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Headline: Four Singapore students with disabilities receive Microsoft YouthSpark Scholarships

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Four young Singaporeans with disabilities have been awarded scholarships to pursue higher education in IT-related fields at the *Microsoft YouthSpark Scholarship 2016* award ceremony. The *Microsoft YouthSpark Scholarship*, now into its eighth year and administered by disability organisation SPD, aims to help promising local youths with disabilities pursue higher learning in information technology (IT)-related fields, by providing them with funding for IT-related diplomas or degree courses offered by local polytechnics and universities.

Among this year's batch of scholarship recipients is second-time beneficiary 22-year-old Tan Jian Hao, who was diagnosed with loss of hearing at the age of seven. While the loss of hearing caused him to lack confidence, Tan received constant encouragement from his family and friends, and began to lip-read and communicate through sign language. He has since graduated with a Diploma in Engineering Informatics at Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP).

This year, Tan will be pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems at the Singapore Management University. He also excels in sports and is passionate about giving back to the community and helping others with disabilities.

Another scholarship recipient, 19-year-old Noah Si, was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) at the age of four, which made it very challenging for him to engage in class activities meaningfully. Despite facing language difficulties and social barriers, Si persevered and did well for his GCE 'A' levels to qualify for a place at the National University of Singapore (NUS) to study computer science and mathematics. Si aspires to be a professor one day, blazing the path as a role model for fellow autistic youths to follow.

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