

For he is a Jolly Good Fellow, really

Google's first Singaporean employee starts an endowment fund for two NTU students yearly

By Grace Chng

A Jolly Good Fellow (JGF) has decided to give out scholarships to two undergraduates who can suggest ways to "save the world".

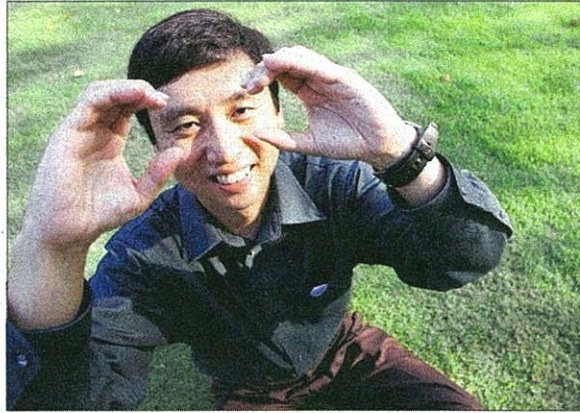
He is Mr Tan Chade Meng (right), 40, who has JGF as his official designation at Google. He joined the Internet giant in 1999 as one of its first engineers – and its first Singaporean employee.

Mr Tan is putting up two scholarships this year worth \$10,000 each from an endowment fund he set up for his alma mater, Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

The Tan Teo Endowment Fund – named after the father and father-in-law of Mr Tan – was created last year with a donation of \$250,000 which was matched by the Government.

He had given out \$5,000 scholarships previously but decided that an endowment fund would be a better way to ensure that the money will flow in perpetuity.

In an e-mail interview, he says he hopes the scholarship will encourage Singaporeans to "think big and believe in themselves".



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Mr Tan, who works in Google's headquarters in Mountain View, California, said: "I want to inspire Singaporeans towards service to humanity. I want to help them inspire each other towards the greater good."

One scholarship will go to an undergraduate at NTU's School of Computer Engineering while the other will be given to an NTU student studying any course.

Mr Tan is no newcomer to charitable projects. In 2005, he started the Tan Teo Charitable Foundation, which is dedicated to promoting peace, liberty and enlightenment in the world.

The Foundation funded the Tan Teo

Endowment Fund.

Successful candidates for the Fund's two scholarships must demonstrate creativity and a passionate concern for humanity, on top of having good academic results.

They must submit an essay on their life story and suggest how the Foundation can help them save the world.

Mr Tan, who did his computer studies in NTU, received his master's degree in computer science from the University of California at Santa Barbara.

He helped Google build its first mobile search service and when the company went public in 2004, his company stocks made him a multi-millionaire.

After eight years in engineering, he is now Head of Personal Growth at GoogleEDU.

His work dovetails nicely with his views on enhancing humanity.

One of his projects is Search Inside Yourself, a "mindfulness-based emotional intelligence course" which he hopes will eventually contribute to world peace in a meaningful way. It is a seven-week course which he teaches at Google.

Mr Tan is also the founding patron of Stanford University's Centre for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education, together with the Dalai Lama.

In other words, his resume is no joke.