



MESSAGE **FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT**

Trisha Craig, VP of Engagement

I hope the summer is off to a marvelous start for you. This year, I was so fortunate to begin mine by taking a group of Yale-NUS students to Ho Chi Minh City for an entrepreneurship study tour. Not only was it great to get to know a truly amazing group of Kingfishers and experience the incredible dynamism of Vietnam, but we were also reminded of the power of our networks. We met up with the head of the Yale Club of Vietnam who shared his reflections on his decades in the country, and we were treated to a fireside chat with Eddie Thai, a Yale alum turned venture capitalist who gave our budding entrepreneurs all kinds of good advice about market timing, building a company and the importance of failing. As we look ahead to the coming years, our networks, not just Yale-NUS but those of our founding institutions may serve our alumni in good stead.

Of course, the biggest highlight so far this summer was a jam-packed week featuring two Graduation celebrations and Reunion. We in Alumni Affairs were so happy to welcome back the Classes of 2020 and 2021 to properly mark the end of their college years with a ceremony that saw them walk across the stage in their caps and gowns. It was incredibly joyous and many faculty, parents, family and friends turned out to offer the in-person congratulations that were delayed by the pandemic.

Reunion, too, was a spectacular affair that saw hundreds of you flock back to campus to catch up with friends, faculty and staff. The traditional alumni debate was hilarious as usual, Brewhouse kept everyone caffeinated and hydrated, the mixer featured a terrific alumni DJ and everyone felt at home. We also heard updates from President Roberts on Legacy projects and the Alumni Task Force.

The Task Force has sent you their draft constitution for your comments and we hope to hold elections for the Executive Committee in September. Exciting stuff!

Warmly,



IN THIS ISSUE



are up to next!



CELEBRATING SAGA | 23 Come relive the memories of Saga College



WELCOME HOME | 16 attending Reunion 2023

THE NEXT CHAPTER

In this feature, we delve into the lives of these bright graduates as they embark on exciting new chapters, bridging the gap between academia and the real world. In candid conversations, they share their post-college adventures, invaluable lessons learned, and cherished memories that shaped their transformative years at Yale-NUS. By Siddharth Mohan Roy ('25)

RYAN KUEH ('23)

Beijing, China

What's next for you?

Next for me is Schwarzman Scholars! I will be enrolling into the Master's degree programme in Global Affairs at Tsinghua University in Beijing come August 2023. After the programme, I will be joining Bain & Company as an Associate Consultant.

Can you describe a particularly memorable or impactful experience you had in college?

experience. It started as an independent future graduates? research project on hawkers and ended losing its cultural authenticity.



Completing my capstone was a memorable What advice would you give to recent/

up becoming a 2-year inquiry, which If you're interested in something, take the included archival research and speaking plunge and experience it firsthand. Believe with members of the National Heritage in yourself and surround yourself with Board. In the capstone — titled The people who believe in you too. No matter "Hawker Problem" and its Historical, Social, how small, what you do is meaningful and Political Impacts in Singapore — we and has a larger impact. Remember, all explored how hawkers have changed big things have small beginnings. The since colonial times and how Singapore world demands more from us, so we has solved hawker-related issues without must be ready to meet that demand. lives thousands of kilometers apart.

NIKITA TARATORIN ('23)

Singapore

What's next for you?

In the middle of my junior year, I received opportunities of the real world? an offer to embark on a Concurrent Degree Program with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Yale-NUS taught me how to think about Policy.

How do you think Yale-NUS has prepared you for the challenges and

Public Policy at NUS. In the next academic problems and solutions, in a way others year, I will be attaining a Masters in Public wouldn't. I already observed in grad school and in my internships that Yale-NUS students always stand out in how they

analyse and tackle problems. I don't think it comes from any specific class or the common curriculum, but rather a combination of all the academics. extra-curriculars, and living in such a dynamic and diverse community. I am convinced that Yale-NUS has prepared me to "always find a way."

What advice would you give to recent/future graduates?

Always remember how strong you are and what you have already done to be where you are today. Remember to take pride in it. As Anna Tsing mentioned in her speech at our graduation ceremony: "Don't rush. But don't settle."



ABIGAIL BELLE CHEUNG ('23)

New Haven, USA



What's next for you?

As a student enrolled in the Concurrent Degree Program in Public Health, my next step is to go to Yale and finish up my master's degree in public health. Within the Yale School of Public Health, I am pursuing a degree focused on the epidemiology of infectious diseases, where I hope to bring this knowledge into vaccine development or management.

Can you describe a particularly memorable or impactful experience you had in college?

A particularly memorable experience I had throughout college was during COVID-19. Amidst the fluster and confusion, I recall having the best conversations with my

friends about our life paths and what we Through learning in small-sized classes, found valuable. These conversations led to lifelong friendships and connected me with seminars, Yale-NUS has prepared me as my friends in the best way. COVID-19 was impactful and even allowed me to spend ready to share or present. On-campus a semester learning from home with family and friends. Another memorable has prepared me with a mindset that experience lies in the carnivals hosted by Yale-NUS College to celebrate the end of my learning. Additionally, my previous each academic year.

How do you think Yale-NUS has prepared you for the challenges and opportunities of the real world?

interactive classrooms, problem sets and an individual to always be prepared and events with alumni and esteemed guests seeks opportunities to always further experience in sports teams at Yale-NUS has connected me to a different community that works collaboratively to support each other.



GARIMA CHIB ('23)

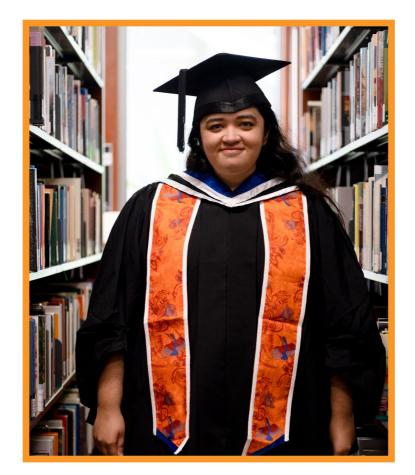
Pennsylvania, USA

What's next for you? What are your plans after graduation?

I'll be heading to Carnegie Mellon University to pursue a master's in chemical engineering. I decided to pursue graduate studies quite early on in my college years, and I'm grateful for this exciting opportunity to learn more about the field I'm interested in.

Is there anything you wish you had known before starting college or anything you would have done differently looking back on your college experience?

Looking back, I would've wanted to spend less time getting caught up in the stress of routine deadlines, exams, and other problems that seem more significant than they really are. It sometimes made me



lose sight of the bigger picture - I had a lot to be grateful for throughout my time at YNC, whether it's the quality of education and resources or the meaningful friendships I've formed. Even though this is easier said than done, I would've tried to be more intentional in making the best of my college experience.

What advice would you give to recent/future graduates?

I would like to commend recent and future graduates on everything they've accomplished so far! I encourage future graduates to make the best of their college experience, even if that means taking time out for yourself or your friends instead of spending those extra hours on an assignment. Wishing everyone all the best for their future endeavours!

ADRIEL YONG ('23)

Singapore

What's next for you? What are your plans after graduation?

I am currently working at Ascend Angels as a senior investment analyst and community lead and am in the process of applying for various deferred MBA programmes. I will continue to live in Singapore, but will likely be travelling around Southeast Asia regularly to meet entrepreneurs and other investors!

If you could relive one moment from your college years, what would it be?

One of the more defining parts of my Yale-NUS experience would be the numerous times I cooked meals with friends and had dinner parties! In freshman year, I made char siew in my rice cooker overnight before finishing it off in the oven at the Elm Buttery with a few friends. Suffice to say, I had lots of fun that



day feeding friends with tender char siew and pasta. However, the stench that haunted my room for the next month was equally memorable (in a bad way).

What is one skill or lesson you learned in college that you think

will be most valuable in your future?

Facilitating difficult conversations. At Yale-NUS, we always have difficult conversations, whether in the classroom, in our suites or over meals in the dining halls. Some of them are purely academic and theoretical, some touch on personal family matters and some veer into the space of religion/politics/ethics that we hold on to dearly. Learning to navigate those conversations respectfully with different parties who have various social, political and religious leanings will be incredibly helpful for me, especially in a role where I will meet people from all walks of life.



MADHUMITHA AYYAPPAN ('23)

Singapore

What's next for you?

Grad School! I am heading to Duke-NUS for a 4-year Doctor of Medicine program this July.

What is one skill or lesson you learned in college that you think will be most valuable in your future?

Things are never as black and white as they seem. They are a lot more complex! This is something that many of my anthropology courses have taught me. As I enter the world of science, where the 'rights' and 'wrongs' are often presumed to be clear, I want to make space for the ambiguities and dwell in the complexities to do justice



to the patients I treat and care for.

What was the most adventurous thing you did during college?

I picked up the practice of mindfulness meditation at Yale-NUS College. After about 3 years of consistent practice, I decided that I wanted to challenge myself even further and embarked on a 10-day silent meditation retreat in Nepal over the winter break of senior year (with my suitemate!)! It was by far the hardest thing I've done in my life, but meditating all day long for 10 days straight taught me so much about myself and my priorities in life.

What advice would you give to recent/ future graduates?

LinkedIn over Instagram, always.



SHAFREEN FATIMAH ('23)

London, United Kingdom

What's next for you?

Through modules in law and economics, I found myself intrigued by, and exploring, the intersection of policy and technology, namely across topics of privacy, security, sustainability and innovation. With that as a stepping stone, I'm going on to begin my career in the technology, media and telecommunications consulting space in London.

How do you think Yale-NUS has prepared you for the challenges and opportunities of the real world?

I believe that the beauty of a liberal arts

education lies in the ability to be flexible. Learning about various disciplines well beyond my comfort zone in short periods, producing extended essays on new academic fields and importantly, always getting the chance to meet someone different from you and being in a heterogenous community has taught me to be malleable and to be able to hold my own in new settings. In many ways, this links back to confidence - ultimately, Yale-NUS has given me the confidence and tools to be able to learn new things to adapt whenever necessary.



What advice would you give to recent/ future graduates?

There is so much out there to experience and there lies a lot of merit in going out of your comfort zone. As someone who just graduated, I feel a lot of imposter syndrome at times, but I take comfort in the fact that there will always be things to learn, and that life is too short to keep doubting myself.

ZIRDI SYUKUR ('23)

Singapore

What's next for you? What are your What is one skill or lesson you learned plans after graduation?

After graduation, I will be starting as a specialist in atomic magnetometry at I think I've gotten better at listening. I'm research and development agencies. My the tiniest of magnetic fields with a small portable form. We hope to make the very valuable in the future. device less costly and more flexible so that we can apply it to medical fields with MRI imaging, chemical characterization for pharmaceutical control, and more.

Is there anything you wish you had known before starting college or anything you would have done differently looking back on your college experience?

I tend to wait for things to happen to me, rather than seek out what makes me happiest. I got there in the end, but I would give my younger self some advice on how to get to that point more quickly.

in college that you think will be most valuable in your future?

A*Star, one of the Singapore government's usually a talker that always has something to say, but you need to be able to listen to research will be focused on working with a others just as much in Yale-NUS---whether team to design next-generation magnetic it be in seminar discussions, lunches with field sensors that will be able to measure friends, or even listening to my band play some funk. I hope this is a skill that will be



DOUBLE THE FUN

This year, we had not one but two graduations! We kicked it off by celebrating the achievements of the Class of 2023 with over 1,000 of their friends and family. Then, our graduates from the classes of 2020 and 2021 returned to finally have a physical graduation ceremony. Check out some of the highlights from the ceremony below. For more photos, check out our Facebook page!













By Suman Padhi ('25)

The best part of reunions has to be seeing how people have grown, and thinking about the future of the community. ??

Matthew Ware ('18)

Last month, over 500 alumni returned to campus for Alumni Reunion 2023, the second one to be held in person after COVID-19. The day also marked the five-year reunion for the Class of 2018 which was held at the President's Apartment prior to the festivities of the reunion.

The reunion featured many classic reunion events like the Alumni Debate, where Steven Sy ('22) and Benjamin Leong ('17) debated on the topic "Be it resolved: International students on the Tuition Grant Scheme (TGS) should be allowed to opt to serve National Service (NS) for their bond". There was also the after-dinner mixer hosted by Zac Yeow ('20) which kept alums on campus till twilight, chatting and basking in the warmth of the reunion. Wingspan talked to some of our alums who attended the reunion and asked them about being back on campus.

For many alums, it had been a while since their return to campus. For some like Payal Lal ('17), campus has drastically changed. She describes being back as "like a breath of fresh air! I love the energy at the Yale-NUS campus, always so vibrant, positive and young. Every time I am there, I tell myself that I should visit more often! It certainly feels different compared to when I was a student. I feel more like a visitor now, since the campus isn't as much of an everyday familiarity like it used to be."

Others like Danielle Sim ('19), said that "being back on campus [didn't] feel too different as compared to when [she was] still studying there."



Many alums were back on campus for the first time since graduating.

She explained, "Everything is mostly still where I expected it to be, but there were occasions where my friends and I played "spot-the-difference" to figure out whether places and things have been moved, like the Writer's Centre for example, which has been nostalgic. It does feel rather surreal though that the overall familiarity of being on campus doesn't change the fact that 4 years have passed since graduation!"

No matter how long it has been, returning back to campus is always a bittersweet moment for alums as it brings back many fond memories of their time in college.

When asked, Isabel Perucho ('18) said that she missed "living with [her] friends and knowing they are never too far away for a study session or catching up over Al Amaans."

Zhongxuan Khwa ('20) agreed, noting that he missed the communal experience, "I miss the convenience and cosiness of having friends living so close to me and the spontaneous activities that happen in our communal spaces. There was a real sense of community at Yale-NUS that is hard to find outside of college."

When asked about the best part of reunions, Berke Önder ('21) replied, "Seeing the Yale-NUS community together again and having fun! Even though we have all gone our own separate ways, it is very heart-warming to see our community coming back together from time to time and remembering all the good memories we had on our campus. It was great seeing many of my friends again and having fun together."

Echoing the same sentiments, Matthew Ware ('18) added, "The best part of reunions has to be seeing how people

have grown, and thinking about the future of the community."

Being able to meet old classmates and friends again makes reunion as special as it is, all events in it specifically curated to allow alums to mingle with one other. To Geoffrey Martin ('19), this is why his favorite event at the reunion was dinner. "It was great to be able to get food and mingle with professors and students I hadn't seen in a while. The other events were fun but the best parts of reunions are always the re-uniting part."

Reunions are always bittersweet, as the campus becomes smaller and smaller every year, but nonetheless, the memories all our alums hold are always treasured and remembered in annual



The Class of 2018 celebrated their 5-year reunion with an intimate cocktail reception at President Joanne Robert's apartment.



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ALUMNI REUNION IN PHOTOS

We look back at some of the highlights from Alumni Reunion 2023!





ALUMNI TASK FORCE UPDATES

Scott Lee Chua ('20), Alumni Task Force Co-Chair

Hello! Scott '20 here with an update from the Alumni Task Force.

During last month's reunion, I mentioned that the Task Force was close to a full draft of a constitution for our alumni organization.

Today, I'm proud to say: you should have received an email from the Alumni Affairs team with a link to the draft constitution for the Yale-NUS Club! If you did not receive this email, please reach out to alumni@yale-nus.edu.sg to let us know.

We intend to file this with the Registry of Societies (ROS) later this year, to establish the Club as an independent society in Singapore.

At this stage, we heartily welcome your questions, suggestions, and feedback about this document through this Qualtrics form. We'll keep the form open for 5 weeks, until Monday, July 24.

After that, we'll open nominations for Club officers in August, hold elections in September, and file with ROS by October. If all goes well, Yale-NUS Club will be comfortably established in 2023, giving Club leadership a year and a half of runway to smooth things out as we approach 2025.

This process has been long but meaningful as we work towards building our community for years to come. I'd like to thank everyone on the Alumni Task Force for their continued service in shaping the vision for the Yale-NUS Club.

CELEBRATING THE MAGIC OF SAGA COLLEGE

As we say goodbye to the beloved Saga buildings at Yale-NUS College, we uncover the fond memories, amusing tales, and lifelong friendships established within Saga's walls. This is a tribute to the colourful history of Saga while honouring the collective spirit of those who called it home.

By Siddharth Mohan Roy ('25)

Rector Khoo Hoon Eng

I joined Saga in July 2018. It has been an enjoyable journey of overseeing and nurturing the cultural life of the Saga community. For the past five years, the Saga Residential Fellows and I have continued Rector Sarah Weiss' deliberate linking of residential life in Saga with the cultures of Asia and Southeast Asia.

Saga has a lovely terraced courtyard and a spacious Shiok Shack which will be missed. My favourite memory is being "kidnapped" by a couple of aliens outside our Common Lounge. From watching students draw Rangoli for Deepavali, enjoying international dinners cooked by students, watching movies in the courtyard, painting Saga posters, trips to museums and art galleries, suppers in the Shiok Shack, folding origami with students to moderating interesting dinner conversations and Rector's Teas, these are memories that I will always cherish.







Rector Sarah Weiss

I first joined Saga College before it was a building, before it had its beautiful Saga tree icon, and even before it was anything other than the imaginary Residential College 1.

I had fallen in love with Saga trees and their unique position in Singaporean culture and history. On our walks with Milo, Prof. Day and I saw a lot of Saga trees in bloom and making their beautiful seed pods full of shiny, deep-red seeds. I lobbied hard for RC1 to be called Saga College.

In addition to the tree's deep connections to Singapore, I loved the analogy that Saga students were like those beautiful seeds. They were 'grown' together, protected and cultivated in Saga College (our 'seed pod'). Each 'seed' is perfect in its own way, prepared to burst forth with new ideas, strong enough to grow into a towering tree, and begin a new spiralling cycle of creativity and growth.

We Sagans are inclusive, forward-thinking, brave, smart, creative, thoughtful, confident, and (naturally) wise. Saga College and our community continues in our hearts. It is part of us, and we are the ever-strong Saga College community.





Assistant Dean Paul Gallagher

I came to Yale-NUS College and Saga in July 2017. At that time, my title was Vice-Rector which would be changed to Assistant Dean a year later. I have many fond memories of Saga College such as cooking midnight breakfasts for students with Profs Choo and Bailey in the Shiok Shack, the orientation outings to Pulau Ubin in 2018 and 2019, and Christmas baking with students in my apartment.

Furthermore, every week at 10:30 am, there would be the sounds of a large group of students in the courtyard below my office windows, streaming through the Saga gate after leaving the Common Curriculum lectures in the Performance Hall.

The commotion embodies our educational aspirations and community ideals. When I try to conjure a typical day as Saga AD, I hear that wonderful stampede out of the Performance Hall.

I hope that students will retain some impressions of the local culture of Singapore and Southeast Asia that Rectors Weiss and Khoo sought to impart to them. Your smiles, laughter, and friendship have far exceeded my hopes when I took that one-way flight to Singapore six years ago.





College Manager Ngu Hui Tze

I joined Yale-NUS College on 4 July 2014 as a senior executive with the Rector's Office. When I moved into the compound of Yale-NUS College in 2015, the different residential colleges were simply known as Residential College 1 (RC1), Residential College (RC2) and Residential College 3 (RC3). It has been nearly nine years. The journey has been an exciting one, full of learning opportunities as Saga evolved.

I have fond memories of using Saga spaces and the various activities that went on in those spaces. I love Saga Courtyard, the space outside the MPH, and Saga's Rector's Commons. I have always appreciated the 'chill vibe' of Saga, and how our students have contributed greatly to the Saga community, yet remained humble about their achievements.

Thank you, Sagans, for all the wonderful memories. I hope you will continue making the best of the time you have and carry the Saga spirit forward!





Hazirah Helmy ('19)

My journey in Yale-NUS started with Saga, and ended very much with Saga. I was an orientation group leader (OGL) in my sophomore year and a residential college assistant (RCA) in my senior year.

I also worked in the Shiok Shack for all four years. It was one of my favourite ways to decompress from schoolwork, spend time with my friends and catch up with other members of the community. Over time, it became a space that made me feel connected and grounded because it was a lot of hands-on work, and it felt nice to settle into a routine amidst the chaos of college.

When I worked the stove, I enjoyed cooking perfectly runny egg yolks which didn't burst! I know it sounds very small, but amidst the grind of college life, you have to celebrate small wins. I also enjoyed making specials, specifically baked goods.

To Sagans: a part of the college will always stay with you.



 $26 \approx 27$



Rhyhan Astha ('22)

To me, a big part of Saga's identity is about embodying a laid-back attitude towards life in general. Seeing that everyone seemed to take everything at their own pace made me feel like Saga was a place to unwind after a long day of classes.

My favourite spot in Saga would have to be the swings in the courtyard. When I'm alone, the swings are a great place to collect my thoughts and watch the day go by. The swings have also been the place where I have had life-changing conversations with my friends.'

Being in Saga has made me form close bonds with my suitemates that have made me the person I am today! The buttery, the laundry room, and the courtyards, really fostered conversations that helped me learn about new ways of looking at problems, both personal and professional.

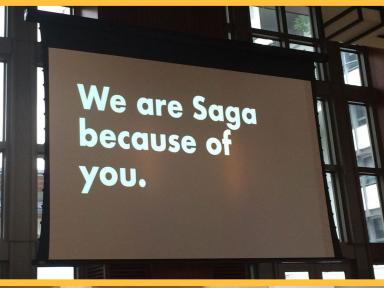


The Saga Community is a welcoming one. We have come to enjoy being part of Saga, and made good connections with friendly, adaptable, easygoing and talented Sagans.

The 'Saga .jpeg Project (film camera initiative)' was initiated by the RCAs. Since this is the final semester in this physical space, the RCAs wanted to allow Sagans to capture all their memories with a camera. This year, the Saga RCAs organised the Open Mic, Mega Kahoot and Movie Screening to fully make use of our courtyard with the set up of the big screen. We also had a mass photoshoot in the courtyard with Sagans wearing the Saga t-shirt.

We also organised two Saga Homecoming Dinners in February and March to bring back Saga alums to the place they once called home. We will truly miss being in this physical space that has become our home.









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A LITTLE BIRD TOLD ME...

Snippets of what our Kingfishers have been up to!



FLYING THE SINGAPORE FLAG HIGH

Singapore national cricket player and our very own Kingfisher, Avi Dixit ('23), recently represented the country in this year's Southeast Asian (SEA) games, where he clinched three podium finishes! He was part of the team which brought home the gold in the men's Sixes as well as two bronze medals for the men's T20 and T10 cricket events.

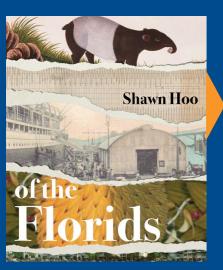


FORBES 30 UNDER 30 ASIA 2023

Hrishi Olickel ('18) was recently named in Forbes' annual 30 under 30 Asia list for his work with Greywing, a software company he co-founded that helps maritime companies operate more efficiently. He recently created SeaGPT, an Albased chatbot that can extract information on crew members and draft emails, further automating information for ships travelling between ports.

Image from Forbes.





LITERARY KINGFISHERS

Our alums have been busy making waves in the literary world! Shawn Hoo ('20)'s debut poetry chapbook, *Of The Florids*, has been awarded the 2023 Eric Hoffer Medal Provocateur Award, which recognises the best on the frontier of poetry in terms of technique and voice. Myle Yan Tay ('19) has also just published his debut novel, *Catskull*, described as a "neo-noir thriller meets coming-of-age mystery."

Image from Epigram Books.

- ORDER SHAWN'S CHAPBOOK HERE
- ORDER YAN'S BOOK HERE



LANGUAGE TRAINING IN IMMIGRANTS

Alex Pont-Grau ('18) recently published a paper, The effect of language training on immigrants' integration: Does the duration of training matter?, alongside Yale-NUS Assistant Professors Yu-Hsiang Lei and Xing Xia. The paper examines the interaction between language training programs and immigrant integration.

Image from Barcelona Global Blog.

READ THE PAPER HERE

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

BE FEATURED

Want to be featured in upcoming issues of *Wingspan*? We're always on the lookout for interesting things that alumni are doing. If you are doing something cool or exciting that you want other alumni to know about, let us know! If you know a friend who is doing cool stuff but is too shy to blow their own trumpet, let us know as well!

PITCH IDEAS

This newsletter is for alumni, and we also want to feature things that you are interested in. If you have an idea for a feature or an article, please feel free to write in as well, and we'll see if it's a good fit!

SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

We're trying out something new for the alumni newsletter, and we want your feedback! Do you like it? Do you hate it? What do you want to see! And what do you want to see less? Let us know!

You can contact us at alumni@yale-nus.edu.sg.

SHARE YOUR STORY

For our new year issue, we're looking to feature recipies from around the world! If you have a recipie that you'd like to share, and photos of your delicious food, please contact us at alumni@yale-nus.edu.sg.





