



NParks works hand in glove with the landscape industry to transform Singapore's vision of a City in a Garden into a reality. We collaborate closely to provide the people, expertise and experience that are needed to drive this effort. It is imperative, therefore, that we continue to address the training and people development needs of the industry in order to strengthen our capabilities and set new benchmarks in productivity and professionalism.

Strengthening Capabilities





- 01 One of the highlights of Green Thumbs is the Skills Championships, which showcase the various competencies of the landscape workforce. Then Minister of State for National Development and Manpower Mr Tan Chuan-Jin tried his hand at the Skid Steer Loader.
- 02 Held since 2006, Green Thumbs is an annual event on the landscape calendar, celebrating the growth and transformation of the industry.
- 03 The Certified Practising Horticulturists programme is one of many organised by CUGE to raise capabilities in the industry.

In the next three years, the landscape industry is expected to grow between 4 and 6 per cent each year. The Landscape Productivity Roadmap aims to upskill the landscape industry as part of efforts to grow Singapore into a City in a Garden.

Working together to boost the landscape industry

NParks' Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology (CUGE) has joined hands with the landscape industry to develop a \$12 million **Landscape Productivity Roadmap** that will boost the capabilities of the workforce as part of efforts to grow Singapore into a City in a Garden. Announced at the annual landscape event **Green Thumbs** on 12 September 2011, the roadmap adopts a comprehensive and holistic approach to enhancing productivity across the industry, with plans for more than 20 initiatives to be implemented progressively from 2011 to 2016.

Some of the initiatives that are being developed under the productivity roadmap include landscape

design guidelines for productive maintenance, landscape maintenance benchmarks, a Landscape Apprenticeship and Mentorship Programme, a Nursery Accreditation Scheme and mechanisation.

Of these, the Landscape Apprenticeship and Mentorship Programme has already seen the first batch of landscape apprentice leaders graduating from its Leaders' Training Course in December 2011. The programme seeks to attract Singaporeans between the ages of 20 and 35 to the landscape industry through a practical "earn as you learn" scheme, with a strong emphasis on mentoring and on-the-job training.



Boosting capabilities

In October 2011, a pioneering group of 14 participants successfully completed the inaugural *Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ)* Diploma programme in Landscape Management (Parks, Reserves and Gardens). The programme was specially designed for landscape supervisors and managers in the field of park and reserve management, practitioners aspiring to be *Certified Practising Horticulturists* and *Certified Park Managers* accredited with CUGE, as well as mid-career individuals who wish to move into the specialist field of park and reserve management.

As of December 2011, another 12 landscape professionals have also joined the ranks of Certified Practising Horticulturists in Singapore, bringing the total number of certified professionals here to 104. This marked a significant milestone for the home-grown programme which was launched only in 2008. The certification is the first of its kind in Asia for practising horticulturists to seek recognition of their professional status. The November 2011 intake for the programme also saw another first – the participation of a senior industry delegate from the United Arab Emirates.

CUGE also reaches out beyond the landscape sector to provide customised WSQ training for practitioners in other fields such as facilities management. On 24 February 2012, nine property officers from the Jurong Town Corporation Industrial Properties Division successfully completed a CUGE course leading to the *WSQ Certificate in Landscape Operations*. Through these efforts, CUGE aims to train and impart landscape, arboriculture and horticulture know-how to a wider network of professionals.

Certification continues to be an important step in boosting capabilities and raising the level of professionalism in the landscape industry.





01 Benjamin Lee, NParks' Assistant Director, Conservation (Projects), is a recipient of the Postgraduate Scholarship offered by NParks to expand its talent pool.

02 The Helios Residences was the second prize winner at the Skyrise Greenery Awards 2011, which recognised achievements in incorporating skyrise greenery into architectural designs.

03 NParks also works to raise the skill levels of its specialists. Apart from tree-climbing, arborists are also trained in the use of high-tech equipment to examine the condition of trees.

Building the talent pool

To build up NParks' talent pool, five Undergraduate Scholarships, three Overseas Merit Awards and five Postgraduate Scholarships were presented in 2011 to promising candidates who will return after their studies to contribute to the agency's work. Applications for *NParks' scholarships* are open to 'A' Level students, polytechnic graduates, degree holders and industry practitioners. Suitable in-service staff are also identified for the Postgraduate Scholarships. Recipients of the scholarships and awards pursue their studies in top universities in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia, focusing on areas such as botany, plant sciences and environment management.

CUGE also assisted the landscape industry in building its talent pool by organising a career fair on 4 December 2011. Held at the Singapore Botanic Gardens' Botany Centre, the second edition of *Career Fair @ CUGE* attracted more than 60 members of the public and helped participating employers with 10 job placements.



“Encourage residents to get creative in planting skyrise greenery in their HDB flats.”

Paviythira

City in a Garden public engagement exercise

Adding an international dimension to greening efforts

Four overseas submissions were among the 18 received for *Skyrise Greenery Awards 2011*, which gives recognition to the creative incorporation of skyrise greenery into architectural designs. Presented at Archifest 2011 in October, the awards were organised by NParks and Singapore Institute of Architects to encourage the integration of horizontal and vertical greenery in buildings. Top prizes went to “Hanging Garden in CBD” at 158 Cecil Street Singapore, The Helios Residences and myVillage. Other projects which came in for honourable mention included 6 Battery Road A&A Upgrading Works – Vertical Garden, Mapletree Business City, Treelodge@Punggol and Universal Studios Singapore (Resorts World Sentosa).

To promote the arborist profession and foster deeper relationships between arborists in the region, Singapore hosted the *Asia Pacific Tree Climbing Championship* for the first time in June 2011. The event, jointly organised by CUGE and the Singapore Arboriculture Society, was held at the Esplanade Park. The championship saw 23 representatives from Australia, Hong Kong, Nepal, New Zealand and Singapore gathering to compete in the categories of Aerial Rescue, Footlock, Throwline, Work Climb and Speed Climb. James Kilpatrick from New Zealand broke the world Footlock record enroute to winning the men’s category, while Kiah Martrin from Australia emerged as the top woman climber.



03



Radiance Of A Tree

Kwok Ling Yi Samantha, 15
Raffles Girls’ School (Secondary)



The Colours Of Life

Nor Zahirah Binte Zainuddin, 16
Pasir Ris Secondary School

Walking the talk

When it comes to championing the causes of conservation, biodiversity and wider social responsibility, the staff at NParks have again demonstrated their commitment to walking the talk.

Hort Champs (NParks' horticulture champions) helped provide informal or on-the-job transfer of knowledge to colleagues who are not horticulture-trained, through inter-divisional activities such as species reintroduction at Labrador Nature Park on 6 October 2011 and a nursery tour on 19 October 2011.

More than 500 NParks officers also took part in a native tree planting event jointly organised by the **Staff Well-Being Committee** and Gardens by the Bay.

About 200 native tree species were planted at the event, which took place at the Gardens' Fragile Forest on 20 October 2011. The highlight of the day was the planting of a 15-metre tall *Koompassia excelsa*.

NParks staff were also out in strength for **Corporate Kindness Day** on 12 January 2012. More than 200 staff visited 12 charity homes for the elderly, disabled, children and animals. The staff were involved in various activities such as Chinese New Year craft-making with the elderly, an excursion to HortPark with autistic young adults, baking cookies with children and spring cleaning for animal homes.





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- 01 Corporate Kindness Day provided opportunities for NParks staff to give back to the community.
- 02 NParks staff planted trees at the Fragile Forest at Gardens by the Bay.
- 03 Children were introduced to nature through potting activities conducted by NParks staff on Corporate Kindness Day.



Trees Protect Us
Li An Qi, 12
Nanyang Primary School



03



Trees For Life
Deborah Ng Jing Ting, 9
Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts



Cartoonish Trees
Kjell Steeman, 13
Genesis School for Special Education