

SNIC Distinguished Chemistry Service Award 2011

Dr Seet Ai Mee

Director, Jade Technologies (S) Ltd

Dr Seet Ai Mee was born and bred in Malacca with a rich cultural and historic heritage. This wonderfully complemented her excellence in and passion for science. A Colombo Plan scholarship took her to Australia where she was outstanding in her academic attainments and student leadership. She graduated with First Class Honours in Biochemistry from the University of Adelaide in 1965 before taking a PhD programme in Clinical Biochemistry in the University of Singapore.

She went on to build up a successful career spanning 12 years in Singapore's Ministry of Health and the Singapore Institute of Standards and Research (SISIR), a predecessor to today's SPRING Singapore. During this period, she authored some 24 scientific papers in refereed international and local journals in the areas of Biochemistry, Clinical Biochemistry and Food Chemistry.

In a very secure Singapore where most people preferred to be in the comfort zone of government and quasi- government service she saw the need for some to venture and contribute to the private sector. She thus went on to establish a medical laboratory practice. Responding further to societal needs, Dr Seet, in 1988, stood for election and became Member of Parliament for Bukit Gombak constituency. Later that year, she was appointed Minister of State, with oversight for the Community Development and Education Ministries. She was promoted to become Acting Minister for Community Development in 1991.

Her passion for things academic and her compassion for the less fortunate in our highly competitive society led her to then accept an appointment as a Senior Visiting Fellow in NUS Institute of South-East Asian Studies and confounding in 1992, the Dover Park Hospice. This

institution has also benefitted from her close association all these years. Dr Seet continued her caring contributions and career with additional board-level and directorship appointments in many charity and public organizations. These include the Singapore Hospice Council, the Hospice Care Association and AM Laboratories Pte Ltd.

She was equally in demand on the corporate front, holding independent directorship positions in a number of household name companies like Courts (Singapore) Ltd, Noel Gifts International Ltd, Datacraft Asia Ltd, Jade Technologies Singapore Ltd, and others. On a personal level, Dr Seet has written 6 articles on Primary School Science Education, and undertakes research, development and authoring work on Creative and Interactive Science programmes for Discovery Vacation Camps. She also continues to pursue her passions in Science education and Hospice leadership.

For her contributions to society, Dr Seet received the Public Service Star Award in 1997 and was appointed a Justice of the Peace the following year. The NUS Faculty of Science honoured Dr Seet with the 2009 Distinguished Science Alumni Award..

Dr Seet has truly been a person of sensitive compassion and strong convictions, of faith and fortitude who has given much of her self and her service to society for which we all indebted and proud. Let us take to our hearts and minds her words :

"Don't just love Science -- be passionate in your love, for it is people with passion who are not only the great achievers but also the ones who pass their love to those around."

Dr Seet is a role model not only for the members of SNIC but also the chemistry community at large.

In recognition of her immense contributions to our society well beyond science, SNIC has the honour to confer the SNIC Distinguished Chemistry Service Award to Dr Seet Ai Mee.