

**Subject: LMM 26/07/2022 - NEW COLOMBO PLAN SCHOLARS**

**MOTION:**

That City of Newcastle:

1. Acknowledges the New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program (NCPSP), whose scholars have achieved great success across the political, business, housing, development, transport and other spheres, benefiting many citizens around the world.
2. Notes the presentation made to, and induction of, six worthy NCPSP scholars to City of Newcastle's Ambassador Program with a Key to the City on 26 July 2022 in Singapore before many distinguished guests, including Australian High Commissioner to Singapore, the Hon. William Hodgman, and the NSW Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, the Hon. Stuart Ayres MP.
3. Notes the purpose of the City of Newcastle Ambassador Program is to highlight the efforts of Novocastrians, both born and adopted, who reside in Newcastle and other parts of Australia and the world.
4. Recognises the recipients and their achievements as follows:

a. Professor Cheong Koon Hean

Professor Cheong was the CEO of Singapore's Housing and Development Board from 2010-2020, overseeing the development and management of over 1 million public housing flats.

Professor Cheong was also the CEO of the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) from 2004-2010, and has extensive experience in strategic land use planning, conservation of built heritage and the real estate market.

Professor Cheong holds a First-Class Honours degree and University Gold Medal in Architecture and a Doctor of Architecture *honoris causa* conferred by the University of Newcastle; a Master's degree in Urban Development Planning from University College London and has completed the Advanced Management Programme in Harvard Business School.

b. Dr Khaw Boon Wan

Dr Khaw is a former politician who served as Minister for Health from 2003-2011, Minister for National Development from 2011-2015, and Minister for Transport from 2015-2020.

A member of the governing People's Action Party, he was a Member of Parliament representing Tanjong Pagar GRC from 2001-2006, and Sembawang GRC from 2006-2020.

During his career, he was noted for being appointed to ministerial portfolios dealing with issues such as housing and transport.

Dr Khaw completed a Bachelor of Engineering degree in Industrial Engineering with Honours Class I as well as a Bachelor of Commerce. He was also awarded the University Medal for academic excellence. In 2002, the University presented a Doctor of Engineering *honoris causa* to Dr Khaw. He is also recognised as a Patron of the University of Newcastle's Alumni Chapter in Singapore.

c. Dr Peter Tay Buan Huat

Dr Tay is a Corporate Advisor, engaging in business development and coaching budding business leaders. He serves on the boards of companies involved in food and education and writes on management issues in international food publications.

For 17 years, from 1989-2006, Mr Tay was the President and CEO of Singapore Food Industries Ltd (SFI), a publicly listed food distribution and manufacturing company in Singapore. Under his leadership, SFI expanded internationally from its base in Singapore to include operations in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, China and Australia.

Dr Tay graduated with Bachelor's degrees in both Engineering (Honours) and Economics from the University of Newcastle. In 1986, he obtained an MSc in Management (Sloan Fellows Program) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, United Kingdom, and a Member of the Institution of Engineers, Australia.

d. Dr Tan Chin Nam

Dr Tan has 33 years' service in the Singapore Public Service holding various key appointments before completing his term as a Permanent Secretary in 2007. He held various top public leadership positions and played a leading role in the information technology, economic, tourism, manpower, library, media, arts and creative industries development of Singapore.

Dr Tan completed a Bachelor of Engineering degree in Industrial Engineering with Honours Class I as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Economics. In 1998, Dr Tan was awarded a Doctor of Engineering *honoris causa*.

e. Mr Bill Chua

Mr Chua has served on local and foreign boards for the past 20 years.

Mr Chua retired from United Overseas Bank as the Managing Director and Head Global Financial Institution Group in November 2014 after 34 years in the financial services sector. He was awarded the Public Service Medal (PBM) in 2004, and the Public Service Star (BBM) in 2016 by the Government of Singapore.

Mr Chua holds a Bachelor of Arts, and a Bachelor of Engineering Hons Class 1 from the University of Newcastle, Australia. He is a Fellow at the Singapore Institute of Directors, and at the Institution of Engineers, Singapore.

f. Mr Jaspal Singh

Mr Singh started his career with the Singapore Government Administrative Service (1978-2004), serving in the Ministries of Transport, Finance and Trade & Industry and on the boards of various statutory bodies and Government-linked corporates.

He was awarded the Public Administration Medal (Silver) in 1998 and the Long Service medal in 2003 for 25 years of service.

He received a Colombo Plan scholarship at the University of Newcastle, Australia and completed post-graduate studies, sponsored by the Singapore Government, at Harvard University.

He currently serves as the High Commissioner to the Republic of Rwanda for Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

5. Congratulates each of our new Keys to the City recipients.

## BACKGROUND

# Distinguished scholars receive Keys to the City of Newcastle

Six distinguished alumni of the New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program who completed their studies at the University of Newcastle have received keys to the city in recognition of their work to promote Newcastle internationally.



Professor Cheong Koon Hean, Dr Khaw Boon Wan, Dr Peter Tay Buan Huat, Dr Tan Chin Nam, Mr Bill Chua and Mr Jaspal Singh were formally inducted as ambassadors of the City of Newcastle at a prestigious function at the Australian High Commissioner's Residence in Singapore on Monday evening.

Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes attended as part of a Hunter Regional Delegation to strengthen international ties and explore economic development opportunities.

The Lord Mayor said each of the Colombo scholars exemplified the City of Newcastle Ambassador Program, the purpose of which was to highlight the efforts of Novocastrians, both born and adopted, who resided in Newcastle and other parts of Australia and the world.

"Together, the Colombo scholars have many decades' of experience and achievements spanning the political, business, housing, development and transport sectors, which have greatly benefited Singaporeans and citizens the world over," Cr Nelmes said.

"Each of them reflect fondly on their time spent in Newcastle and attribute many of their successes abroad to this enriching experience, and for that the City of Newcastle acknowledges and celebrates their ongoing efforts to promote the city."

An Australian Government initiative, the New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program is designed to strengthen ties between Australia and the Indo-Pacific region, offering recipients unique opportunities to enhance their learning and global citizenship.

The latest Keys to the City recipients join nine fellow Newcastle ambassadors, including Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, Cook Islands and Niue, Her Excellency the Hon. Patricia Forsythe AM, and National Gallery of Australia Director, Nick Mitzevich.

### **Background on recipients**

#### **Professor Cheong Koon Hean**

Professor Cheong was the CEO of Singapore's Housing and Development Board from 2010-2020, overseeing the development and management of over 1 million public housing flats. Prof Cheong was also the CEO of the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) from 2004-2010, and has extensive experience in strategic land use planning, conservation of built heritage and the real estate market. On 1 January 2021, Prof Cheong was appointed Chair of the Centre for Liveable Cities under the Ministry of National Development, Singapore. She is also the current Chair of the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize Nominating Committee.

Prof Cheong holds a First-Class Honours degree and University Gold Medal in Architecture and a Doctor of Architecture *honoris causa* conferred by the University of Newcastle; a Master's degree in Urban Development Planning from University College London and has completed the Advanced Management Programme in Harvard Business School.

#### **Dr Khaw Boon Wan**

Dr Khaw Boon Wan is a former politician who served as Minister for Health from 2003-2011, Minister for National Development from 2011-2015, and Minister for Transport from 2015-2020. A member of the governing People's Action Party, he was a Member of Parliament representing Tanjong Pagar GRC from 2001-2006, and Sembawang GRC from 2006-2020. During his career, he was noted for being appointed to ministerial portfolios dealing with issues such as housing and transport. Following his retirement from politics in 2020, he has become the chairman of SPH Media Trust, a not-for-profit media entity set up by Singapore Press Holdings after it underwent a restructure in 2021.

Dr Khaw Boon Wan completed a Bachelor of Engineering degree in Industrial Engineering with Honours Class I as well as a Bachelor of Commerce. He was also awarded the University Medal for academic excellence. In 2002, the University presented a Doctor of Engineering *honoris causa* to Dr Khaw. He is also recognised as a Patron of the University of Newcastle's Alumni Chapter in Singapore.

#### **Dr Peter Tay Buan Huat**

Dr Tay is currently a Corporate Advisor, engaging in business development and coaching budding business leaders. He serves on the boards of companies involved in food and education and writes on management issues in *Asian Meat* and *AgriFood Magazine*, two

international food publications. For 17 years, from 1989-2006, Mr Tay was the President and CEO of Singapore Food Industries Ltd (SFI), a publicly listed food distribution and manufacturing company in Singapore. Under his leadership, SFI expanded internationally from its base in Singapore to include operations in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, China and Australia. During the period from 1992-2004, he concurrently held other positions, including Group Coordinator for Human Resource and Group Director (Strategic Development) in Singapore Technologies.

Dr Tay graduated with Bachelor degrees in both Engineering (Honours) and Economics from the University of Newcastle. In 1986, he obtained an MSc in Management (Sloan Fellows Program) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, United Kingdom, and a Member of the Institution of Engineers, Australia.

### **Dr Tan Chin Nam**

Dr Tan has 33 years' service in the Singapore Public Service holding various key appointments before completing his term as a Permanent Secretary in 2007. He held various top public leadership positions including as General Manager and Chairman, National Computer Board, Managing Director, Economic Development Board, Chief Executive, Singapore Tourism Board, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Manpower, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts, Chairman National Library Board and Chairman of the Media Development Authority. He played a leading role in the information technology, economic, tourism, manpower, library, media, arts and creative industries development of Singapore.

Dr Tan completed a Bachelor of Engineering degree in Industrial Engineering with Honours Class I as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Economics. In 1998, Dr Tan was awarded a Doctor of Engineering *honoris causa*.

### **Mr Bill Chua**

Mr Chua has served on local and foreign boards for the past 20 years. He is currently an Independent Director on the boards of IES-INCA Pte Ltd, United Hampshire US REIT Management Pte Ltd, Sunseap Group Pte Ltd, Citibank Singapore Limited, and BoardRoom Executive Services Pte Ltd, and a Managing Partner and Director of Green Sands Equity Inc. Bill retired from United Overseas Bank as the Managing Director and Head Global Financial Institution Group in November 2014 after 34 years in the financial services sector. He was awarded the Public Service Medal (PBM) in 2004, and the Public Service Star (BBM) in 2016 by the Government of Singapore.

Mr Chua holds a Bachelor of Arts, and a Bachelor of Engineering Hons Class 1 from the University of Newcastle, Australia. He is a Fellow at the Singapore Institute of Directors, and at the Institution of Engineers, Singapore.

### **Mr Jaspal Singh**

Mr Singh started his career with the Singapore Government Administrative Service (1978-2004), serving in the Ministries of Transport, Finance and Trade & Industry and on the Boards of various statutory bodies and Government-linked corporates. Key appointments held include Director of Budget and Deputy Secretary in the Ministries of Finance and Transport. He was awarded the Public Administration Medal (Silver) in 1998 and the Long Service medal in 2003 for 25 years of service.

CITY OF NEWCASTLE  
Lord Mayoral Minute

He received a Colombo Plan scholarship at the University of Newcastle, Australia (1973-77) and completed post-graduate studies (sponsored by the Singapore Government) at Harvard University (MPA, Kennedy School of Government, 1984-85, and AMP, Harvard Business School, Fall 2003).

Mr Singh is currently Senior Advisor to SMRT Corporation Ltd and SPH Group. He sits on the Governing Council of the Singapore Institute of Directors and is also Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies at the LKY School of Public Policy. He is also the High Commissioner to the Republic of Rwanda for Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs.