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**Our mission:**
Transforming medicine, improving lives

**Our vision:**
Pioneering medicine for the 21st century

Cover photo: Courtesy of Prof. C. Frank Stammer
The most important step is to assemble a team of doctors and professionals who man these facilities and bring medical research and services to a higher level. Duke-NUS has brought innovations to medical education in Singapore.

Lee Hsien Loong  
Prime Minister - Singapore

I congratulate the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School (Duke-NUS) on its official opening.

Singapore is building a world-class healthcare system to deliver affordable, accessible and good quality medical care to its citizens. At the same time, we are investing in the biomedical sector, to establish it as another key pillar of our economy. In both these efforts, talent is vital. Putting up the hospitals and laboratories fulfills the basic requirements, but the most important step is to assemble a team of doctors and professionals who man these facilities and bring medical research and services to a higher level.

The increasing demands exceed the capacity of a single medical school. Therefore, Duke-NUS was established in 2005 to train clinician-scientists to support the biomedical sector, as well as train specialist doctors to serve our growing medical needs.

Duke-NUS has brought innovations to medical education in Singapore. Students are exposed to clinical training early on in its four year program, and are organized and taught in teams to achieve better learning outcomes. They can also tailor their research experience according to their own long-term goals and interests. This flexible curriculum and team-based format aim to produce high-quality clinicians and scientists for the 21st Century.

Despite its short history, Duke-NUS is gaining international recognition. The strong partnership between Duke and NUS, and active support from the Ministries of Education and Health, A*STAR and the hospitals, have been crucial. I thank all of you for your efforts, and look forward to seeing the products of the medical school.
The prospective partner must be willing to commit time and their most precious asset, clinical teachers and mentors, to infuse the school with a spirit and achieve high standards that all would be proud of.

Dr Ng Eng Hen
Minister for Education

When Singapore was looking for a partner to start a second medical school with, we set out stringent requirements. The prospective partner would have to share our vision that education could transform people and societies for the better; that the new medical school would not only produce good doctors and competent clinician-scientists but also leaders in healthcare and the region. Most importantly, that partner must be willing to commit time and their most precious asset, clinical teachers and mentors, to infuse the school with a spirit and achieve high standards that all would be proud of. These exacting criteria made match-making difficult and Dr Tony Tan and I therefore had to visit a few renowned medical schools. Fortuitously, we found these qualities in Duke University. The official opening of the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School (Duke-NUS) is therefore a notable milestone – a concrete manifestation of a long-term partnership and commitment between Duke University and NUS.

Still in its infancy, this new medical school formed in 2005 that has yet to graduate its first batch of trained doctors, already shows promising signs that point to a bright future ahead. Duke-NUS is attracting top quality students, researchers and faculty – essential ingredients needed to become a peak of excellence in our higher education landscape and a leading center for medical education, research and healthcare. The School’s teaching program has also received worldwide attention from over 40 delegations since 2007 for its innovative approach to medical education.

Duke University has put in considerable resources to make the project succeed, and NUS has done well to embrace and nurture the School as part of its family. A strong relationship has emerged founded on a common mission and mutual trust and respect. These achievements have been possible because of the strong support from its stakeholders and benefactors. I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation for the generosity of the various private donors, sponsors and foundations whose contributions have been instrumental to the School’s development and mission.

As we celebrate the opening of Duke-NUS, I congratulate the School’s Governing Board, leadership, faculty and staff for having started well and building strong foundations. Much remains to be done in this long term venture but I am confident that we can all look forward to great successes in the years ahead.
We look to medical schools and their graduates to help us navigate a more complicated medical world, to reap the benefits of medical advances, without impoverishing the society or subjecting us to unnecessary fear of ageing and dying.

Mr Khaw Boon Wan
Minister for Health

The official opening of the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School Singapore is a historic event. The last time we opened a new campus for a medical school was in 1986 when the NUS Medical Faculty moved from Outram to Kent Ridge. The current event marks the return of a full-fledged medical school to the Outram Campus, but with significant differences.

Firstly, after one hundred years, Singapore now has two medical schools. The decision to set up a second medical school, instead of simply expanding the existing medical school, was not taken lightly. Both are viable options even though there is a practical limit to how large a good medical school should grow. In the end, the decision was taken to set up a second one to offer diversity and some contestability. I am sure history will prove this decision to be wise.

Secondly, both the Outram and the Kent Ridge Campuses have progressed to become significant regional players in healthcare delivery, teaching, training and clinical research. Both are now embarking on the next logical stage of their development, to become world-class academic medical centres, bringing the benefits of basic and bench research to the bedside, so as to make a real difference to the health of the patients they serve.

This is also a significant year for Singapore as it marks 50 years of self-government. Over five decades, Singapore healthcare has been transformed from the third world to the first. Singaporeans’ health outcomes are now comparable to the best in the world. Notably, we have evolved our own unique approach to healthcare financing which has enabled Singaporeans to enjoy a high standard of healthcare, without inflicting a heavy financial and tax burden on the patients and their families or employers. We do this by picking the best features of healthcare financing from other countries and forging them into a coherent system to suit our circumstances.

Our system is not perfect but it has been reasonably effective in avoiding the many pitfalls of abuses, over-consumption, over-servicing and other moral hazards observed elsewhere.

However, as Singapore healthcare moves up to first world, success has brought with it many first world problems of modern life-style diseases, over-specialisation and erosion of primary healthcare. Advances in medical science create new treatments, sometimes of marginal value, and breed new, probably unnecessary, demand. The resultant mismatch between supply and demand is inevitable. Meanwhile, the ageing of the population accentuates the stresses created by such a mismatch. The healthcare delivery system designed principally around acute hospitals which has been successful in treating acute illnesses has become less appropriate in addressing the problems of chronic diseases and long-term care. The world is actively looking for a more sustainable healthcare delivery model which will allow us to age with peace of mind, while preserving quality of life and dignity.

This is a problem of success, brought about by modern medical science. We look to medical schools and their graduates to help us navigate a more complicated medical world, to reap the benefits of medical advances, without impoverishing the society or subjecting us to unnecessary fear of ageing and dying.

Past generations of medical schools have succeeded in adding years to our lives. In one century, most populations have increased their life expectancy by almost 30 years. The present generation of medical schools should now help us to also add life to our years.

On this note, I would like to express my Ministry’s heartiest congratulations to Duke-NUS on this momentous occasion.
In The Beginning

Dr Ralph Snyderman
MD, Former Chancellor for Health Affairs
Former President and CEO, Duke University Health System

July 1, 2003 – “The government of Singapore has launched an impressive and thoughtful campaign to reorient their educational and economic emphasis toward biomedicine. For Duke, the endeavor represents an opportunity to work in a rapidly evolving research and clinical care environment in a region of the world with great scientific and economic potential.”

Signing the Memorandum of Understanding, June 2003
Seated L-R: Duke’s Prof Ralph Snyderman, NUS’ Prof Choong Chi Tat, Duke’s Prof Sanders Williams
Standing L-R: Mr Tharman Shanmugapriyan, Dr Teo Chee Hean, Dr Tony Tan, Dr Ng Eng Hen, Mr Moses Lee and Prof Tan Ser Kiat

Dr Victor Dzau
MD, Duke University Chancellor for Health Affairs
President and CEO, Duke University Health System

“Most important is the visionary leadership of the Singapore government, spearheaded by former Deputy Prime Minister Dr Tony Tan, Health Minister Mr Khaw Boon Wan, former and present Education Ministers Mr Tharman Shanmugapriyan and Dr Ng Eng Hen, Minister of Trade & Industry Mr Lim Hng Kiang, key ministry officials such as Ms Yong Ying-ling and Ms Tan Ching Yee, and A*STAR’s former and present chairman Mr Philip Yeo and Mr Lim Chuan Poh.

We have also benefited greatly from our partnership with the National University of Singapore, led by President Tan Chorh Chuan and Provost Tan Eng Chye, and from the wisdom of Mr Tony Chew, the chair of the governing board.

We are also deeply appreciative of the invaluable support and contributions to this project from many key people associated with Singapore Health Services – specifically Prof Tan Ser Kiat and Prof Ivy Ng.”

4 Our Story
Prof Tan Ser Kiat
Group CEO, SingHealth

“In the search for medical schools of excellence around the globe, Duke stood out for its sterling record of producing excellent clinician-scientists. Its illustrious experience of creating a strong medical education program for generations augurs well for Singapore’s first graduate medical school.”

Formalizing the partnership in April 2005 are Dr Victor Biao (L) and Prof Tan Chorh Chuan (R)

Prof Tan Chorh Chuan
President, National University of Singapore
Deputy Chairman, Agency for Science, Technology & Research (A*STAR)

“Duke-NUS is a truly remarkable partnership that goes far beyond the regular model of collaboration between universities.”
Winning Partnerships

Duke University
The Duke University School of Medicine is widely recognized as one of the best in the world. Consistently ranked among the top ten U.S. medical schools by U.S. News & World Report, the school is noted for its leadership in training clinician-scientists as well as its unique curriculum that includes a full year devoted to independent research. More than 1,700 faculty clinicians and researchers and over US$600 million in annual sponsored research make Duke one of the largest biomedical research enterprises in the United States.

National University of Singapore
A leading global university centered in Asia, the National University of Singapore (NUS) is Singapore’s flagship university which offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise. With 14 faculties and schools across three campuses, its transformative education includes a broad-based curriculum underscored by multi-disciplinary courses and cross-faculty enrichment. Over 30,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives.

Dr Tony Tan
Patron, Duke-NUS Development Committee
Chairman, National Research Foundation

“Duke-NUS was established as part of a national strategy for Singapore to become a leading center for medical research and education. The transfer of Duke’s ethos and culture into Duke-NUS diversifies Singapore’s medical education and strengthens our research focus in our endeavor to be a center of excellence in medical education, clinical research and healthcare delivery.”
Lim Chuan Poh
Chairman, Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)

“In a mere two years, the School has taken the lead in clinical education and research by offering its students an innovative and rigorous curriculum with a particular focus on research, and I am proud to have witnessed how it has developed from just a concept into a brand new campus with 130 students.

Already, collaborative programs such as the A*STAR-Duke-NUS Neurosciences Research Partnership provide valuable opportunities to share and capitalize on complementary research strengths.”

“For Duke University and Duke Medicine, the project underscores our strong commitment to a global mission in research and education that will ultimately speed the translation of scientific discoveries to the bedside, and close the gap in healthcare disparities worldwide.”

Dr Victor Dzau
MD, Duke University Chancellor for Health Affairs
President and CEO, Duke University Health System

Our Stakeholders
Developing Future Leaders

Borne from Singapore’s visionary Biomedical Science Initiative in the year 2000, the Singapore government actively supported a new hybrid model of clinical medical training and research that is poised to greatly advance medical progress. A formal agreement was inked on 14 April 2005 for a partnership between Duke University in N. Carolina, USA and the National University of Singapore (NUS).

Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School (Duke-NUS) is Singapore’s first international medical school that offers a graduate-entry, four-year medical program based on the unique Duke model of education and curriculum. Duke-NUS leveraged further on the Duke edge by developing its own TeamLEAD, a team-based, interactive learning process that mimics what our students will experience when they are in research or in the wards. Students are not only embedded in clinical wards one year ahead of their peers in other American medical schools, but are also exposed to one year dedicated to independent study and research projects of a basic science or clinical nature.

Five Signature Research Programs

Duke-NUS has established Signature Research Programs in five areas. Each of these aims to make a substantive impact on Singapore’s medical needs, and each was formed on the underlying principle that there was a competitive advantage for performing research in Singapore, and also that the research can capitalize on strengths at Duke University. The five Programs are:

- Cancer & Stem Cell Biology
- Emerging Infectious Diseases
- Cardiovascular & Metabolic Disorders
- Neuroscience & Behavioral Disorders
- Health Services & Systems Research

Dr David Virshup
Program Director
Cancer & Stem Cell Biology

Dr Duane Gubler
Program Director
Emerging Infectious Diseases

Dr David Matchar
Program Director
Health Sciences & Systems Research

Dr Dale Purves
Program Director
Neuroscience & Behavioral Disorders

8 Our Story
The completion of the Khoo Teck Puat Building marks Duke-NUS’ accomplishment of all its Phase 1 milestones, planned for 7 years but achieved in just over 4 years.

Prof K. Ranga Krishnan
Dean, Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School

It is my privilege, pleasure and honor to serve as Dean of Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School (Duke-NUS).

Under the guidance of our chairman Tony Chew and the Governing Board, and with the hard work and dedication of our Vice Deans, program directors, faculty and staff, Duke-NUS has exceeded all our targets and expectations in an unbelievably short time span. Within a year of inking the agreement between Duke University and the National University of Singapore (NUS), we started recruiting faculty and students. In August 2007, the first class of 26 students began their medical studies. Since then, we have had two more enrollments, drawing the best students from a wide variety of backgrounds. We are looking forward to the first class graduating in 2011 with joint Duke-NUS medical degrees — the first such degree in the history of both Universities.

Duke-NUS’ new, innovative medical education methods have made the young school visible internationally. Our distinctive TeamLEAD methodology trains our students to think creatively and critically to solve problems, not just individually but also in teams. Over 40 delegations have visited us to see this in action. It is particularly gratifying that Duke’s education faculty is now introducing elements of TeamLEAD in Durham, N. Carolina.

Our faculty has established a clear visible presence in the global research landscape. Their work has been recognized and bestowed with numerous awards and honors.

The completion of the Khoo Teck Puat Building marks Duke-NUS’ accomplishment of all its Phase 1 midterm key performance indicators in 4 years, 3 years earlier than scheduled.

It demonstrates what can be achieved by team work with strong backing by stakeholders, a committed and cohesive governing board, unified and dedicated management team, and generous support from the clinical community in particular from Singhealth and by our donors.

I take this opportunity to recognize our stakeholders — Duke, NUS, A*STAR, SingHealth, and the Ministries for Education, Health, and Trade & Industry – for their vision, leadership and spirit of collaboration.

We are deeply grateful to our donors for their generosity at the historic founding stage. I also recognize the stellar contributions of my talented and committed team.

With your continued support, I am convinced Duke-NUS cannot but become one of Asia’s leading medical schools, a center of research, and a leading force in healthcare.
Since Then

Dedicating the new campus grounds
L-R: NUS President Shih Choo Kong, Prof Sanders Williams, Minister Khaw Boon Wan, Duke-NUS Chairman Mr Tony Chew and Prof Tan Chorh Chuan

“The leadership, management, faculty and staff of Duke-NUS must turn the blocks and mortar of the School’s building into a home for generations of clinician-scientists, clinician-entrepreneurs, clinician-leaders, clinician-pioneers, who will love the pledge of service they take as they enter our portals.”

Prof R. Sanders Williams
MD, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Duke University
Founding Dean of Duke-NUS

“I would like to thank the pioneering leadership team for the Duke-NUS project, including Founding Dean Sandy Williams, Patrick Casey, Soo Khee Chee, Bob Kamei, Giselia Giam, Robert Taber and more recently, Dean Ranga Krishnan.”

Dr Victor Dzau
MD, Duke University Chancellor for Health Affairs
President and CEO, Duke University Health System

Prof Soo Khee Chee
Vice Dean – Clinical & Faculty Affairs
Together with Dr Charles Ng, Dr Lee Seng Teck and Dr Chan Yew Weng, Prof Soo Khee Chee was part of the “Gang of Four” who actively lobbied for Singapore’s second medical school.

“I am amazed at how Duke-NUS’ entry has energized the whole Outram campus. This makes for a rich, intellectually stimulating environment for all. I also hope for the School to transform into a biomedical university involving other schools of medicine.”
Our pioneer team comprises (l-r) Matthew Swee, Mei Wang-Casey, Giselia Giam, Dr Patrick Casey, Dollis Ang and Cheah Li Fook.

“We train our students to not only practice medicine but to also improve the practice of medicine. We nurture them through the start of their medical journey, support their strong sense of service and help them become future leaders in their areas of interest.”

Dr Robert Kamei
Vice Dean of Education, Duke-NUS

“As the first Duke faculty member to relocate to Singapore, my biggest concern was: could we manage the expectations of all six stakeholders on both sides of the planet? This made for some very interesting times in the first few years!”

Dr Patrick Casey
Senior Vice Dean of Research, Duke-NUS

“Albert Einstein once said that the most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. My Duke-NUS journey began with curiosity, was peppered with many surprises and marked with plenty of personal ‘firsts’, all of which have been extremely fascinating, incredibly satisfying and richly mysterious.”

Ms Giselia Giam
Vice, Dean of Corporate Services, Duke-NUS

“Our students are the direct beneficiaries of an impressive and forward thinking group of men and women in Singapore and on the Governing Board who dreamed of a star-studded graduate medical school.”

Dr Jean G. Spaulding
MD, Trustee, Duke Endowment

“When we first started, we really didn’t have to rely on emails to communicate with colleagues. We could literally shout to one another since everyone was housed in a single large room within Block 1!”

Cheah Li Fook
Senior Manager, Facilities Management & Planning, Duke-NUS
“How the past 4 years have flown by... in setting up the first research lab at Duke-NUS in 2005, I am deeply indebted to the research management crew of National Cancer Center, without whom my early research would be impossible.”

Dr Mei Wang-Casey
Asst Prof, Laboratory of Cancer Molecular Pharmacology, Duke-NUS

“Building Duke-NUS is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do something no one else had done.”

Prof C. Frank Starmer
Associate Dean, Learning & Information Technologies, Duke-NUS

“I am proud to have played a part in Duke-NUS’ early beginnings. While there were some challenging times, there were also many good moments.”

Dolliss Ang
Personal Assistant to Senior Vice Dean – Research, Duke-NUS

“Mission IMpossible? My sense is that everyone here has the “I M possible” mindset that is like being out in the open sea with only one goal in mind: looking for dry land.”

Matthew Seow KH
Deputy Director, Learning & Information Technologies, Duke-NUS

“Since the first intake in 2007, we have seen Duke-NUS students and academic and research faculty in our midst – training at SingHealth institutions, interacting and working alongside our healthcare staff. They are now an integral part of our education mission and vibrant campus life.”

Professor Tan Ser Kiat
Group CEO, SingHealth
Awards & Accolades

“The strength of the Duke-NUS faculty is impressive. The School has assembled brilliant minds at the forefront of basic and clinical research.”

Prof Tan Chorh Chuan
President, National University of Singapore
Deputy Chairman, A*STAR

Although still a fledgling institution, Duke-NUS has attracted many outstanding clinicians and scientists to its research faculty, with distinguished and varied academic backgrounds, from hallmark institutions around the world. The faculty has received many national research awards at the highest level, and over 60 million research dollars from Singapore and overseas. These include:

2007 Clinician Scientist Investigator Award (Junior Clinician Scientist)
Dr Charles Chuah, Asst Professor, Cancer & Stem Cell Biology Program

2008 Singapore Translational Research Investigator Award
Dr David Virshup, Professor & Director, Cancer & Stem Cell Biology Program
Dr Michael Chee, Professor, Neuroscience & Behavioral Disorders Program

2008 Clinician Scientist Award
Dr Ong Sin Tiong, Assoc Professor, Cancer & Stem Cell Biology Program
Dr Tan Eng King, Assoc Professor, Neuroscience and Behavioral Disorders Program

2008 Young Investigator Award, National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression, USA
Dr Zhang Xiaodong, Asst Professor, Neuroscience & Behavioral Disorders Program

2008 C. Charles Burlingame Award
Dr K Ranga Krishnan, Dean

2008 Young Scientist Award (Biological & Biomedical Sciences)
Dr Wang Hongyan, Asst Professor, Neuroscience & Behavioral Disorders Program

2008 Singapore Youth Award Medal of Commendation for Science & Technology
Dr Patrick Tan, Assoc Professor, Cancer & Stem Cell Biology Program

2008 National Research Foundation Research Fellowship
Dr Wang Hongyan, Asst Professor, Neuroscience & Behavioral Disorders Program
Dr Lok Shee Mei, Asst Professor, Emerging Infectious Diseases Program

2009 National Research Foundation Competitive Research Program Award
A team led by Dr George Augustine, Professor, Neuroscience & Behavioral Disorders Program

2009 National Outstanding Clinician Scientist Award
Dr Michael Chee, Professor, Neuroscience & Behavioral Disorders Program

2009 L’Oréal Singapore For Women In Science National Fellowships
Dr Melissa Jane Fullwood, Research Fellow, Neuroscience & Behavioral Disorders Program
Who Are They?

“Our graduates must never lose sight of the important truth that medicine is also an art — a fine balance of knowledge, judgment, technical competence, compassion, respect, confidence, honor, service and humility. They must learn to be thought-leaders, change agents, innovators and creative mavericks who care for patients while they also build new evidence by which doctors in Singapore and around the world make decisions.”

Prof R. Sanders Williams
MD, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Duke University
Founding Dean of Duke-NUS

International Diversity
Our students hail from 17 countries

Student Intake
Total of 130 students are enrolled in three classes

Males vs Females
Age on Enrollment: 20 – 32

Some Student Community Projects

Community health screenings
Art therapy project at SGH, 2008
Community trip to Rempang, Indonesia, 2008

Halloween 2008 at KK Women and Children’s Hospital
Spreading Christmas cheer at Assisi Home, 2008
Participating in SGH’s Community Day 2008
In Appreciation

Tony Chew  
Chairman, Duke-NUS Governing Board

“I want to thank the Trustees of the Estate of the late philanthropist Tan Sri Khoo Teck Puat for their S$80 million gift to accelerate Duke-NUS’ biomedical research programs. I also want to express my deep appreciation for the support and generosity of our other donors:

• the Goh Foundation
• the Lee Foundation
• the Lien Foundation
• the Shaw Foundation
• the Singapore Medical Association
• the Tanoto Foundation
• several anonymous donors.”

Mavis Khoo  
Estate of Tan Sri Khoo Teck Puat

“My late father devoted himself to philanthropic work and championed community values that centered on education, healthcare and medical research. He believed passionately that advances in these areas will make a real and substantial difference to the lives of people in Singapore and around the world.”

The Estate of Tan Sri Khoo Teck Puat pledges the first and biggest donation to Duke-NUS in 2007

Dr Patrick Casey thanks Mrs Margaret Lien for helping Duke-NUS establish the Lien Center for Palliative Care in 2008

The Class of 2011
The Khoo Teck Puat Building

The Khoo Teck Puat Building at Duke-NUS offers up 26,000 sq m of space and soars within the grounds of SGH Campus at Outram.

The strong architectural design encourages easy exchange between faculty, researchers, students and administrators—with its beautifully lit atrium, open staircases and hallways and its thoughtfully placed, casual meeting spots.

The interior of the building is organized around an 8-storey atrium - the heart of the vertical campus. To one side of the atrium soars the 11-storey administrative tower with faculty offices, research support stations and “post-doc pods”.

On the other side of the atrium is the 9-storey laboratory tower containing 6 research floors, organized according to targeted areas of study. A genomics facility and high-performance computing cluster is located on the ground floor. The students’ state-of-the-art learning and training facilities on the second and third levels form the institution’s Education foundations.

The Duke-NUS design is strongly influenced by Singapore’s tropical climate, with an emphasis on sustainability. The primary materials are ceramics, glass and metal. It is a tranquil and spacious building with an open design that supports the Duke-NUS collaborative spirit.
Acknowledgements:

Duke-NUS would like to recognize the following that have played a pivotal role in the conceptualization, management and construction of this beautiful space:

Mr Philip Ng, Chairman of the Duke-NUS Campus Development Committee (2005 – 2008)
Mr Philip Eng, Chairman of the Duke-NUS Campus Development Committee (2008 – now)
Prof Sanders Williams, Founding Dean for initiating the design brief and keeping a close watch on the project through the years
Gregory Warwick, Duke University’s chief architect when the project commenced
RMJM for the design and CPG Consultants for the contract administration
PM Link for managing the project
China Construction (South Pacific) Development Co and all their partners for the construction

Editor’s note:

This publication by no means represents the involvement, commitment and dedication of the many agencies, individuals and partners involved in Duke-NUS past and present. We apologize to those whose contributions we have inadvertently omitted.
A Collaboration Cast in Stone

For a young school, Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School is steeped in rich history. A distinctive stone wall marks the entrance to the Duke-NUS campus along College Road. The uniquely colored stone, a gift from Duke University, was quarried from the hills of Hillsborough in North Carolina and made its journey out of the USA to Singapore. Called “bluestone” by quarrymen, the stone has seven primary colors and seventeen different shades of color. Of volcanic origin, it is believed to be at least 400 million years old.

In the spring of 1925, the bluestone was inconspicuous, little known and not even then actively quarried, Senior Duke officials brought this stone to the attention of James B. Duke who founded Duke University. He was at that time intensely involved in the development and construction of its West Campus and wanted a stone that had a strong character, that would make distinctive and lasting buildings while yet being affordable.

For over seven decades, Duke University has benefited from the attractive union of a unique local stone and an ancient architectural style. The bluestone, so eponymous with Duke University, is now popularly known as the “Duke Stone”. Buildings on Duke’s massive campus in Durham feature the stone widely till this day.

As a fitting tribute to Duke’s first strategic collaboration with Singapore and NUS, the Duke Stone takes pride of place, welcoming visitors, faculty, staff and students from near and far into our ‘home’. It appropriately symbolizes the collaboration as a hallmark and pioneering effort that is, literally, cast in stone.

Contributed by Wee Lai Ming, Duke-NUS Senior Communications Manager