



NATIONAL YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Chai Chee Community Life through the eyes of Ping Yians

Students from Ping Yi Secondary School would never have imagined that their photography work and reflections can go beyond their school's boundaries to be read by so many people in the community.

To commemorate the school's 88 years of history from the days of the old Peng Ghee Public School back in 1930, Ping Yi Secondary School, in partnership with the National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA) Council, embarked on a community project for the students to explore the Chai Chee Community from March to June 2018.



Chai Chee Our Home coffee-table book.



NYAA Young Photographers Network's mentor briefing students before their assignment.

A group of 31 Normal Technical students embarked on a journey of discovery to interview, document and capture life within the Chai Chee estate – the institutions, landmarks, festive celebrations, flora and fauna and the day-to-day life of the Chai Chee residents



Ping Yian photographers in action at the mall.

Students in the project explored the estate with their mentors from the NYAA Young Photographers Network (YPN) to interview and capture places within the Chai Chee vicinity. It was an eye-opener for the students as many were not aware of the various interesting places that existed in their neighbourhood and the history and stories behind them.

Some of these students involved in the project could not afford a camera and they had cameras loaned to them from the school and their NYAA YPN mentors.

Empowering Individuals

Mr Jervis Lim used to be a problematic student in school who ran foul of teachers and the law with numerous police records. Through the project, he managed to develop an interest in photography and discover his hidden talents. Jervis did very well in the project and his photo was selected as one of the top three images by the NYAA YPN mentors. His attitude towards school and learning also changed for the better after the project and his principal and teachers were very pleased with his positive transformation, which was a miracle.



Mentors and students going through thousands of images.

More than 11,000 images captured by the students encapsulated what it means to live in a vibrant community through the eyes of the students.

The images vividly captured the social harmony, physical space, people and at times, the values of respect, care and inclusiveness which created the interesting landscapes of a HDB housing estate brought forth into the open.

Hj Ariffin bin Suleiman, Chairman of the Al-Ansar Mosque which was featured in the book praised the young photographers who had captured the magnificence of the mosque in a very unique way whereby the mosque was complemented by the lush greenery and the vibrancy of its activities in Chai Chee estate.

The NYAA YPN mentors and teachers worked very closely with the students to go through their images and selected over 250 images that reflect life in the Chai Chee community.

The selected images were published into a book, titled Chai Chee, Our Home and was launched by the Speaker of Parliament and Member of Parliament for Kembangan-Chai Chee, Marine Parade GRC, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, on 29 June 2018 at the school's Speech Day.



The Book was launched by Speaker of Parliament Mr Tan Chuan-Jin and Member of Parliament for Kembangan-Chai Chee, Marine Parade GRC.

“Education is both an uplifting and integrating force. It uplifts, as people acquire the skills and knowledge to lead dignified lives, fulfil their aspirations and contribute to society. If we harness its passion, creativity and dynamism, we can make bold and meaningful changes to prepare our students well for the future. This is our collective moral imperative.”

**Mr Ong Ye Kung
Minister for Education**

“The scale that our students from a heartland school will probably not have imagined - that their photography work and reflection go beyond the school boundaries to be read and enjoyed by so many people in the Chai Chee community. The value-add that NYAA has created for our students far exceeds their secondary school days. This belief that NYAA has in them will follow them all their lives, helping them to believe in themselves and in people around them, motivating them to keep learning and growing.”

**Mr Ang Chee Seng
Principal
Ping Yi Secondary School**

“Do something that you love and is meaningful to you. Always be truthful to yourself and use your talents, whatever it may be, to serve society. Don't let other people's perceptions of you define who you are.”

**Mr James Soh BBM, PBM
Executive Director
National Youth Achievement
Award Council**

(From left) Mohamad Hashri Rusyaidy, Ng Wei Sing Alvin, Bashirah Uzma and Chyna Anne Damalanta with the photos they took for the project. TNP PHOTO: ZHANG XUAN

Slice of Chai Chee's community life captured in photos by students

● DHANYALINGESH

It was a subject matter worth capturing for student photographers from Ping Yi Secondary School (PYSS).

In a collaboration with the National Youth Achievement Award's (NYAA) Young Photographers' Network, 19 students were tasked with taking photos in the vicinity of their school for the Chai Chee, Our Home project.

A total of 11,986 photos were taken and 266 of these were chosen to be compiled into a coffee table book, which was presented to Speaker of Parliament Tan Chuan-Jin during PYSS's Speech Day last week.

The project began in February. The students worked for two months, while coordinators such as English head of department, Madam Saheedah Begum, 44, and allied educator, Mr Isaac Chin Ming Seng, 62, took five months to organise and compile the book with NYAA.

Ng Wei Sing Alvin, 15, a Secondary 3 student, took 431 photos. He said: "We met over five Saturday mornings and focused on different areas in Chai Chee each week."

Meeting a group of elderly smokers was one of Alvin's most striking experiences. He said: "I was surprised when they refused to allow us

to take their photo. They later explained that they did not want students like us to be influenced by their habit.

"I felt touched that these men cared enough to warn us against smoking."

The students also found it important to appreciate the small and sometimes forgotten peculiarities hidden within the Chai Chee community.

Sec 3 student, Bashirah Uzma, 15, took 778 photos.

RACIAL HARMONY

She said: "I was reminded that Chai Chee has a Chinese temple, a mosque and a church all in the same area. We learn in class that racial harmony is important and it was great to observe this in the real world."

"The training that our teachers and NYAA's Young Photographers' Network gave us was invaluable. I learnt how to capture great moments, with good composition, lighting and angles."

Mr Isaac, who helms PYSS's photography club, said: "The students have become so much braver and confident. They had to challenge themselves and approach strangers to take these amazing photos."

"We are so proud of their passion and the coffee table book we finally compiled together with NYAA."

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An article from The New Paper.



Speaker Tan Chuan-Jin autographing at the book launch.



Student photographer Alvin Ng receiving a book from the Speaker of Parliament.