

**ADDRESS BY MS LOW KHAH GEK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/ITE AT THE ITE GRADUATION CEREMONY, ON TUESDAY 25 JULY 2017, AT 3.00PM, AT THE TAY ENG SOON CONVENTION CENTRE, ITE HEADQUARTERS**

**Introduction**

- 1 Welcome to ITE Graduation Ceremony. ITE plays a vital role in meeting the skilled manpower needs of Singapore. I am happy to share that in Academic Year 2016/2017, **13,731** students are graduating. Today, **711** will receive **Certificates of Merit** for excelling in their courses. Among these graduands, **213** will also receive **Course Medals** for being the top achievers in their respective courses.
  
- 2 I offer my Heartiest Congratulations to all graduands and award winners. You have seized the opportunities here in ITE and have done outstandingly well. We are proud of you and share your joy.

**A Momentous Year for ITE**

- 3 This year, ITE celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We have much to celebrate given the tremendous progress made since our formation in 1992. Our achievements and impact are encapsulated into the celebration theme: *25 Years of Inspiration, Transformation and Excellence*.

- 6 ITE's transformation has been holistic. We have changed ***what we teach*** – from **24 courses across 4 industry sectors** in 1992, to **98 courses across 12 industry sectors** today.
  
- 7 We have transformed ***where we teach*** – our teaching and learning environment have changed. From 10 smaller satellite campuses, we now have three magnificent mega Colleges, which our students enjoy and international visitors admire. Moving into larger and more comprehensive campuses, like the one we are in now, allows us to do so much more in terms of creating learning and development opportunities for our students.
  
- 8 We have also changed ***how we teach***, embracing applied learning, evidenced by the authentic learning facilities which simulate actual work environments, like a Training Hotel, Restaurants, an aircraft hangar with real aircrafts, including a Boeing 737, and a Healthcare Simulation Centre. Such authentic real-world training has provided our graduates with a seamless transition into their work places.
  
- 9 ITE works very closely with the industry. Today, we have **120 Memoranda of Understanding** with industry partners who pledged their commitment to share knowledge and technology with us so that our students and staff keep abreast with industry transformation and technology changes.

- 10 We have **1,700 Internship Agreements** with companies, creating 10,000 internship places. These allow our students to gain **real work** exposure.
- 11 We have grown **our network of international partners to 18**, facilitating international experience, overseas industry attachment and exchange programmes for staff and students.
- 12 However, one thing has not changed over these two and a half decades – the commitment and passion of our staff. They are the ones who give so much of themselves to help our students find their strengths and passion, encourage them to set higher goals and motivate them to realise their aspirations.

### **A Strong Positive Impact on Graduates**

- 13 ITE's transformation is not just reflected in the beautiful buildings and modern facilities. ITE's impact lies in the many lives that it has touched and enriched.
- 14 Between 1992 and now, ITE has impacted **1.5 million** learners who have benefited from their education at ITE to find their niches, develop their skills and grow their careers.
- 15 The 2014 ITE 10-year Graduate Employment Survey showed that after ten years, **21% of ITE graduates had attained managerial or professional jobs** and **8% had started their own businesses**.

- 16 The public and employers now have a better perception of ITE. The public view our students as **‘creative’ and ‘innovative’**. Employers find ITE graduates **‘technically competent’ and ‘good team players’**. Indeed, ITE graduates are now highly sought after by the industries.

### **A Poster Boy for ITE**

- 17 Let me share with you about one of our graduands present today – **Low Wei Ting**, who is graduating with a *Nitec* in Aerospace Avionics.
- 18 Wei Ting did not have to convince his parents when he wanted to study at ITE. His father had studied Precision Engineering at ITE’s predecessor, the Vocational and Industrial Training Board (or VITB) and was very impressed with how ITE had evolved. He was confident his son, Wei Ting, would grow and develop well at ITE.
- 19 A keen aviation enthusiast, Wei Ting excelled at ITE. Wei Ting represented ITE at the 2016 WorldSkills Singapore Competition, where he outperformed competitors from the polytechnics to clinch a Gold Medal in Aircraft Maintenance. He then represented Singapore at the 2016 ASEAN Skills Competition, where he again won a Gold Medal.
- 20 We would have thought that Wei Ting would be too busy with his studies and preparing for the various skills competitions to have any time left for other pursuits. Yet, amazingly Wei Ting managed

to find time for his CCA, the Black Knight Air Scouts and for volunteering with the Willing Hearts Community Programme where he organised the packing and distribution of food to elderly and underprivileged families around Singapore.

- 21 Wei Ting has charted his future and is already working towards becoming a Licenced Aircraft Engineer. He will again be representing Team Singapore at the International WorldSkills Competition, in Abu Dhabi, in October this year. We wish him all the best in the competition and in his career.
  
- 22 Wei Ting shared that his achievements are possible because of the strong support of his parents, the bond and camaraderie of his friends and the dedication of his teachers. Likewise, I hope all graduands would remember to thank the people who have played a significant role in your success and who would treasure this moment of pride with you.

### **Remaining Relevant and Ready**

- 23 Wei Ting epitomises today's ITE students – determined to do well, passionate about life and compassionate towards the community. They have embraced ITE's *Hands-on, Minds-on, Hearts-on* philosophy and will continue to chart their lives towards achieving their dreams.

- 24 In the years ahead, ITE will have to continue to transform, embrace new technologies and ensure our curricula for our students are industry-relevant.
- 25 Just as ITE has to be prepared to deal with change, so do you, our graduands. While the knowledge, skills and values we have imparted to you provide a good foundation to launch your careers and support your future learning, you will need to keep abreast of new developments at the work place. Keep yourself relevant, resilient and ready.
- 26 ITE has a wide range of Continuing Education & Training programmes for our graduates and adult learners to upskill or reskill. We hope that you will return to ITE to refresh and upgrade your skills and knowledge as you navigate your career and journey in life.
- 27 As I urge our new graduands to embrace a journey of lifelong learning, I want to congratulate the **34 adult learners** who are graduating today with a Certificate of Merit. Among you, 13 will also be receiving Course Medals. I applaud not only your decision to come back to deepen your skills under ITE's Continuing Education & Training, but also your extreme commitment and dedication which have enabled you to sacrifice many nights and weekends to complete the training course. It is not easy juggling learning, work commitments and family responsibilities. Having done so and achieving stellar results is certainly cause for celebration today. You are exemplary role models of lifelong learning.

## **Conclusion**

28 Once again, I congratulate all graduands and awardees. I wish all of you the very best in your careers and lives. Be strong advocates and ambassadors for ITE. I hope to meet you at our alumni events.

29 Thank you!