



# **SYAM LAL SADANANDAN**

## **RECIPIENT OF THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR TEACHERS (PAT) 2019**

Mr Syam Lal S/O Sadanandan is an experienced educator of 22 years. He believes that every student can do well, and this philosophy guides him in mentoring the NT students under his charge.

Mr Syam organises various holistic development programmes that effectively inspire the students to explore and strengthen their rapport with their teachers. He established the One Earth Club (OEC) to re-engage NT students who have dropped out of their CCAs. Through coastal clean ups and monthly nature treks, these students became rejuvenated in their role as learners with some of them able to assume leadership positions in the process. The club also enables Mr Syam to forge meaningful teacher-student relationships with the more challenging NT students.

To ensure sustained engagement, Mr Syam initiated the annual overseas Values in Action (VIA) programmes such as 'Project We Care' and 'Project We Appreciate' for the NT cohort. These programmes which is now into its 11th year has provided countless opportunities for the underprivileged students to play their part to contribute to the society. Through collaborative and fund raising activities, the students were able to expand their world view, build self-confidence, hone entrepreneurial skills and nurture a sense of humility and perseverance.



In addition, Mr Syam believes in the value of skills building in an authentic learning context. One example is the innovative partnership which he forged with Halogen Foundation to run the Financial Literacy Programme. The students learnt to craft and market business plans with activities that include learning journeys to companies. Through this process, they received opportunities to hone communication and research skills, necessary to thrive in the workplace, in real world business context. Mr Syam is also committed to keeping a repertoire of skills in his pedagogical toolbox. For example, he employs inquiry-based learning using discrepant events and differentiated instruction. This innovation, obtained from his insights on the students' learning styles, has helped to allay their fear of science and to see the relevance of science in their daily lives. In reaching out to his students, Mr Syam's focus has always been about balancing the importance to enable students to grasp fundamental science concepts with the need to stretch the potential of high ability students.

Mr Syam, as an educator, has always put the interest of his students and colleagues in his heart; empowering the students with personal and life skills and enhancing the professional capital of his colleagues. Mr Syam uses his influence to create many positive ripple effects of success. He actively fosters professional collaboration and initiates learning communities within and beyond his school; the outcome of which is the creation of meaningful experiential learning packages.