

ADDRESS BY MR BRUCE POH, DIRECTOR & CEO/ITE, AT ITE STUDENT ACHIEVERS' AWARDS 2015 PRESENTATION CEREMONY, ON THU 28 MAY 2015, 10.00AM, AT THE AUDITORIUM, TAY ENG SOON CONVENTION CENTRE, ITE HEADQUARTERS

Distinguished Guests

Parents

Award Recipients

Colleagues, Students

Ladies and Gentlemen

Introduction

- 1 Good morning and welcome to the ITE Student Achievers' Awards Presentation Ceremony 2015.
- 2 Today, we celebrate the achievements and contributions of some **400** students who have shown the desire, drive and will to achieve personal excellence in co-curricular activities (CCAs), sports and arts, and technological innovations. My heartiest congratulations to each and every one of you!

Remembering Mr Lee Kuan Yew's Contributions to ITE

- 3 The achievements of the award recipients show that given the right opportunities, our students can thrive and do well in life. And this was the hope of the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew. In 1998, he donated **\$555,000** from the proceeds of his Memoirs, to set up the **Lee Kuan Yew Awards for achievements in CCAs, Model Student/Trainee, and Technology Awards**. Many ITE students and graduates have, over the years, benefited from his generosity and support.

Life Is What You Make of It

- 4 The late Mr Lee once said, *“Life is what you make of it. You are dealt with a pack of cards... Your job is to make the best of the cards that have been handed out to you.”*¹
- 5 I know that many of you had faced tough challenges and circumstances in life. But, you did not give up. You made the best out of what life had handed you, and persevered.
- 6 I am very proud of you!
- 7 But I believe a truly successful person is not one who just makes good for himself. A truly successful person is one who remembers others in his success, and works hard to bring others with him/her, so that they, too, will succeed. I am therefore very heartened that many of you have done that, and made a difference to others. We have many role models, and I would like to share one with you.

From Troubled Youth to Role Model

- 8 **Gary Lau** did not have the best growing-up experience. His father was a sole breadwinner. His sister has down-syndrome. Before joining ITE, Gary got into in trouble with the law.
- 9 But Gary has not let his past determine his future. Through the encouragement of mentors and friends, and through sheer determination, Gary changed the course of his life. From a troubled youth, Gary became a top student. From a troubled youngster, he became a valued member of society, and a role model for other youths.

¹ <http://news.asiaone.com/News/AsiaOne+News/Singapore/Story/A1Story20111031-307804.html>

- 10 Today, the *Nitec* in Community Care and Service student is not just a straight 'A' student, but also the Vice-President of the Interact Club and Care Connection Club. He conducts peer support workshops and activities for autistic children; represented Singapore as part of the Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS); and was attached to the Social Welfare Agency in Seattle, Washington, where he provided help to the homeless and needy.
- 11 Outside school, Gary dedicates his time to helping youths-at-risk. As a volunteer with Campvision, and through his work at Eighteen Chefs (a local eatery), he mentors troubled teenagers and helps ex-convicts reintegrate into society.
- 12 For his tenacity, achievements and contributions to the community, Gary will receive the **Lee Kuan Yew Model Student Award**.
- 13 Gary and all of you here today are living testimonies of the power of change. If you set your mind to do it right at ITE, you can scale new heights and make a difference – to yourself and the community.

SEA Games

- 14 Before I conclude, I would also like to share that we are proud that **10** current ITE students and **45** ITE graduates will be representing Singapore in the coming SEA Games next month. We wish them all the best in the Games.

Conclusion

- 15 Students and graduates, today is a proud day for you, your families and all of us here at ITE. Congratulations once again, and best wishes for your future endeavours. Thank you.