



# Growing People Potential

What matters is people, and people matter most. Life at work in NParks is all about improving our systems and developing our people to their best potential.

NParks believes in its people and in nurturing their talents. This comes from our conviction that maintaining the Garden City requires not just good policies, and talented and committed staff, but also giving them the proper management and training that they need to ensure that they are equipped with tools that allow them to realise their passion.

## Nurturing Our Talent

As in previous years, continuous training and upgrading of our skills remained a focal point for NParks. One of our proudest achievements was to improve the efficiency and efficacy of our tree maintenance operations so as to meet the high expectations of the public. Here, NParks is committed to providing training opportunities to develop greater professionalism among our arboriculture staff as tree carers.

In year 2002, 30 NParks officers met the standards and attained the status of Certified Arborist, a designation conferred by the International Society of Arboriculture, which is an internationally recognised body of the highest standing in this field. In addition, NParks has in the pipeline, arrangements to conduct training and to facilitate certification to external parties in the arboricultural industry – officers who are providing tree care in the Town Councils and also those in the private sector.

The Trade Certificate on Horticulture from Singapore Botanic Garden's Training and Certification Branch also continues to provide an avenue for supervisors to upgrade themselves while graduates from the Diploma in Horticulture and Landscape Management, a joint programme with the Ngee Ann Polytechnic, filled middle management positions in the industry.

NParks also conducted a comprehensive assessment of the skills levels of our 250 horticulture workers. The project, which received strong support from the Amalgamated Union of Public Daily Rated Workers, aims to certify employees under the National Skills Recognition System. This enables NParks employees to be nationally recognised for their horticulture skills.



32. Meeting international standards –  
30 NParks officers attained status  
of Certified Arborists.



## The Continuous Learning Journey



In line with our focus to ensure a holistic and systematic approach to staff development, NParks has embarked on a programme to achieve the People Developer Standard administered by SPRING Singapore. A new competency-based training system was used to identify staff's training gaps, which were then translated as a Total NParks Learning Plan. Training in 2002 focused on innovation, communication and service quality, supporting NPark's goals of enhanced green recreation and community-based programmes. NParks continued to achieve the public sector target of 100 learning hours per staff through increased in-house training.

In addition, NParks also sponsors talented staff on a wide variety of local and overseas certification courses, including skills certifications, undergraduate and post-graduate degrees and executive development in areas that will develop the core competencies of NParks. Currently, two staff are reading recreation and leisure management at the undergraduate level while another three are pursuing post-graduate degrees in public policy, environmental management and landscape architecture.

## Serving Our Community

NParks remains deeply committed to our conviction that we must contribute to our community at large. This is reflected in the fact that 'care and compassion' forms one of our core corporate values. This year, NParks staff showed that their hearts were in the right place by holding two blood donations drives, where a total of more than 140 staff volunteered to donate blood.

More than 60 NParks staff also visited the ASEAN Women Welfare Association Community Home for the Senior Citizens in July 2002 to help with domestic chores at the Home and to talk to the senior citizens, providing them companionship and care.

To reach out to children, NParks arranged the Eco-Garden Educational Guided Tour at the Singapore Botanic Gardens for Fei Yue Family Service Centre and Serangoon Moral Family Service Centre in September 2002. During this tour, NParks staff shared with the children facts on interesting, unusual and useful plants growing in the Eco-Gardens.



33. Showing that NParks cares, over 140 staff participated in the blood donation drives.

34. Volunteering time and expertise for the community.

## Towards Excellence

The year saw NParks Deputy Chairman Mr Khoo Chin Hean being awarded the Public Administration Gold Medal.

Among NParks management, Director (Resource Management) Mrs Ng Siew Yin and Director (Parks Development) Mr Yeo Meng Tong were conferred awards. Mrs Ng received the Public Administration Silver Medal while Mr Yeo received the Public Administration Bronze Medal.

The MND Investiture Awards Ceremony was held on 31 December 2002.

Mr Abdul Rahman bin Sultan (Assistant Planning Manager), Mr Mohd Zahid bin Ibrahim (Technical Officer), Miss Soh Jeng Har (Library Officer) and Mr Tan Swee Kwang (Assistant Parks Manager) received Efficiency Medals for their sterling work performance. In addition, 26 NParks officers were awarded the Long Service Medal for more than 25 years of dedicated service.

NParks was also awarded the Singapore H.E.A.L.T.H (Helping Employees Achieve Life-Time Health) Award (Silver) by the Health Promotion Board on 13 September

2002 for the promotion of health activities among staff.

NParks also clinched two Silver and one Bronze awards at the National Quality Circle Convention. The teams from Building Management Unit (TLS), Mechanical & Electrical Unit (TLS) and Parks Management (West) took part in this annual event organised by SPRING Singapore to recognise the efforts of quality circles and work improvement teams as they strive to continuously improve and excel in their place of work.

This year, NParks won two Gold and two Silver awards at the Public Service ExCEL Convention which is aimed at providing a platform for public officers to showcase their projects to improve work processes in the public sector.

The teams SBG Nature Warden (Singapore Botanic Gardens) and Strike Force (Transport Unit from Technical & Logistics Division) obtained Gold awards for their projects. In addition, the team Green Angels (Nursery Services of Technical & Logistics Division) won the NOVA award for their project to improve

the process of nurturing and harvesting instant trees. The award is given to teams which are able to offer innovative alternatives to existing practices.

At the ministry level, NParks received four awards which were presented at the MND Innovation Launch cum ExCEL Award Ceremony. These included the 'Dynamic WIT award' in recognition of the significant progress NParks had made in WITs and the NOVA Gold Award for the Nursery Green Angels team. For the individual category, Silver Award for 'Best Suggestion' went to Mr Izzul Haq whilst Mr Wong Wai Sung from Building Management received Merit Award for Quality Suggester.

Finally, NParks officially launched its Innovation Journey in October 2002 at SAFRA Toa Payoh. The objective of the launch was to raise awareness on the importance of innovation in NParks. Staff also witnessed management's commitment through the signing of the Innovation Charter.

35. The launch of the Innovation Journey signifies the importance of innovation to NParks.



## Ensuring Employee Wellness

Staff who have served many years with the then Parks & Recreation Department and the now NParks, were given recognition for their long service in March 2003. Some 128 employees received their Long Service Awards.

The award for the longest service this year was for a staff member with 50 years of service.

NParks held its annual A.C.T.I.V.E. (All Companies Together In Various Exercises) Day at Marina City Park in September 2002. Dedicated to promoting a healthy lifestyle among staff, the event brought together NParks staff for a mass workout session conducted by instructors from the Singapore Fitness Instructors Association and a fitness assessment. Participants could choose from either a 2km walk or a 2.4km run. Participants who performed well were awarded certificates (Bronze, Silver or Gold) from Singapore Sports Council.

NParks also held its Family Day at the Singapore Zoological Gardens in March 2003. The sunny fun-filled day at the lush green environment of the zoo saw NParks

staff enjoying the wildlife and the exciting performances by the primates and other animals.

Finally, recognising that both parents play equal roles in a family, NParks extended the child-care leave scheme to fathers. Many NParks fathers benefited from the five days of leave per child, alternating child-care duties with their spouses.



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36. NParks Family Day presented an opportunity for staff and family to interact in an informal setting.

37. Moving towards a healthy workforce.