

## Digital hope funding for 2 Singapore schools

+ Life-enhancing projects from Ngee Ann Polytechnic and National University of Singapore to benefit the hearing-impaired and the physically disabled

+ 11 projects across Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam receive funding.

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Singapore, November 4, 2005 - Samsung Electronics announced 11 winners of its USD500,000 Samsung DigitAll Hope grant program that leverages technology leadership to provide a brighter future for the less fortunate in South East Asia and Australia.

Gracing the awards ceremony today is Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports and Second Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore. Dr Balakrishnan has been involved in the program since its beginnings in 2003; he also represents Singapore on the regional judging panel for Samsung DigitAll Hope 2004 and 2005.

Into its third year, Samsung DigitAll Hope 2005 has awarded funds to organizations for projects such as a "Cyber Coach" - a mobile multimedia unit for Tsunami disaster victims; an education technology centre for the blind; an e-skills development training program for disadvantaged youth; a streetnet mobile technology van, and a digital

audio book library and screen display reading program.

"It is exciting to see the creative and innovative solutions that this year's 11 winners have developed to help better the lives of the disadvantaged in their own communities. Technology is but an enabler that will bridge to brighter futures for everyone," said Mr Sang-Jin Park, Regional CEO & President, Samsung Asia. "Through the DigitAll Hope program, we are proud to crystallize our goal of giving back to the communities within which we operate, in a meaningful way, and raising the awareness of specific social needs."

The awarded organizations are evaluated by an independent judging committee comprising acknowledged authorities in the spectrum of community, youth and infocomm technology (ICT) development. (See attached lists of Regional and National Judges.)

### Singapore Leads with Assistive Technology

The two Singaporean winners of the Samsung DigitAll Hope 2005 grants are:

- *GlovoLogy*, by Ngee Ann Polytechnic, School of Infocomm Technology; and
- *Augmented Reality Assistive Keyboard* by National University of Singapore, Mechanical Engineering Department.

### Communicate with GlovoLogy

In Singapore, the project *GlovoLogy* is aimed at utilizing an electronic Data Glove and a Pocket PC ("PPC") Phone to enhance a hearing- or speech-impaired person's ability to communicate more freely with the world.

The hand signs of a hearing-impaired person will be captured and converted into voice and the speech of a hearing person will be converted into text. This revolutionary approach will enable a two-way communication via wireless transmission to take place, where both parties can be either communicating face to face or using a mobile phone.

"Although the hearing-impaired are able to use mobile phones to communicate via text messaging, the project team found that signing is still a faster and more natural mode of communication for the hearing-impaired. With the Samsung DigitAll Hope grant, the idea of *GlovoLogy* can be further exploited to use mobile technology to bridge the communication barrier faced by the hearing-impaired and an ordinary person. We hope to provide a solution whereby a more seamless conversation can happen either face-to-face or remotely between both parties using their own most natural language – sign-language and speech", said Ms Angela Wee Li Kwang, Director, School of InfoComm Technology, Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

### Integrate with Augmented Reality Assistive Keyboard

This National University of Singapore project marries Assistive Technology devices with Augmented Reality technology (that overlay virtual information onto a real scene) to assist physically disabled persons in carrying out their daily tasks through complementing and augmenting their abilities and disabilities. The project will allow people with disabilities to operate household appliances, the computer and communicate with their loved ones via the Internet without the need for a mouse or a physical keyboard.

"With Samsung DigitAll Hope's funding, we can customize the Augmented Reality Assistive Keyboard for different applications. We envision the project to be useful to individuals with disabilities to carry out their daily living tasks and we hope to bring it to users in other countries as a

useful assistive tool," said Associate Professor Ong Soh Khim, Nominated Member of Parliament and project leader, National University of Singapore.

#### **About Samsung DigitAll Hope**

Samsung DigitAll Hope is Samsung Asia's single largest regional social program in South East Asia and Australia. The focus is on improving lives with technology, helping to bridge the digital divide.

Members of the regional judging panel have included high profile UNESCO officials, government ministers and heads of organizations. Samsung DigitAll Hope in 2005 benefited more than 80,000 youth and disabled in Asia Pacific, granting a total of USD500,000 to 11 projects in the region.

This year's regional judges include Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, Dr Pairash Thajchayapong, Permanent Secretary of Thailand's Ministry of Science & Technology, Dr. Kusmayanto Kadiman, State Minister of Research & Technology for the Republic of Indonesia and Professor Dao Van Luong, Director of the Department of Science and Technology, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City.

For more information, please visit <http://www.samsung.com/sg/hope/>.

#### **About SAMSUNG Electronics**

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