

THE RAFFLES WAVE




**RAFFLES
GIRLS' SCHOOL**

*Nurturing Daughters of a
Better Age*

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#OneNationTogether: In answering the rallying call of this year's theme for the National Day Parade, RGS came together to celebrate our nation's 52nd birthday in full force. Along with Guest-of-Honour Ms Isabel Vadiou Govind, founder of Joy Works, staff and students witnessed our Uniformed Groups in action during the parade segment, and were treated to the entertaining LuvSG skits put up by some of our Year 4 classes during the performance segment. The community singing brought the celebratory mood to a high as everyone huddled together and belted out familiar lyrics to songs such as 'We Will Get There' and 'Where I Belong'.

A DOUBLE CELEBRATION!



It was a memorable birthday for RGS on 12 August 2017 as we not only celebrated 138 years of staff and student achievements, but also marked yet another milestone in our New Campus project with a Groundbreaking Ceremony, symbolically laying the foundation for RGS to set a new benchmark in learning spaces. The dual celebration saw alumna Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Health and Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources gracing both events, which were held back-to-back, as Guest of Honour.



The symbolic ceremony of breaking ground sets the foundation for the new RGS campus @ Braddell.



The RGS Alumnae presented a cheque of \$100,000 to the school in their show of continuous support for our New Campus project.



One of the concert items during the celebration was a joint performance by the RGS Choir and String Ensemble of the song 'On the Wings of Song I Fly'.

HAPPY TEACHERS' DAY!

Captivating performances, a surprise item and rapturous cheering was the order of the day on 30 August, when students spared no effort to make their teachers feel like the superstars that they are on Teachers' Day. One of the performance items - a hilarious skit put together by the students from both English Drama and Chinese Drama - drew much laughter from their teachers as some of them found themselves parodied to a T by the student actors.



Student-fanclubs held up self-made posters for their superstar-teachers to cheer them on as they made their grand entrance into the Amphitheatre.



How many 'teachers' can you recognise in this photo?



A dramatic end to the celebration turned out to be a surprise skit by our talented teachers, who 'got into trouble' for turning up late for school!

A DAZZLING CULTURAL AFFAIR



Students had the opportunity to interact with the Getai performers and sing along to some well-known Mandarin songs. (Photo by Zhao Jinxin, Year 4, RGS Photographic Society)

Getai performers took over the Evelyn Norris stage on 21 July 2017, entertaining and educating students with their vibrant costumes, energetic personalities and wealth of knowledge on our unique local culture. As part of the activities organised for Mother Tongue Fortnight, which was also held in conjunction with Racial Harmony Day, the Getai showcase was specially curated for students to learn more about the history and development of Getai, which is deeply rooted in Singapore Chinese culture.

HEY NOW, YOU'RE AN ALL-STAR



Along with the rest of the selected all-stars, Nicole, Charmaine (third and fourth from left respectively) and Natasha (extreme right) will represent Singapore on an overseas trip to Shanghai in October with fellow Junior NBA All-Stars from around South-East Asia. They will have the opportunity to witness a live match between the reigning NBA champions in a pre-season game.

Year 2 Basketball students Natasha Sanghar, Ng Kai Xin Charmaine and Nicole Tng Kai Ning were amongst the eight boys and girls selected to become a Junior National Basketball Association (NBA) Singapore All-Star! They had to go through a three-day training camp that included drills and were eventually chosen from a group of 200 boys and girls.

*For more Achievements, please click [here](#).

**PORTRAIT OF A RAFFLESIAN
DRIVEN TO SERVE**

When she first started volunteering at Siglap Community Centre to help children with their schoolwork, RGS alumna Lim Zhi Yi Vanessa was understandably apprehensive. Only 14 years old at that time, she was unsure of how to deal with children, much less be of any help to them. However, as time went by, she came to realise that the children would look forward to seeing her each week, whether it is to help them with their corrections, give them spelling tests or to teach them concepts that they could not quite grasp. Evidently, her initial fears were unfounded, and four years on, she is still helping the children there, and has taken on more responsibilities that come with having to manage an entire class of children.

Now in Year 5 at Raffles Institution, Vanessa is also part of Community Advocates, a service-based CCA that organises projects and events to help raise awareness for various causes. She has also started volunteering at Meet-the-People Sessions for her neighbourhood and has since joined the youth grassroots efforts in the area.

This unwavering dedication to serving the community is something that may be seen as an achievement to most people, given the awards she has received. However, for Vanessa, it is almost an innate ability and a constant in her life, one that she attributes to the inspirational teachings of her grandmother. We speak to Vanessa, who is also the recipient of the 2017 Rafflesian Award, to find out about her community work and her RGS experience.



Vanessa with her Debate batchmates of 2016.

Myriad Experiences through the RP

"I've come to discover that I love gathering new and exciting experiences because there's so much to learn. In *Odyssey of the Mind*, I learnt about teamwork and creative problem solving. In *Debate*, I got the chance to expand my knowledge of the world and engage in intense intellectual battles that were always thrilling for me. In the areas of *Art and Science*, my participation in competitions were out of my passion for the subjects, and I also went for attachments with the A*STAR science institutes because I find research exciting and am considering becoming a researcher one day. All of these programmes are evidently very different, but one thing I enjoyed through my participation in all of them is having the opportunity to meet and work with different people."



Vanessa (Class of 2016) is the recipient of the 2017 Rafflesian Award. She was also one of two recipients of the inaugural RGS Alumnae Award in 2015.

Her RGS Experience

"It was a wild ride filled with some of the most memorable experiences. I remember that towards the end of primary six, I had a conversation with my cousin, who is an ex-RGS girl, and she gave me this piece of advice: "At RGS, you must find your own niche and space, and that is where you'll excel". She was right; I'm lucky to have had the chance to explore my interests and passions, to develop various aspects of myself and finally, discover my place in not one but four spaces - Science, Congress, Debate and Art... I don't think I'll be forgetting my RGS journey anytime soon."

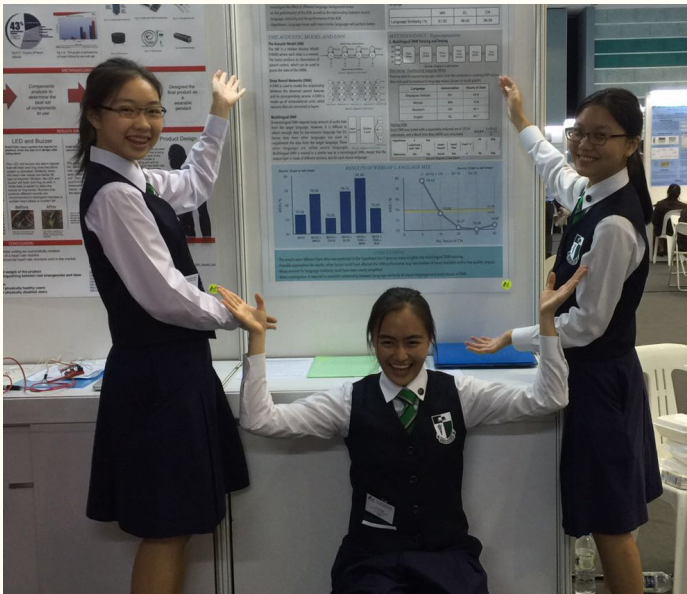
Growing & Learning from Failures

"I believe that I've grown as a person because I've experienced failures. When I was first elected as Speaker of Student Congress in 2015, I didn't quite know what to expect. During the first few months, I felt like I was thrown into the deep end of the pool because there were so many things I didn't know like how to write emails to teachers, how to write proposals and how to present something in front of the student population. At that time, my Exco and I were really just seven ambitious noobs trying our best not to fail because there were people counting on us to get things done. But fail we did - Our first Congress survey was almost nine pages long because we made some bad choices. As a result, we got a very low response rate. After that, we had a reflection session, the first of many to come and looking back, I think I was extremely lucky to have a team of like-minded Exco members. They were humble, open-minded and understanding, and did not waste time blaming each other, but instead focused on working with our teachers to learn from our mistakes."



Vanessa with her Congress Exco (2015-2016) at Student Leaders' Investiture 2015.

PORTRAIT OF A RAFFLESIAN DRIVEN TO SERVE



Vanessa with her Science Mentorship Programme (SMP) team mates Ang Hui Shan (centre) and Estelle Lee (right) at the Singapore Science and Engineering Fair (SSEF) 2016 presenting their project on building the first Singapore Hokkien Speech Recognizer.

Serving the Community

"My involvement in community work can be separated into two main types: short-term or ad-hoc volunteer work, and my regular service. For the former, I usually sign up for volunteer opportunities together with my peers for causes that I find meaningful, such as at Willing Hearts Soup Kitchen or with Youth for Causes teams. For regular service, I volunteer once a week at Siglap Community Centre under a programme called Homework Café, which was set up to give children from troubled family backgrounds a conducive environment to study and seek help with schoolwork. The children mainly come from the rental blocks behind the Community Centre, and we get anywhere between 10-15 kids every night. No matter how busy I am, I would go down because I know the children are counting on my help. I feel that such programmes can really have a lasting impact on the lives of these kids in terms of keeping them focused in their studies and giving them a slightly more equal footing as their peers in school. I also started volunteering at Meet-the-People sessions and joined the youth grassroots efforts of my neighbourhood community. Getting more involved in grassroots efforts within my community is something I've not really explored before in my community service journey, and I'm glad to have embarked on it. It may be tough at the start (I'm still learning as well), but it'll really open your eyes to the people living in your community. At the end of the day, it is a good place to learn things that you probably will not learn in school."

New RGS Campus

"There will always be certain parts of the Anderson campus that I'll miss, but mostly because it is associated with all the memories I have of the time I have spent in those places, such as the Congress Room, the OM workspace, the library, the Amphitheatre and even J block. But looking at the empty Amphitheatre will not bring back memories of school celebrations as much as photographs of the events will. So I'm glad that our new school campus will have a similar Amphitheatre so that these RGS events continue to be memories shared by RGS girls past, present and future. I believe it is the people who make the home, and as long as the RGS spirit continues to burn bright, there will always be something to remind us of the RGS we knew."

Favourite RGS Event

"It is definitely our annual Open House because of all the fun we have organising it and the positive, vibrant atmosphere that envelopes the school whenever it happens. I remember attending Open House when I was in primary six and immediately loved the energy. I think the vibrancy of our school culture was what drew me to RGS in the first place. From the overly-excited students at the CCA booths ready to attack unsuspecting visitors with stickers, to the enthusiastic student ambassadors leading tours around the school, along with teachers and students running all over the place, and at the centre of it all, non-stop cheering and entertaining performances at the Amphitheatre. It always feels like a lot is going on at one time, and there is so much excitement and energy. I love it!"



Vanessa with her Odyssey of the Mind (OM) team (Problem 3 Division 2) and their beloved coach Ms Sandy Leow at the OM World Finals 2014 held at Iowa State University.

A Family that Inspires

"My family really has had the greatest influence on all aspects of my character, and every day, they inspire me to do better and to be a better person. My grandmother, whom I call 'ah ma', taught me empathy and inspired me to do more for the underprivileged through community service. From humble beginnings, ah ma's recounts of her past were my first insights into hardship and poverty. Despite being uneducated and illiterate, ah ma speaks wisely about the importance of compassion, and always believes in forgiveness and kindness, and doing right by others. My mother is my role model when it comes to work ethics. Whether it is in leadership or personal commitments, she stands by being professional and responsible, and has taught me to be disciplined in setting my priorities and managing my time. My father constantly inspires me to adopt a positive attitude towards life, to be willing to try new things, and to not be afraid of failure. At the same time, he always reminds me to be humble, to be grateful for the things that I have, and to treat the people around me with respect."

Hopes for RGS

"I hope that no matter where the campus is physically located, the Rafflesian community will stay as strong as ever, and that RGS continues to be a place where students are encouraged to develop themselves in ways they have never considered, discover things about themselves they never knew, and grow to be all-rounded, confident, compassionate people grounded in their roots and values. Last of all, I hope that more RGS alumnae can return and give back to the school because this supportive community of educators has given us so much, and I believe that the Rafflesian identity is one that stays with us for life."