

## Less legwork, more lab work

### Advanced labs at NUS High save the students trips to NUS and they can do night research

By Grace Chua

THE NUS High School for Mathematics and Science now has six laboratory facilities as good as those found in universities.

The new labs and rooms, which cost about \$5 million, include spaces for clean energy research, life sciences, aerodynamics and laser research, and chemical synthesis and analysis.

Previously, students who needed advanced equipment had to use the National University of Singapore's labs.

"This lightens the burden on the scientist-mentors at NUS, and the school's labs can be opened up in the evening for students to do research," said NUS High director of research, innovation and enterprise Goh Hock Leong.

The labs, which span about 1,200 sq m, were opened on Thursday after the school's convocation ceremony for its second batch of 88 graduating students.

Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean, who came up with the idea of the specialised science school when he was education minister, was the guest of honour.

In a speech, he said NUS High was part of the national strategy of promoting science and mathematics. "We also need to ensure we have a population which is well grounded in mathematics and science so we can stay ahead of the curve."

NUS High School was started in 2005 to cater to students talented in mathematics and science disciplines. This year's valedictorian, Tan Zhong Ming, 18, spoke fondly in a speech of "explosions of cracking glass in the physics lab" as students tried to do experiments.

The son of an assistant engineer and a clinical laboratory technologist scored 250 – a good score, but not outstanding – in his PSLE and went on to Catholic High School, but left at Secondary 3 to attend NUS High.

"Conventionally, I wouldn't have had a chance at all," he said.

He hopes to study physics in the US, at Princeton University or the University of Chicago after completing national service.