

**ADDRESS BY MR BRUCE POH, DIRECTOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
ITE, AT THE ITE STUDENT ACHIEVERS' AWARDS 2009 PRESENTATION
CEREMONY, ON FRIDAY 22 MAY 2009, AT 1000 HOURS, AT ITE AUDITORIUM,
ITE HEADQUARTERS, DOVER DRIVE**

Distinguished Guests

Parents

Award Recipients

Fellow colleagues and students

Ladies and gentlemen

Introduction

Good morning and welcome to the ITE Student Achievers' Awards 2009 Presentation Ceremony. While we hold this event every year, it is good for us to reflect on these questions: *Who is an ITE Student Achiever? And why is today a cause for celebration?*

Honouring ITE's Outstanding Young Talents

2 Consider the story of Sukvinderjit Singh. After failing to obtain a Student Pass to continue his studies in Singapore (he was from Malaysia), Sukvinderjit had to work here for four years and then serve National Service before being accepted into ITE College East. He did not give up his aspirations to have a Singapore education. His perseverance paid off. The arduous journey that Sukvinderjit went through, which others take for granted, spurred him to excel in his studies. As President of the Interact Club and Assistant Director of the Community Service Club, he also applied his Nursing skills to care for and bring cheer to the aged and terminally-ill children.

3 We have another Student Achiever – Muhammed Afiq. He has a life motto, which has served him very well: *"There are very few dead ends to anything"*. What others see as problems, Afiq sees solutions. For his positive attitude in pursuing excellence, he is elected the President of the ITE College Central Student Council by

his peers. It was in ITE that his leadership and organisational skills were honed. And he cherished the opportunity to lead a team of students on an Overseas Community Service trip to Thailand in 2008. On top of his many commitments, Afiq still maintained a perfect 4.0 Grade Point Average in his studies.

4 One more Student Achiever amongst us today is Natalie Lim. You can tell a lot from a person's character by what she takes pleasure in. As for Natalie, lending a helping hand and touching lives give her satisfaction. The President of the Student Council and Vice-President of the Co-op at ITE College West (Clementi Campus) believes in the concept of servant leadership, where she can serve those she leads. Perhaps, the best testament to that is her desire to become an ITE lecturer one day.

5 These are some real stories about our ITE Student Achievers this year. I hear many of such stories year after year. They never cease to amaze me. This Ceremony is necessary to give due recognition to them – for their achievements in co-curricular activities, sports and innovations. The award recipients are also lauded for their contributions towards enriching the ITE learning environment, while maintaining consistency in their academic performance.

6 Today, we are pleased to honour **332** award recipients, who have demonstrated strong passion and resilience in the relentless pursuit of their goals in the respective fields. On behalf of the ITE College Management and staff, I extend to you our heartiest congratulations. You have done us proud.

Uniquely ITE

7 At ITE, we are interested in educating the whole being, not just an assessment of academic or skills ability. That is why ITE's unique brand of ***Hands-on, Minds-on and Hearts-on*** Education prepares our youths for life's challenges. We aim to provide every student with an all-rounded education, regardless of their interests and abilities. We aim to develop their full potential – in both academic and non-academic pursuits

8 Through a Holistic Student Development Framework, students have varied opportunities to develop and excel in Games and Sports, the Arts, Community Service, Leadership, Enterprise and Innovation, and Global Education. The challenges and diverse learning experiences provided through these programmes help to hone the leadership and social skills of students; build personal responsibility; and create cultural awareness for a better quality of life.

The Lee Kuan Yew Awards

9 This morning, **37** among you will be presented with the prestigious **Lee Kuan Yew Awards** for the outstanding accomplishments in the various fields. These awards were introduced in Year 2000 arising from the \$555,000 donation made by then-Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew to ITE, using the sales proceeds of his memoirs.

10 I am pleased to announce that Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew has kindly donated another \$30,000 to help towards the cause of promoting the academic aspirations of ITE students and graduates. The amount is an honorarium that Minister Mentor recently received from the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation in Brunei Darussalam. The honorarium was presented to Minister Mentor for the inaugural Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Memorial Lecture delivered by him on 25 February 2009 in Brunei Darussalam. The donation will be used to fund a new Book Prize for outstanding ITE graduates.

New Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Book Prize

11 The new **Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Book Prize** is worth **\$500 each**. We will award **up to six** outstanding ITE graduates each year. The awardees will be selected from among the ITE recipients of the Lee Kuan Yew Scholarship to Encourage Upgrading (LKY-STEP) Award, who have excelled in their respective courses, and have progressed to full-time studies at the polytechnics. The Book Prize will be awarded for the first time with the other LKY-STEP awards at the MOE Special Awards Ceremony in August 2009.

12 On behalf of ITE Management, staff and students, I wish to express our appreciation to Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew for his thoughtfulness and generosity towards ITE students and graduates. The new Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Book Prize will provide further recognition to outstanding ITE students, and encourage them to work hard and excel in their studies at the polytechnics.

Conclusion

13 In conclusion, to pick up from my stories earlier, it would be an anti-climax if I do not share with everyone here the happy endings of Sukvinderjit Singh, Muhammed Afiq Hakim and Natalie Lim. They have since moved on to further their studies in the polytechnics. And we wish them the very best in their endeavours.

14 I would also like to applaud two groups of people who play a quiet, but pivotal role in grooming our students. We all owe a big thank you to you, the parents and ITE lecturers, for their unstinting support and care that help to bring out the best in their young charges. Today's celebrations are for you, too.

15 To the award recipients, my parting advice is for you to continue to have clear goals in your life, work hard, be it in your careers or studies, and be inspiring role models to the next cohort of ITE students. I would also like to encourage all of you to build upon today's achievements for tomorrow's success.

16 Congratulations and best wishes to one and all.