Inside Xinmin

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1. Mother Tongue Language Festival
2. International Friendship Day
3. SYF Showcase
4. Speech Day
5. Night to Day Run
6. Post-Exam Activities
7. Secondary 3 Camp
8. Secondary 2 Drama Showcase
9. Interview with Top Students
Mother Tongue Language Festival

Xinmin Mother Tongue Language Festival was held from 23rd March to 1st April 2015. The purpose of this activity was to promote students’ interest in their respective Mother Tongue languages. This year’s theme of “Revising the Past and Finding The New” was in conjunction with our school’s 70th anniversary theme ‘Celebrating Our Heritage, Creating Our Future’. Many interactive activities were held during these two weeks. The festival started with a video featuring students sharing their thoughts on Xinmin and what the school meant to them. The activities held included the Chinese Chess Competition for Secondary Two students, Creative Writing Essay Competition, Word Puzzles, as well as a Xinyao performance put up by the teachers, which was warmly received by the students. On 30th March, the school also invited local singers Micapella, Tay Kewei and Bonnie Loo to put up an exciting performance for the Upper Secondary students. They shared about their experience with learning Chinese, and emphasised the relevance of Chinese in the real world context. The Malay students created Malay traditional dishes with bananas. Through the cooking of dishes, they learnt more about the Malay culture and traditional food. Venus Lim from class 301 said that all of them enjoyed themselves and they looked forward to more engaging activities to promote active learning of Mother Tongue Languages next year!
International Friendship Day

The school commemorated International Friendship Day on the 10th April by having the Secondary Two classes make friendship bands for their friends. Each pupil was given a minimum of three coloured strings and a tutorial video on how to make the bands was shown to the pupils. A performance was also put up by the international students during morning assembly. They sang two songs to the whole school in their native languages. The performance was warmly welcomed by the students as the entire school cheered the performers on. Nur Sabrina from class 204 said, “I think that this special day was very enjoyable for all of us. I learnt to form friendship ties with others regardless of race and religion.” The Secondary Four international students went around the different classes to share about their customs and play their traditional games.
SYF Awards 2015

Chinese Dance - Certificate of Distinction

Band - Certificate of Distinction

Guzheng - Certificate of Distinction

Drama - Certificate of Accomplishment
On 22nd April, the Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) Showcase was held in the evening in the school hall. The Performing Arts CCAs presented their SYF performances to the school. Guzheng, Chinese Dance, Band and Choir performed two pieces each, ending the entire event with the English Drama Club’s performance, ‘Sublime Chaos’. Between each CCA’s performance, the President and Vice-President of each CCA were interviewed by the emcees, sharing the challenges their CCAs faced in preparation for the SYF Arts Presentation and how they managed to overcome their obstacles. “SYF has been a great experience and a remarkable feat. It has brought us everlasting memories. Because of the hardships I went through with my CCA mates, I have learnt to be more cooperative as well as understanding. It was truly a wonderful experience,” said Kimberley Tay from Band.
Xinmin held its 70th Speech Day on 17th April, Friday, from 3pm to 6pm. It was a joyous occasion as students were recognised for their hard work and outstanding achievements in the past year. The event began with the arrival of the Guest-of-Honour, Mr Chua Kee Teang, Chairman of Xinmin Alumni Association and Vice-Chairman of School Advisory Committee. Mrs Ong Hong Peng, our principal, gave the welcome address. Mr Chua gave the Guest-of-Honor speech, who shared his secrets to success. Numerous prizes were given out that day, with new additions of the Yap Fung Hong Awards for Sports and Outdoor Education, Heng Chin Soo Award for Visual, Creative and Performing Arts, Tung Sey Yew Award for Leadership in Uniformed Groups, Chew Peng Leng Award for Exemplary Service, and the Chew Peng Leng Scholarship. In addition, the Chinese Dance and Choir put up breathtaking performances that left the audience awe-struck. The event ended with a heartwarming and motivating speech by L.E.A.D Awardee & Valedictorian, Dexter Tan Ying Jie of class 404 (2014) followed by the singing of the school song. It was certainly a success, with Seow Simin of 303 saying, “I am very honoured to have been part of this year’s Speech Day, and I hope that this will not be my last.”
Night to Day Run

On 15 May 2015, the school held the Night to Day Run 3 in commemoration of the school’s 70th anniversary. Each CCA was split into groups of 14 and every group ran a total of 70km. There were 2 sessions, the day and night sessions. Our Principal, Mrs Ong, Vice-Principal, Mr Chung and teachers also enthusiastically participated in this run. After the run, the students in the night session watched a movie named Coach Carter. This event ended successfully with Nicolas Loo from class 405 saying, “I think that the run was a thrilling experience as it allowed all the CCAs to come together and cheer one another on during the run. The run allowed the CCAs to interact with one another and was also a chance to help us relieve stress after our examinations. It was a rare opportunity to forge closer bonds with members from CCAs other than your own and create new friendships as well.”
Post-Exam Activities

From 25th May to 29th May 2015, the Secondary 1 to 3 students participated in various post-exam activities.

Secondary 1

The Secondary 1 students took part in a Bridge Building Competition. Students were required to build a bridge that could withstand loads without bending or falling apart. Class 108 was the champion of the competition. On Day 2, the Secondary 1 students had inter-class games namely Tchoukball and Soccer for boys and Badminton and Captain’s Ball for girls. Students showed perseverance and sportsmanship throughout the games and their efforts paid off with class 105 clinching the overall champion. On Day 3, they participated in a learning journey to the Singapore Discovery Centre to learn more about military life. The highlight of this learning journey was a show with special effects. The students saw how NS men trained day and night, preparing themselves to defend Singapore in times of crisis. Secondary 1 students did clay sculpting with the theme of XMS70. “This allows the students to be creative and learn how to plan thoroughly before doing anything,” said Hu Xiang Shi of class 103. Overall, the post exam activities for the Secondary 1 students were interesting and exciting. We are definitely looking forward to more engaging activities in future!
Secondary 2 By MARCUS CHUA

The Secondary 2 girls played Badminton and Captain’s ball, as well as Handball and Soccer for boys. The games promoted teamwork among students and allowed them to interact with their peers. Thereafter, they had a mini art workshop, where all students made their own wire sculptures. They also visited Polyclinics in Singapore for tours, and the Land Transport Authority headquarters for a talk. “I think that the post-exam activities were extremely fun. I was able to participate in the inter-class games and I enjoyed it immensely,” said Zong Yun from class 203. The Secondary 2 Normal Academic students went for a dragon-boating course from which they benefited greatly.

Secondary 3 By SELVIRA MELIA

Multi-Sports Carnival

The Secondary Three students started off their post-exam activities on 25th May with a Multi- Sports Carnival, where the students got to try out new sports that were not usually in the Physical Education curriculum, such as Archery, Golf and Dodgeball. The students took turns to play the new sports every hour.
3E Camp

The 4 Days and 3 Night Secondary Three Express Camp, organised by SP Campers started on 26th May. The students went through many engaging activities, including the High Elements, where the students conquered their fear of heights by going through activities such as Rockclimbing, Abseiling and the Flying Fox. They also experienced outdoor cooking and SP Advance Rescue Tactics. The camp ended with a bang when each class presented a performance and their class cheered during the campfire night. Joycelyn Teo from class 301 said, “This was a fresh and unforgettable experience which I had learnt a lot from.”

3N Camp

The 3N Camp, held in Johor, had the students involved in many activities, including a Night Confidence Walk on the first night. Other activities included kayaking at Johor River, trekking at Pelepah Waterfall and Rice planting. Yun Ting from class 307 said, “The camp was tough but it was a fun and good experience!”
Secondary Two Drama-in Curriculum Showcase

The school held a Drama Showcase on 28th May 2015 at 7pm in the school multi-purpose hall, which was a culmination of the Secondary Two teams drama enrichment in Semester 1. In line with the school’s 70th Anniversary celebrations, the students went through the process of dramatising scripts based on the stories of the founding principals and alumni members of Xinmin. On the actual day, the multi-purpose hall was filled with parents and Secondary Two pupils who cheered for the performers so as to support them and boost their confidence. Class 204 won first place, 205 second and 203 third. Class 202 received the consolation prize. All the teams received prizes from the vice-principal, Mr Chung, at the end of the day. “I am happy to be able to perform in front of my peers and parents. I will never forget the atmosphere in the hall when my classmates gave us their fullest support,” said Muhammad Nabil, a performer from class 204.
Interview with Top Students

L.E.A.D Awardee & Valedictorian

Tan Ying Jie Dexter

How did you feel immediately after receiving your O-level results?
I was relieved and rather happy after receiving my results as I knew that all the hard work and effort I put in over the past years had paid off.

Are you satisfied with your O-level results?
I am quite satisfied with my O-level results as it was better than the goals I had set for myself. However, I felt that there was room for improvement especially in English Language.

What techniques or study skills did you employ while studying for the O-levels that you would like to share with your juniors?
I always planned ahead and started revision early, although the O-levels were still many months away. Also, a piece of advice I always give to juniors is to sleep early as burning the midnight oil just to finish revising a chapter is not going to help in the long run, especially when you can’t concentrate during lessons the next day.

How many hours did you study daily? Did you have time to meet with friends?
Although I did not really keep track of the exact number of hours I studied daily, I made sure to make use of most of my free time to revise the topics which I had conceptual problems with. Although I didn’t really have any time to meet up with friends before the O-levels, I reminded myself that once the O-levels were over, I would have a lot of time to catch up with them.

Did you ever feel like giving up while studying for the O-levels? When and why?
It was a stressful year, especially during the last few months before the O-levels. However, proper time management and planning made the preparation phase much easier as I had a rough gauge of what I was doing and I knew that everything was under control.

Who did you turn to during those times? How did he or she help you?
When I needed help, my friends and teachers were always there for me. If not for their support in academic and non-academic areas, I would not have been able to achieve such results and I would not have enjoyed my stay in Xinmin.

What is one thing you wish you could have done better?
I did not do very well for English Language in the O-levels and I wish I had spent more time honing my skills for the subject. Just using the daily morning reading sessions was insufficient to get a good grade for the subject.

Do you have any advice to give to the present Xinmin students?
Enjoy your time in Xinmin as many of the friends you make here and the memories you make will stay with you for a long time. Growing through your teen years is a once-in-a-lifetime event, so live it to the fullest and make sure that when you look back, you won’t have any regrets.

What is your fondest memory of Xinmin?
I enjoyed my journey in Xinmin and would have to say that if any part of the journey was missing, the journey would have been very different. However, if I had to pinpoint a particular part of my stay which was extremely memorable, it would have to be the time which I spent with my class, 404 (2014). There was never a dull moment when we were together as we had a strong bond, in our own unique way.

Now that the O-levels are over, what is your next goal in life?
My next goal is to enjoy my JC life and do well in the A-levels.

(Dexter is currently in Year 1 at Nanyang Junior College.)
How did you feel immediately after receiving your N-level results?
I was shocked and confused, but was slightly relieved too.

Are you satisfied with your N-level results?
I was satisfied at first but after looking through my score, I was disappointed because I felt that I could have done better.

What techniques or study skills did you employ while studying for the N-levels that you would like to share with your juniors?
I would always look for my teachers after school for extra help. I was always afraid to ask certain questions in class to clear my doubts so I would always ask my teachers for extra time after school to clear my doubts. I prefer to study alone and with a timetable planned properly. That ensured that I gave the same amount of attention to all of my subjects instead of avoiding the ones that I hated, which happened to be my weakest subjects. Another technique I found useful was to focus on my weak topics before looking at the whole subject. For example, I always disliked Chemistry because there were a lot of topics I was weak in. However, I kept looking for my teachers to clear the doubts I had and soon, it turned out to be a rather fun subject.

How many hours did you study daily? Did you have time to meet with friends?
It varied throughout the week and the number of subjects I wanted to study that particular day. I would study around 1-2 hours on weekdays as it was pretty tiring after long hours of school. On weekends, I would attempt to spend 5 to 6 hours studying. I would try to revise more subjects on the weekends too. I never really had the habit of meeting up with friends as I prefer to stay home, so it did not bother me much.

Did you ever feel like giving up while studying for the N-levels? When and why?
I felt like giving up every time I sat down in front of the textbooks, especially with many strange-looking equations staring back at me. However, the biggest urge to quit was when the examination date was nearing. I kept feeling that I was lagging behind on all my subjects as I had no time to catch up on my weak subjects.

Who did you turn to during those times? How did he or she help you?
I turned to my teachers, friends and family. They would lend me their listening ears as I whined to them about the stress that I was facing; I had to tell someone instead of bottling my feelings up. Ultimately, I knew that I had to pick myself up and carry on.

What is one thing you wish you could have done better?
Although I wished to do better in my weaker subjects, I am also happy that I had improved a lot.

Do you have any advice to give to the present Xinmin students?
Find your own motivation and have a clear idea of what you want. We all want to score well but we may become lazy along the way. You have to find motivation to carry on and stop being lazy. It will be hard to sit down and focus on studying in the first few months but soon you will be thankful that you did.

What is your fondest memory of Xinmin?
There are too many fond memories to list and some I consider too personal to share here. Xinmin had seen me grow throughout the years from a clueless lower secondary student to a more rounded individual now. I am thankful for the memories that Xinmin had given me.

Now that the N-levels are over, what is your next goal in life?
My next goal in life is to complete Polytechnic with good results. It is still hard for me to decide what my next goal is when I can barely digest the fact that I have just finished secondary school.

(Angeline is currently in Ngee Ann Polytechnic.)
How did you feel immediately after receiving your O-level results?
I was very thankful as my hard work for the many months of preparation had paid off.

Are you satisfied with your O-level results?
I am rather satisfied with my results as it was a great improvement from my preliminary examinations. More importantly, it took me where I hoped to be and that is Nanyang Junior College.

What techniques or study skills did you employ while studying for the O-levels that you would like to share with your juniors?
During revision, I usually drew mind maps or tables to link different ideas and organise my flow of thoughts. I also used acronyms to help me remember the key points. Memorising may not be the best way out because it is tough to link them together when writing an explanation in tests or examinations. However, the most important thing to do is practise. With practise, not only can you understand how to apply the topics and concepts, you expose yourself to examination-styled questions to help you tackle questions in an examination. Another technique would be reading newspapers or books as current examples are more convincing if used in an explanation compared to rather outdated ones in the textbook. However, there might be little time for that as there are many subjects to juggle with.

How many hours did you study daily? Did you have time to meet with friends?
I studied for about 2 hours a day after my homework and projects (if any). I do not believe in studying long hours for all my subjects. My way of studying is to absorb key ideas and concepts and articulate them without reference, especially for Humanities subjects. If one tries to squeeze and memorise everything in the textbook, it is not beneficial because firstly, your grasp of the subject would be very weak and secondly, you may neglect other subjects and may need to read and understand them again. During study break and the weeks nearing the O-levels, I spent up to 8 hours daily reading 3 subjects at most. I still had time to meet my friends and sometimes we even studied together. Even if I did not have a lot of time for them, they understood because we were working towards a common goal.

Did you ever feel like giving up while studying for the O-levels? When and why?
There were times; especially near the O-levels, when the stress was so high that I wished I did not have to take the examination. I was afraid that I could not handle the stress and would get a mental blackout in the examination hall. There are always fears to face, so I just did my best and my effort and determination are seen in the results.

Who did you turn to during those times? How did he or she help you?
I usually talked to my best friend because we were experiencing the same kind of stress. We realised that all we needed to do was to vent. Then we could continue to work on our revision. Her motivation was of great importance to me and I am truly grateful that I had her with me on this journey.

What is one thing you wish you could have done better?
I had high expectations for my Mathematics results as Mathematics is my strongest subject, compared to the others. However, I only achieved an A2 for my Additional Mathematics paper, I was very disappointed. I wish I could have managed my time in the examination better as I would then have sufficient time to check my answers and attain a better grade.

Do you have any advice to give to the present Xinmin students?
Keep working. Hard work is magical. It can help you get a distinction even for subjects you had been weak in in the past. With hard work and determination, you realise that you can actually conquer your fears and exceed your limits. I have tried it and it has worked for me.

What is your fondest memory of Xinmin?
Xinmin’s school spirit at any school event, be it Chinese New Year celebrations, Sports Day, Inter-School Combined Sports Meet or National Day. I can see and feel Xinmin as one big family. We cheer for our students, our teachers and our school because everyone of us is truly proud of it. We appreciate each other’s efforts during school games and performances as we see each other as family. The spirit is strong and I still feel that I am part of Xinmin even though I have left the school.

Now that the O-levels are over, what is your next goal in life?
My next goal in life is to achieve good A-level results so I can go to the university of my choice and do the course I have been wanting to do since Secondary 2.
How do you feel about receiving this award?
I feel that many of my other friends who have contributed greatly to the school are more deserving of this award. I am not as deserving as they are but I am grateful that the school has seen and appreciated my efforts for the student body and the community.

Who or what inspired you to serve the school and the community?
Mr Ethen Ong is the main person who has inspired me to serve the school and the community as he has opened up my ideas about being an empathetic leader. His teachings and stories have made me think a lot about the differences between a good leader and a great leader. The latter has empathy and humility. I have changed from an introverted follower to an extroverted leader who is empathetic and approachable.

What are the challenges faced in serving the school and the community?
The challenges were communication and coordination between the planning committee and the participants of events such as cross-country, where cheers needed to be taught to the juniors within a short period of time. As for coordination, it was a greater challenge as we all had different personalities, strengths and weaknesses. There were also disagreements and conflicts which we had to learn to manage.

How did you overcome those challenges? Who helped you?
Pertaining to communication, we made use of common breaks and organised a cheer-teaching session with the juniors where we practised the cheers with them and bonded with them before the cross-country. It was rather effective as that day, most of the juniors were able to cheer loudly for one another. To improve our teamwork, we had many bonding sessions where we learnt about our strengths and weaknesses and worked out how we could complement one another to achieve a harmonious work environment. We played ice breakers and competitive games to know one another better.

How did you manage both your studies and serving in the many school community programmes?
Striking a balance requires more than good time management. I learnt that certain sacrifices have to be made. I always try to plan my time before I start so I know what is important and what is urgent. A good plan rarely fails so most of the time, I was able to finish my tasks on time and with quality. I have Mr Ethen Ong to thank for teaching me these essential skills of time management.

What are the values you have learnt from serving the school and the community?
The most important value I have learnt is empathy which is being sensitive to the needs of others. To be able to serve well, I first have to understand the problems and the best way to find out is to interact with people, be it the student body or the low-income group or the elderly. From many occasions of interaction, I truly understand the meaning of aid. Sometimes the aid needed is beyond money or food. It is psychological aid such as talking to the elderly living in one-room flats or at old folks’ homes. I have learnt other values such as humility and responsibility while I serve the community. When I put myself in the shoes of the less fortunate, I am able to help the needy better and appreciate my comfortable life much more. In Cambodia, I used the knowledge I had to teach those who were not given a chance to learn. My team and I taught English and Mathematics to the children there. I realised that I am responsible to help those who need it and I will do it with empathy.

What is one memorable experience you have of any of the school community programmes?
The most memorable experience was the service learning trip to Cambodia. It was the first time I went overseas to do voluntary work. A rural countryside in a Third World country is vastly different from Singapore. Besides helping the children learn English, I was learning it the tough way, to get my ideas across. The discomfort that the children could not understand what I was saying motivated me to learn harder. The easily-contented nature of the people, especially the youth, made me reflect a lot on my attitude in life. I used to complain about the smallest things but many service learning projects have improved my character, especially this one.

What words or advice do you have for those with passion to serve the school and the community?
Stop at nothing. Obstacles will help you grow to be a stronger person. The joy you feel when you serve surpasses months of hard work, blood, sweat and tears. Nothing is comparable to when you see the wide smiles on them or their generous words of thanks. You know someone has benefitted because of you. You know you have made a difference and you will be remembered for a long time. Make that impact today.

(Jenin is currently in Year 1 at Nanyang Junior College.)
How did you feel immediately after receiving your N-level results?
After receiving my ‘N’ level results, I was happy. All my hard work had paid off. Not only that, I know that I did my best during the examination. I am very thankful to my teachers for teaching and guiding me for the past 4 years, as well as my family, especially my mother for her support all these years. Ms Anny helped me a lot during my upper secondary years too. She guided me well to be a better me. She was also very caring towards her students and very approachable.

Are you satisfied with your results?
Yes, I am satisfied with my N-level results.

What techniques or study skills did you employ while studying for the N-levels that you would like to share with your juniors?
• Always keep your study table neat and tidy.
• Do up a reliable and reasonable daily task list.
• Have sufficient hours of sleep and don’t skip meals.

How many hours did you study daily? Did you have time to meet with friends?
I didn’t take note of how many hours I spent studying on a daily basis. I only went to bed after I completed my daily tasks. I always had a short break after every task I did. During my study break, I didn’t meet my friends for any catch-up sessions or group study. I only met up with them in school for consultation purposes. We chatted through WhatsApp or SMS and after the exams, we had a lot of meet-up sessions such as to watch movie together.

Did you ever feel like giving up while studying for the N-level? When and why?
I felt like giving up when I was revising for my O-level Elementary Mathematics papers. This was because I felt drained after just completing my N-level exams. Nonetheless, I regained my energy and motivation to complete my remaining papers.

Who did you turn to during those times? How did he or she help you?
During those times, I turned to my sister. We would often have heart-to-heart talks during dinner or before bed time. She helped me by consistently giving me moral support. Not only that, she believed that I was capable of doing well for my national exams. My other family members also played a part in supporting me. They gave me their support and always believed in me. My family was my main source of motivation to do well for my national exams as I didn’t wish to disappoint them.

What is one thing you wish you could have done better?
One thing I wish I could have done better would be helping my family, especially with my grandparents. While I was studying in Xinmin, I couldn’t help my grandparents to go to their check-ups at the Singapore General Hospital or Hougang Polyclinic. This was because of my long and busy school hours. I wish I could have been able to make some time to help them with their visits.

Do you have any advice to give to the present Xinmin students?
• Complete all the school work (homework, assignments etc.) diligently.
• Treasure the time spent with your classmates as well as CCA mates.

What is your fondest memory of Xinmin?
My fondest memory of Xinmin is the long hours I spent with the Xinmin Symphonic Band (XMSB). I treasure every band practice. Even though some practices were bitter due to the scolding and punishments, I learnt how to be more disciplined and work together as a team. XMSB is my warmest memory of Xinmin because we were like a family. We spent our after-school hours and Saturday mornings together making music. We motivated and helped one another. We didn’t leave anyone behind (in terms of music skills and bonding sessions. We worked hard as a band to give the very best performance. The high demand of teamwork to play together as a band made all of us close to one another.

Now that the N-levels are over, what is your next goal in life?
My next goal in life will be to give my support to my sister as she will be performing in the SYF and taking her national exams this year. Besides that, I aim to do well consistently in my post-secondary education as well as to live with a purpose in my life.

(Jannah is currently in Singapore Polytechnic.)
Heng Chin Soo Award for Visual, Creative and Performing Arts
Jaserie Si Yan Ting

How do you feel about receiving this award?
I feel that my efforts were paid off and all the hard work put in dance was worth it.

What do you think or feel about your CCA?
I feel that my CCA is very challenging and it requires the cooperation of every single dancer in the troupe to piece together the entire dance as one.

What is one memorable experience for you in your CCA?
The most memorable experience for me is the SYF 2013 that I took part with my fellow dancers. As I was not able to participate in SYF 2011 when I was Secondary 1, I felt that the one in 2013 was very important to me. I remember the entire process of working together with my dance mates and enduring all the pain and hardships together so that we could give our best on the day of the SYF. Those were 5 precious minutes on stage!

As a leader in your CCA, how do you lead your CCA mates?
As a CCA leader, I often try to encourage my fellow dance mates, give them advice and feedback of their performances so as to push them to greater heights.

How do you think your CCA helped develop your leadership?
My CCA has taught me to manage situations when conflicting interests arise among the dancers as I played the role of mediator to try to resolve the conflicts and issues among them. It is a good skill to acquire as a leader.

What were the difficulties you faced in your CCA? How did you overcome them?
I found it particularly difficult to balance my studies and my CCA as Secondary 3 was a crucial year to build up the foundation of subjects for Secondary 4. I also found it hard to relay instructions and directions effectively from my instructor to the dancers. I had a senior whom I was close to and I would talk to her and get advice from her so as to better lead the troupe. I had to emphasise the importance of constant pacing of work load and studies. With the help of my teachers, I was able to catch up with the lessons I missed and topics I was unsure of.

What are the values you have learnt in your CCA?
Dance has taught me to be strong, persistent, and resilient and most importantly, I have learnt the importance of teamwork.

What words or advice do you have for your juniors?
"The person you should try to be better than is the person you were yesterday." I feel that in dance it is not about the position you are given in a dance but instead about growing and improving on your skills and basics every step of the way.

(Jaserie is currently in Singapore Polytechnic.)
Tung Sey Yew Award for Leadership in Uniformed Groups
Tan Jin Heng

How do you feel about receiving this award?
I feel honoured to receive this award as it is not easily achieved. I would like to thank Xinimin and my teachers for giving me this opportunity and honing my leadership skills.

What do you think or feel about your CCA?
I think that NCC is a CCA that can bring out the potential in you as you are given many opportunities to lead and teach your juniors and peers. It also teaches you to be disciplined and responsible for your actions. I feel that NCC in Xinmin is on the right track to achieve more for Xinmin with the introduction of many new activities.

What is one memorable experience for you in your CCA?
I think that the experience of planning a camp with my batch for the juniors was the most memorable experience. The planning and execution of the camp strengthened our bond and allowed us to grow.

As a leader in your CCA, how do you lead your CCA mates?
As a leader, I think being patient and understanding is important. There is no need for a line between seniors and juniors as it would strain relationships. Doing things together with your CCA mates can also help them respect you as they do not see you as an authoritative figure but instead as someone who they can turn to for help. This way, you have their respect and they have your respect as well.

How do you think your CCA has helped develop your leadership?
NCC has taught me to be independent, disciplined and responsible through the various camps and activities carried out by the school and NCC HQ.

What are the difficulties you faced in your CCA? How did you overcome them?
One difficulty I faced was the physical training every week as I was not as fit during my lower secondary years. Another difficulty I encountered after becoming the CSM of NCC was gaining the respect of my peers. I trained with my batchmates outside of CCA time to increase our fitness levels. Our seniors would also push and motivate us. As for gaining respect, I think time would show what you are capable of as a leader and your peers would slowly start to respect you as the CSM.

What are the values you have learnt in your CCA?
I have learnt to be more responsible and disciplined while performing my tasks in NCC. I also learnt to be more confident and not be afraid to make mistakes.

How did you manage both your CCA and studies?
I think time management and prioritising what comes first is very important to juggling CCA and studies. I tried to have a timetable to study each subject and if CCA camps were approaching, I set suitable deadlines for myself to meet so that the homework and stress level would not pile up. There was a period of time when stress kicked in but I wasn’t afraid to ask the teachers for help as they gave some really good advice.

What words or advice do you have for your CCA juniors?
I treasured my time in Xinmin and NCC as it forged some beautiful memories for me. Don’t hesitate to try out new things as you might end up with something rewarding!

(Jin Heng is currently in Year 1 at Anderson Junior College.)
How do you feel about receiving this award?
I feel privileged to receive such an award. It allows me to reflect on the period of time I have spent in Xinmin Rock Climbing. I am grateful to receive an award for something I love doing.

What do you think or feel about your CCA?
I think Rock Climbing is a unique CCA as most secondary schools do not have it. Our team is exposed to numerous competitions, such as the national competitions and competitions organised by other schools.

What is one memorable experience for you in your CCA?
The most memorable experience for me was when we begged our teachers to organise a competition in school. We succeeded. Our school had the honour to organise the first National School Bouldering Competition (NSBC) in 2013.

As a leader in your CCA, how do you lead your CCA mates?
I would try to understand everyone so that I could manage all the conflicts and train as a team. I believe that everyone plays an important part in the team and nobody’s needs should be neglected.

How do you think your CCA has helped develop your leadership?
Climbing is all about learning and improving ourselves. Learning to put your trust in the person holding your rope fosters relationships quickly. Forming good relationships is important for a leader.

What are the difficulties you faced in your CCA? How did you overcome them?
The most difficult problem I faced was when I felt like giving up climbing. I felt very frustrated with myself due to some simple exercises that I was not able to complete. My coach and Ms Cheryl Lie talked to me and reminded me about the interest that I had when I was in Secondary 1. They motivated me to press on.

What are the values you have learnt in your CCA?
I apply my CCA values, namely Studies, Attitude, Discipline, everyday and even now.

How did you manage both your CCA and studies?
The day after a CCA day, I would wake up early to complete my homework and do my revision. I believe that having sufficient sleep is important to students. I would also follow a timetable that I had planned for myself.

What words or advice do you have for your juniors?
Compared to other secondary schools, Xinmin has an excellent bouldering gym and speed wall. We also have 2 coaches Mr Yam and Mr Tay, both of whom are veterans in climbing. Without the teachers-in-charge, we would not have Rock Climbing. Moreover, our school invests huge sums of money in our CCA every year, so that we would be able to enjoy free usage of the climbing gym, participate in competitions and go for our annual trips to Malaysia. We should never take these for granted. I am proud to be a member of the Xinmin Rock Climbing Team.
How do you feel about receiving this award?
I am honoured and glad that my efforts were noticed and appreciated by the school.

What do you think or feel about your CCA?
I enjoyed my CCA which allowed me to meet many awesome teammates. I think Rock Climbing also brought out another side of me.

What is one memorable experience for you in your CCA?
I think that all my experiences were memorable as long as I was with my teammates, especially my batch. They were great people who supported one another, especially during competitions. Even if there was only one of us in the finals, they would always be at the competition venues to cheer the person on. I always enjoyed myself during training sessions and outings.

As a leader in your CCA, how did you lead your CCA mates?
I made sure everyone did things as a team, e.g. stretching, climbing the same route (and guiding those who fall behind). I always tried to look out for those who were left-out or feel demoralised and encouraged them.

How do you think your CCA has helped develop your leadership?
I think my CCA has developed my leadership greatly. I encountered a few situations when I had to step out of my comfort zone and start leading the team. I had never thought that I could lead others. I am thankful for this opportunity and the trust that the teachers gave me.

What are the difficulties you faced in your CCA? How did you overcome them?
A leader is usually more easily noticed when he or she is more outspoken and guides juniors well. There were times when my coaches, teachers, and CCA mates felt that I was not a leader because I was not outspoken. So I tried to be more confident and learnt from people who had better leadership than me. Teachers and coaches advised me on how to improve to be a better leader and how to lead others. I also attended leadership programmes which I found useful.

What are the values you have learnt in your CCA?
The 3 important values of my CCA are Discipline, Attitude and Studies; to be disciplined, have the right attitude in everything I do and maintain good academic results. I also learnt about teamwork. Though climbing is an individual activity, I felt that I did not win the competition for myself. The best feeling was when my whole team got into the finals in Secondary 2. I felt a sense of achievement back then because we were working together as a team.

How did you manage both your CCA and studies?
I always had a goal in my mind and worked towards it. When it was time to climb (e.g.during CCA), I would focus on climbing only. Otherwise, I would be focused on my studies.

What words or advice do you have for your juniors?
If you want it badly, you have to work hard for it. Climb hard and study hard, juniors. Go for it!

(Hui Shan is currently in Secondary 501 at Xinmin Secondary School.)