the school’s referral system at the MOE ExCEL Fest and the school’s Community Involvement Programme in Cambodia at the Character and Citizenship Conference organised by the National Institute of Education.

Mr Devindra’s enthusiasm is praiseworthy and his ability to lead his staff and his pupils to achieve success is highly commendable.

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Miss Teh Wan
Townsville Primary School

Miss Teh Wan is the Head of Department for Mathematics in Townsville Primary School. She believes that it is important to spark her pupils' interest in Mathematics as their curiosity will inspire them to further explore the subject. She gains much satisfaction in seeing her pupils experience the joy of learning and self-discovery when they are able to grasp mathematical concepts.

Miss Teh believes that success breeds success. To help her pupils attain their goals, she helps them with target setting and spends time with them to review their targets regularly. She recognises and affirms her pupils' little successes, such as progress in their work or improvements in their behaviour. Through her guidance and motivation, two of her pupils obtained the most prestigious pupil award, the "Townsville Most Outstanding Pupil Award", at the end of their primary education in consecutive years.

A skilful classroom practitioner, Miss Teh displays a wide repertoire of skills and regularly shares them with others. She is passionate about developing and honing the professionalism of teachers and has shared her experience and pedagogical skills with her colleagues at various levels – school, cluster, and MOE's Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD). A parent of her pupil, who was also a teacher, was inspired by Miss Teh's ideas and went on to implement them in her classroom. Miss Teh is also active in supervising and mentoring staff. She led a team of teachers to collaborate with CPDD on a Primary 3 Mathematics Project in 2008.

In addition to being a teacher of her pupils, Miss Teh is also a teacher of teachers. Her professionalism and passion for education are admirable.

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Mrs Mohana Eswaran
Regent Secondary School

Mrs Mohana Eswaran is the Head of Department for Mathematics in Regent Secondary School. She strongly believes that a true teacher cares for and touches the hearts and minds of the children.

Warm and nurturing, Mrs Eswaran is regarded by her students as a confidante, someone they can trust to share their problems with. They also appreciate her efforts in affirming their work which boosts their morale and spurs them towards greater success. After the release of the GCE 'O' level results last year, the top student from her school paid a tribute to Mrs Eswaran for her unwavering belief that students can be nurtured and that there are "no problem students but students with problems". The student attributed her success to Mrs Eswaran who motivated and challenged her to change for the better.

Recognising the need for the inculcation of values in students, Mrs Eswaran spearheaded the Personal and Social Effectiveness programme which incorporated elements of Habits of Mind and Sexuality Education. These interesting lessons were well-received by students and teachers in the school. The parents and partners of the school also commended Mrs Eswaran's sincerity and enthusiasm in collaborating with them to enrich the students in their learning.

Mrs Eswaran values every opportunity to contribute to the teaching fraternity. She leads by example in sharing with other educators at national platforms, such as focused group discussions on Sexuality Education as well as the Heads of Department in the Management and Leadership in Schools programme on Home School Community Partnership.

Mrs Eswaran is an extraordinary teacher whose conviction and passion has transformed her students and helped them fulfil their potential.

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PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR TEACHERS – SELECTION PANEL 2010

Chairperson: Mrs Josephine Teo
(Education) Chairperson, Government Parliamentary Committee

Members: Mrs Tan Ching Yee
Permanent Secretary (Education)
Ministry of Education

Ms Ho Peng
Director-General of Education
Ministry of Education

Mr Syed Ahmad
Member of COMPASS
General Manager
Geolab Services Pte Ltd

Mr Alan John
Member of COMPASS
Deputy Editor
Singapore Press Holdings Ltd

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