For Immediate Release

Republic Polytechnic celebrates 10 years of nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship

Singapore, 4 January 2012 – Republic Polytechnic (RP), Singapore’s youngest polytechnic, today kicked off an exciting year of activities to celebrate its 10th anniversary with a ceremony officiated by Principal and CEO, Mr Yeo Li Pheow and Deputy Chairman of Republic Polytechnic Board of Governors, Mr Ong Chao Choon.

The event for the launch of RP’s 10th anniversary celebrations saw the unveiling of a new triangular banner bearing the Republic Polytechnic 10th Anniversary logo. The banner is now proudly displayed at The Mound facing Woodlands Avenue 9, symbolising RP’s rising aspirations to be an educational institution of choice.

Since entering the higher-education arena as Singapore’s fifth polytechnic in 2002, RP has achieved a number of milestones, establishing itself as a respected choice for tertiary education. Students at RP learn through a process of Problem Based Learning (PBL) – a unique pedagogical approach based on the ideal of “learning by doing” – instilling in them the basic skill set of problem solving process skills and teamwork.

Since it enrolled its first batch of 800 students in 2003, with three schools offering five diplomas, RP has grown extensively, and today has over 13,000 students at its 20-hectare campus, which houses six schools and four centres offering 38 courses across various disciplines.

RP’s Principal and CEO, Mr Yeo Li Pheow said: “RP has had to transform itself over the course of its journey to evolve as an educational institution. Today we are assured that RP graduates leave us equipped with the skill sets and confidence to meet a constantly changing workplace.”

Speaking at the anniversary event, Mr Ong Chao Choon, Deputy Chairman of RP’s Board of Governors said: “As we enter our second decade, we will face new and no less daunting challenges. With the global economy and environment expected to change drastically in the next 10 years, competing against other First World economies will require our students to be equipped differently from their predecessors. Our Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach gives us a good platform to stimulate thinking skills and innovation in our students. We need to continue to improve and adapt our PBL approach to ensure our students stay ahead of the game, and are imbied with an attitude to learn and tackle challenges throughout their working lives.”
A culture of collaboration, innovation and entrepreneurship

In line with its goal of nurturing innovative, entrepreneurial and cultured professionals for key growth industries, RP has actively engaged numerous stakeholders over the last decade to ensure that its students’ skills are aligned with the needs of these industries. To this end, RP has signed MOUs with leading organisations such as IBM, Eu Yan Sang and Resorts World Sentosa, to help equip students with industry-relevant skills and knowledge. In the past two years, RP has secured over 1,000 industry partners for student and staff research collaborations.

A catalyst for innovation, RP has furthered its technological engagement with industry players through events such as its Technology Day, at which its various schools have showcased some cutting edge research from its students and faculty. Last year, for example, students at the School of Engineering developed a technology that uses an iPhone to process brain signals to control home appliances, while in 2010 Dr. Willy Tan from the School of Applied Science worked with Professor Liu from NUS and ST Kinetic to develop a type of silk that was strong enough to be used for bullet-proof vests.

Annually RP’s students from its School of Engineering also walk away with top prizes in key competitions such as the Singapore Robotic Games. In the 2011 edition of this competition which saw the participation of teams from many of Singapore’s leading tertiary institutions, students from RP walked away with a total of seven trophies, including a clean sweep in the Autonomous Underwater Robot Category.

A strong testament to the effectiveness of RP’s unique curriculum and learning environment are its alumni, who have secured jobs at a multitude of highly reputed organizations. Many RP graduates have also started businesses of their own. Among these are graduates such as Derek Ong, a graduate from RP’s School of Applied Science, who after receiving a $50,000 grant from SPRING Singapore for his business, established O Savory, a food company offering what is possibly Singapore’s first fish bak kwa, via an online portal. Meanwhile, a team of three graduates from RP’s School of Infocomm and School of Engineering set up Seeksquare Pte Ltd, which aims to minimise the time needed for consumers to search for products and services by matching businesses and consumers through a centralised IT platform.

Developing well-rounded students

To help develop graduates who are well-rounded individuals with skills and pursuits extending beyond pure academics, RP has undertaken various projects that allow its students to explore their interests outside the classroom. For the past four years, The Republic Cultural Centre (TRCC) has organised RP’s annual arts and cultural events – such as the IGNITE! Music Festival, Momentum Dance Festival and Reflections. All three community arts events encourage students to develop and showcase their artistic talents both on stage as well as backstage.

Students at RP have also been taught the importance of giving back to the community. The 2011 Republic Run, jointly organized by Republic Polytechnic and Nam Hong Welfare Service Society, saw 3,500 participants and S$150,000 raised for the Nam Hong Welfare Service Society. Through initiatives like the Underwater Robotics Olympiad and the Science and
Mathematics Pursuit, RP students have mentored students from secondary schools, and helped inculcate in them an interest in science and innovation.

10 events to celebrate a decade of nurturing young innovators

RP will celebrate its 10th Anniversary throughout 2012 with a line-up of 10 major events including a Family Day in March, the Republic Run and IGNITE! Music Festival in July and a Technology Forum in September.