

**ADDRESS BY MR BRUCE POH, DIRECTOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/ITE AT THE ITE GRADUATION CEREMONY, ON FRIDAY 12 JUNE 2015, AT 3.00PM, AT THE AUDITORIUM, TAY ENG SOON CONVENTION CENTRE,**

**Mr Heng Swee Keat**, Minister for Education

**Mr Heng Chiang Gnee**, Deputy Chairman, ITE

Members of the ITE Board of Governors

Excellency, Graduands, Parents, Colleagues

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

**Introduction**

- 1 Welcome to the 2015 ITE Graduation Ceremony. We are pleased to have as our Guest-of-Honour, Mr Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Education. Thank you, Minister, for joining us in celebrating the success of our graduands.
- 2 Today, we mark the graduation of **12,522** students from ITE's full-time, traineeship and part-time courses for Academic Year 2014/2015. Of these, **630** will receive **Certificates of Merit** for excelling in their courses. Among them, **223 graduands** will receive **Course Medals** for achieving outstanding results.

- 3 Another **10** will receive the **Tay Eng Soon Scholarship Awards** for their outstanding results and excellent participation in Co-Curricular Activities. The Award was instituted in memory of the late Dr Tay Eng Soon, former Chairman of ITE and Minister-in-charge of Polytechnics and Institute of Technical Education from 1981 to 1993.
- 4 My heartiest congratulations to all graduands and award winners on your achievements.

#### **Fruitful Year for ITE in AY2014/2015**

- 5 Academic Year 2014/2015 has been an exhilarating one for ITE. Student enrolment reached a high of **30,023** [*FT 29,295 +TRN 728*]. This reaffirms the attractiveness of ITE Education.
- 6 Our spectrum of courses continues to meet the interests of school leavers, and industry needs. Today, we have 101 courses in 11 sectors, ranging from *Nitec* courses, to *Higher Nitec* and Technical Diploma programmes. These courses, including three new courses launched this year, are reviewed regularly to meet the manpower needs of both established and emerging industries.

- 7 We are also heartened that our graduates who entered the job market last year continue to be in demand. The 2014 ITE Graduate Employment Survey showed that ITE graduates enjoy high employment rates, with nine in 10 graduates employed within six months. Our graduates also receive higher salaries, with gross mean salary rising from \$1,686 in 2013, to \$1,782 in 2014.

### **New Five-Year Strategic Roadmap *ITE Trailblazer* (2015-2019)**

- 8 Every five years, ITE formulates a new Strategic Roadmap to ensure that we remain relevant to our stakeholders and industry. In February this year, we launched our **new 5-year strategic plan, the *ITE Trailblazer*, to develop career-ready and world-ready graduates.**
- 9 ***ITE Trailblazer*** is ITE's strategic response to Singapore's next phase of development as an advanced economy and society, where growth will be powered by knowledge, skills, innovation and ingenuity. It is also very aligned with the thrusts of SkillsFuture.

10 Under the new plan, we will focus on:

- Empowering learning for our students by leveraging on new technologies to engage and inspire students. We will use more info-comm technology in our teaching to make it more interesting and accessible. We will also adopt discipline-specific pedagogies to customise teaching methods;
- Providing opportunities for them in honing and mastering skills, through more applied learning and internship opportunities; and
- Helping in building careers, through enhanced career guidance and developmental programmes to instil in our students the values and competencies for long-term career success.

### **Celebrating the Success of an Outstanding Top Graduate of AY2014/2015**

11 Like all our previous Strategic Plans, the interest of students remains core to the focus of *ITE Trailblazer*. Each student is important to us, and we aim to ensure that

every student who passes through ITE leaves us enriched by the knowledge, skills and values he received.

- 12 Let me illustrate with the story of Andrew Tan Kai Hao, whose journey through ITE typifies how students who are keen to work with us can be transformed. You saw him in the video just now.
- 13 Andrew, in his own words, was not a good student in secondary school. He did not have good grades, and did not do very well in secondary school. When he had a chance to study in ITE, as part of the pioneer batch of the Direct Entry to Polytechnic Programme, or DPP, he made up his mind to do well.
- 14 With care and guidance from his lecturers, Andrew developed an interest in the *Higher Nitec* in Electrical Engineering course that he was posted to, and blossomed. He participated actively in course-related activities, and won many competitions and awards. He was on the Director's List for both 2013 and 2014, and was awarded the Singapore Power Book Prize and Phoenix Contact Book Prize Award in 2014. He trained hard for the 2014 WorldSkills Singapore and 10<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Skills Competition, in Hanoi last year, in Information Network Cabling and

won Gold in both competitions. Andrew was also bestowed with the 'Best of Nation' title in the ASEAN Skills Competition. More recently, he clinched the esteemed Lee Kuan Yew Model Student Award 2015 and ITE College East Outstanding Graduate Award 2015.

## **Conclusion**

- 15 Andrew's achievements are remarkable and show the power of self-belief. I am sure there are many graduands here today who have also stories of determination, excellence and perseverance, and of success.
- 16 ITE has prepared you well to take on the challenges ahead. I encourage you to stay positive and adopt a 'can-do' attitude. Resilience and perseverance will take you far, regardless of which route you take after graduation. Stay in touch with your lecturers and friends. Join the ITE Alumni and be an active participant of alumni events and activities.
- 17 Finally, I encourage you not just to excel in your chosen careers, but to contribute back to society.
- 18 Thank you, and once again, my heartiest congratulations to all.