



# CHIJ ST JOSEPH'S CONVENT

## AUGUST NEWSLETTER

2017

Dear SJC Community, here are highlights from our July and August calendar.

### NATIONAL DAY AWARDS 2017

Congratulations to our principal, Ms Susie Ho, and our Physics Subject-Head, Mr Yau Ming Chin, for being conferred the *Public Administration Medal (Silver)* and the *Commendation Award* respectively in recognition of their contributions to the Education Service!

### RACIAL HARMONY DAY AND NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS 2017 - ONE NATION TOGETHER

During the annual RHD Celebrations in July, SJC seeks to guide students to truly understand the importance of racial and religious tolerance and harmony, that each and every one of them has an important role to play in maintaining peace and harmony in Singapore. As such, during the RHD assembly, students are provided yearly with the historical context of why RHD is celebrated. In class, during CCE lessons, students engaged in mature conversations about racial stereotypes and how to overcome these stereotypes as a nation. These discussions would be continued in August when as part of National Day Celebrations, form teachers discussed with students the security threats facing contemporary Singapore. Through these activities, SJC aims to develop students into socially responsible individuals who understand that at the end of the day, we are all Singaporeans first, working hand-in-hand for a common goal.



Students and Teachers from Sec 2E

As is tradition, students were encouraged to attend school dressed in ethnic costumes on RHD. Lower secondary students were also encouraged to bring an item that represents their culture to school and share about the item and their culture with their classmates. Through these, students learnt a little more about the culture of their peers. Understanding another culture is one way to continue to maintain racial and religious harmony in Singapore as it helps to break misconceptions one might have about another culture. Attached are photos of classes

where students and staff gamely came attired in ethnic wear that was from their own culture or from the culture of a classmate. Our girls enjoyed the experience and also deepened friendships as they borrowed and lent one another ethnic clothes and gained an appreciation of one another's cultures.



Students and Teachers from Sec 3C



Students and Teachers from Sec 3E

One of the many events that commemorated RHD in SJC was the sandwich-making competition organised by the FCE department for the Secondary 2 students. Students had to create a healthy and interesting sandwich with a local twist. Students were given the basic ingredients of a sandwich and allowed to add ingredients that are characteristic of the cuisine of our local ethnic groups. They were also allowed to create fusion sandwiches that incorporated ethnic influences from foreign cultures. Each presentation was accompanied by a short write-up about their dish and students. Prizes were given to the top 3 winners, with first prize going to Cheyne and Sophia of 2F.



Weeks before National Day, form teachers led SJCians through discussions during Character Citizenship Education (CCE) and Talent Development Programme (TDP) lessons on what Singapore means to them. Teachers revisited the 5 pillars of Singapore's National Defence (Military, Civil, Economic, Social, Psychological). Both lower and upper secondary students discussed the internal and external threats that Singapore face today and the role that they can play to ensure that we continue to enjoy peace and security in Singapore for years to come.



Lower secondary students were subsequently given time during the Visual-Spatial and Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligences TDP lessons to create cards which expressed their feelings for Singapore. The best four card designs were selected and the students' work recognised during National Day celebrations in school.

In no particular order, the 4 Best Cards from our lower secondary students:



Joan Loh and Maya Amiena (1F)



Ashley Chan and Nagothu Harshitha (1F)



Jessica Wong, Nyah Kwok and Krsiten Ng (1H)





Chloe Cheong and Guenevere Goh (1H)

This year's National Day Observance Ceremony was as usual a high-spirited event which encompassed Mass and community singing. Students sang excitedly and gregariously in one voice, holding hands or with their arms around one another's shoulders. Unexpectedly, a technical glitch occurred towards the end of the ceremony. When students were about to sing the national anthem to mark the end of the celebrations, the CD soundtrack could not be played due to a technical fault. Our student councillors took charge and led the school in singing the anthem a cappella. It was a beautiful moment, in line with this year's theme, **One Nation Together**.

## NATIONAL SCHOOL GAMES SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIP 2017 - 'C' DIVISION

This year's National School Games Shooting Championship ('C' Division) saw SJC's Air Rifle Women's team attain a remarkable achievement. With a total score of 1183.8, 4 of our 'C' Division riflers surpassed expectations to clinch the 3<sup>rd</sup> Runner-Up spot in the Air Rifle Women Event, coming in behind Singapore Sports School, Nanyang Girl's High School and Raffles Girls' School. The winning team consisted of Lorenzo Maryse Kristen B (2D), Nur Bayyinah Bte Mahmood (2D), Ng Sin Yin (2G), and Tan Wan Ru Deiondre (2H). Out of the four, two of them got into the finals after earning a top place in their respective relays. Here are our girls' reflections:

*After competing in the intense qualification round, I managed to secure a place in the finals. Indeed, it was not easy to enter the finals. It was a memorable time for my teammates and I as we were given the opportunity to experience the finals. Even though I was proud of myself for being able to break my own personal record, I was quite disappointed in my performance during the finals. As the qualification scores were erased and we started the competition anew, I did not do well during finals and was eliminated. Hence, I did not finish with a good placing. Nevertheless, I really appreciate the trust that was given by the shooting CCA for me and my teammates to represent the school for this competition. I hope that we have done the school proud and hopefully, we inspire the juniors to do better and bring our CCA to greater heights. – Nur Bayyinah Bte Mahmood, 2D, finalist.*



**Congratulations to the SJC Sharp Shooters!**

*It was a fruitful experience taking part in the competition this year and I am delighted to be able to win 4<sup>th</sup> placing with my team. We trained very hard for this competition, and even though not all of us managed to get into the finals, we surpassed our personal best scores. This was a great experience and I'm looking forward to achieving even better results with my team next year! - Tan Wan Ru Deiondre, 2H.*

*At first, I was extremely anxious. Everyone in the range was there to win and I could feel the tension rising in the range. However, my teammates and I managed to work through the pressure and get 4<sup>th</sup> placing as a team. I was very proud of them for getting 4<sup>th</sup> placing as a team despite the pressure each of us faced. Moreover, I was elated to find out that two of my teammates had gotten into the finals. The pressure to get the top placing is truly something that is not easy to achieve but they pushed through and did the best they could. I hope that this achievement inspires our juniors and other CCA members to also do their best for future competitions and hope that the team is able to learn from this experience and always strive to do their best and improve.- Lorenzo Maryse Kristen B, Sec 2D*

*It wasn't easy. We had to train 3 times a week, but with the help of my teammates, I managed to make it pass this tough time. Although it isn't my first time competing in a competition, I was still nervous. It was the encouragement I got from my teammates that helped me to break my personal best. All of us did our best and we were delighted when we realised that we've gotten the 4<sup>th</sup> position for team placing. I am really proud of my teammates. This was our greatest achievement yet. Even though I did not do well for finals, I am still happy that I did better than last year. I am thankful for the teachers and coaches that that have stood by our side this whole journey. I am motivated by our result to do better for B'Div next year. – Ng Sin Yin, 2G, finalist*



Shooters with their coaches Ong Jun Hong and Foo Peilin

## DEBATE CLUB ENRICHMENT

19<sup>th</sup> August 2017 saw members of the Debates Circle participating in an Under 16 Novice Debate Championship held at River Valley High School. The championship is targeted at aspiring young debaters with the aim of providing an engaging platform for them and nurturing a strong debating culture in schools. The debate team were engaged in a series of prepared and impromptu debates to hone their debating skills. Through the day's event, our debaters also had the opportunity to interact and exchange valuable debating experience with debaters from other institutions. These are some of our members' reflections:



*This challenging yet enriching experience taught us many invaluable lessons and values that we will be able to use during CCA sessions as well as in school. The preparation period was tough, and we learnt endurance and perseverance as we balanced CT3 revision and debate preparation. We constantly encouraged one another as a team, strengthening our team spirit. During the competition, we were focused and determined. Though we did not win all our rounds, we acquired knowledge of different skills sets through the feedback given to us by the judges. - Ria Bhattacharjee, 3D*

*The debates competition was nerve wrecking for me as this is the first time that I participated in a competition. Even so, I am happy that I was able to go for it as I learnt useful skills such as how to structure good substantives for our case. I was also able to work better in a team. Although we did not win, I think it's important not to be discouraged but rather, see failure as the stepping stone to success. Now, I look forward to any upcoming competitions and hope to do my best! - Lad Bijal Bhupendra, 1D*



## PURSuing HER PASSION AND TALENT FOR THE VIOLIN

Yuki Chew Min Er, an avid violinist from Sec 1G, enrolled on her own to compete at the 4<sup>th</sup> Singapore Raffles Music Competition in Kuala Lumpur. Yuki attained a *Silver Award for the Violin Solo Competition (Youth A Category)*. Congratulations, Yuki!

Here are her thoughts about her experience: *I feel blessed to have been given the opportunity to share my passion for music through this platform. This win is another great confidence booster as it has been some time since I last competed in the American Protégé International Competition of Romantic Music, 2015, and was a First Place Winner (Violin) for the Junior Category (Age 10 to 13). I still get nervous before a competition. In preparation for this competition, I practiced for one to two hours each day. It was a challenging period but I coped with the support of my mom and by trying to manage my time well. Overall, it was a good opportunity for me to push myself and I got to meet many good musicians from around the world who motivated me.*





Dwarfed in a sea of pineapple plants



Participants listening attentively.



Appreciating the delicate craft of beekeeping

## STAFF LEARNING JOURNEY TO A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PINEAPPLE FARM

On Saturday, 5 August, 32 SJC staff had a learning journey to the Nictar Pineapple Bee farm. At the farm, participants were enlightened by the owner of the plantation who shared his wealth of knowledge about growing pineapples commercially. Participants learnt a variety of interesting things about commercial agriculture, from the importance of peat soil in ensuring the healthy growth of the fruit to knowing how the enzyme in pineapple, bromelain, makes this fruit naturally pesticide-free. They also learnt that the sweetness of pineapples are already determined at the point of harvest and that the change in colour from green to a golden hue, which many urban consumers equate with ripeness and thus sweetness, actually has no bearing on how sweet the fruit really is.

At every step of the process, care is taken to ensure healthy flowers to secrete nectar for the bees to make top quality honey. As staff learnt about the many intricate, carefully thought out applications required to produce the best quality fruit, they left the farm with a much deeper appreciation for the complexity of farming this well-loved fruit, and greater appreciation of sustainable farming.

The symbiotic relationship between the bees and the pineapples that successful growers recognise and strive to maintain in order to ensure the long term sustainability of the farm for years is a powerful metaphor for the importance of taking pride in one's work for the benefit of the larger community. As public service officers, participants were mindful to think about how they can raise the bar of pride and passion to pursue the best in every step of everything that they do.