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NUS professor inspires students with interactive lab

Posted: 12 April 2008 2050 hrs

SINGAPORE: The National University of Singapore (NUS) held its annual Awards Ceremony on Friday evening at the University Cultural Centre.

EDB Chairman, Professor Lim Siong Guan, was honoured with the Outstanding Service Award for his contributions to the university and society. Professor Wong Poh Poh, who was on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, was also recognised at the ceremony.

In all, thirteen awards were given out, including three Outstanding Educator honours.

One recipient of this award is 40-year-old Physics Professor Sow Chong Haur who inspires students with his interactive laboratory.

There are 60 experiments in the enthusiastic educator's "Physics Demonstration Laboratory". It was conceived in 2002 to share his love for Physics with his students.

Prof Sow is often seen around the Kent Ridge campus, pushing a trolley called the "Mobile Physics Lab" to lecture halls.

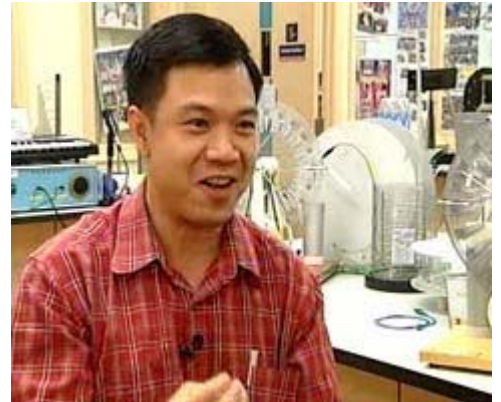
He said: "How do you keep the attention span of students for a long period of time? Human by nature has limited attention span so what we usually do is to show a demonstration every 15 minutes or so."

Chang Sheh Lit, Year Three student from Science Faculty, NUS, said: "It helps me to visualise the situation and to understand the concept better. And if I want to explain the concept to my friends, I can use the same situation again."

Prof Sow said he has plans to make his mobile lab bigger.

"Hopefully, we would have this double-decked bus where we could load all these nice and cool demonstration toys. We could drive the bus to school, unload the demonstration, do the show, and bring it back," he said.

Prof Sow's lab has inspired a similar one to be set up in the NUS High School. It has also received more than 3,000 visitors and is open for school excursions.



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Professor Sow Chong Haur

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