

LAS Lifetime Contribution Award

Wee Joo Gim

Wee Joo Gim is one of Singapore's pioneer librarians whose stellar career as a creative and tireless problem solver, nation builder, and widely admired library leader spanned nearly 40 years.

Joo Gim began her career at the Singapore Polytechnic Library in 1966 where she won a prestigious Ford Foundation Scholarship to study Library Science at the University of Wisconsin in the United States. In 1970, she joined the University of Singapore's Medical and later Engineering Library before being tapped to create and lead the Colombo Plan Staff College Library for Technician Education serving participants from 26 Colombo Plan countries for nearly a decade.

In 1984, she was appointed Assistant Director of the Reference Library at the National Productivity Board, which she administered, reorganized and marketed, before returning to the National University of Singapore Library in 1986 as Assistant Librarian at the Medical Library. She was soon promoted to head the library, where she continued to enhance its reputation as Southeast Asia's leading medical library. In 1993, Joo Gim was appointed Deputy Librarian of the NUS Library System in charge of technical services, helping to spawn a culture of continual process improvement, including reorganizing the Technical Services and introducing more IT based programs and services. She concluded her formal library career in 2003, after working two years as Principal Assistant Librarian to implement the project to organize the digitized Photographs Collection of NUS' Central Library.

Joo Gim's name was synonymous with the Library Association of Singapore (LAS). She was a hands-on, collaborative, frugal, and visionary leader who held virtually every LAS Council position, including serving five terms as LAS Council President. She championed numerous forward looking initiatives, such as establishing a library school, funding the education and professional development of librarians, encouraging greater cooperation among libraries and librarians, raising the status of librarians, creating a permanent LAS Secretariat, and building a healthier financial position for LAS. She served on nearly a dozen LAS committees, organized innumerable events, and also represented LAS regionally on CONSAL's Executive Board and the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA) Council.

Joo Gim has been recognized as a forthright and principled role model, strict task master, perfectionist, and respected colleague. She patiently mentored and inspired

a generation of librarians, changed lives, built warm and lasting friendships with peers, and brilliantly chronicled the development of Singapore's libraries and LAS. In recognition of her deep commitment, selfless service, and passionate efforts to promote and strengthen LAS and the library community in Singapore and the rest of Asia, it is a privilege to honour Wee Joo Gim with the 2014 LAS Lifetime Contribution Award.