

ADDRESS BY MS LOW KHAH GEK, CEO/ITE, AT ITE STUDENT ACHIEVERS' AWARDS 2018 PRESENTATION CEREMONY, ON WED 16 MAY 2018, AT 1000 HOURS, AT THE AUDITORIUM, TAY ENG SOON CONVENTION CENTRE, ITE HEADQUARTERS

Introduction

- 1 This morning, we honour the outstanding achievements of **418** students. They have demonstrated grit, resilience, compassion and the spirit of innovation in the various tasks that they have undertaken. Your lecturers and parents are proud of you. I extend my heartiest congratulations to you too.
- 2 Every year, we continue to witness and be moved by the transformation journeys of our students during their stint at ITE. Many students surpassed their parents' and their own expectations of themselves and went on to achieve outstanding achievements in your studies, your CCAs and in community service.
- 3 Let me illustrate this through the stories of our four award winners, **Shazuan, Ryan, Amanda and Jagateesvaran.**

Muhammad Shazuan Bin Shiraj Abdullah

- 4 Many would remember Shazuan as the confident, lively and high-spirited emcee at ITE College East events. Few would know that before coming to ITE, Shazuan struggled to find his confidence and direction in life. In school, he was a victim of bullying. At home, he had to adjust to life in a single-parent family.

- 5 When Shazuan joined ITE, he felt he was given a fresh start and a new lease of life. He was determined to use the many opportunities available to grow, to develop useful skills and to look beyond his own struggles. Shazuan excelled in his *Nitec* in Community Care & Social Services course, and participated in various social service projects such as mentoring at-risk children at AWWA Family Service Centre and visiting a children's home in Jakarta to conduct lessons. He has achieved great satisfaction in helping others, and now aspires to be a social worker. He is currently pursuing a Diploma in Social Sciences (Social Work) at Nanyang Polytechnic.
- 6 Shazuan was surprised when his lecturer, Mr Aaron Soo, saw his potential for public speaking. At the encouragement of his lecturer, Shazuan joined the Speakers' Society. He worked hard to improve his public speaking skills and grew to excel in it, winning the ITE College East Public Speaking Competition in 2017. More impressively, he emerged first runner-up in the tertiary category of the 2017 YMCA Plain English Speaking Awards where he had to compete against JC and Poly students.
- 7 Shazuan, we are inspired by your story of indomitable determination to uplift yourself to grow, shine and excel as well as your selflessness to use your abilities and talents to help others. We are proud of you.

Ryan Noel Bangras

- 8 As for Ryan, he took more time than others to discover his passion. Growing up, he enjoyed theatre but also loved infocomm technology. After doing theatre studies at the School of the Arts (SOTA) for four

years, Ryan realised that his true passion lies in infocomm technology. He decided to join ITE to pursue this passion and did the *Nitec* in Infocomm Technology (Mobile Networks & Applications) course at College West.

- 9 The switch was not easy, but with the support of his teachers at ITE, Ryan re-discovered the joy of learning and re-gained confidence and self-belief. He immersed himself thoroughly in the various activities at ITE. He took part in competitions such as the National Science Experiment Big Data Challenge and the National Data Viz Video Challenge. He contributed extensively to ITE and community events such as being the emcee at the ITE-VTC International Student Seminar and teaching IT skills to the elderly at the Silver IT Fest. Ryan has also created an ITE College West Student Handbook app to help orientate freshmen. Ryan is now pursuing his Diploma in Information Technology at Ngee Ann Polytechnic.
- 10 Ryan hopes that his ITE story of re-discovering himself, re-igniting his dreams and passion and re-firing his compassion will inspire other students to believe in themselves and create their own success stories. Thank you Ryan for sharing your story and being an inspiration to us all!

Amanda Neo Yan Lin

- 11 Another student, Amanda, showed strong resilience and leadership to rise above challenges and make the best out of her educational experience at ITE. She was the leader of two CCAs, serving as the

President of ITE College East Student Council and Captain of the volleyball team.

- 12 When Amanda first assumed her role in the Student Council, she struggled to get the support of some members. Through her strong dedication to her duties and “leading by example” leadership style, she eventually earned their respect as an inspirational and caring leader.
- 13 Amanda faced another challenge, when she sustained a permanent injury that ruled her out of competitive volleyball. With the encouragement of her teacher, Ms Pestana Venetia Frances, Amanda picked herself up and continued to mentor her teammates as Vice-Captain of the team. Instead of playing the game, Amanda decided to do refereeing and thoroughly enjoyed it. Indeed, this experience has helped Amanda discover her true passion and upon graduating from the *Nitec* in Business Services course, she has moved on to pursue a Diploma in Sports Coaching at Republic Polytechnic.
- 14 Amanda has shown how perseverance and a positive mindset can yield positive outcomes. Well done Amanda!

Jagateesvaran Rajoo

- 15 Jagateesvaran struggled with learning because of dyslexia. When he was younger, he could barely read or complete a sentence. However, he was determined not to let this disability stop him from pursuing his dream of being an IT programmer. He invested much time and effort

and pushed himself to improve by reading and practising speaking as much as he could. At ITE, Jagateesvaran made the best out of the opportunities available to stretch his potential. He took part in various competitions to hone his programming skills, including WorldSkills Singapore and the International Convention on Vocational Student Innovation Project in Thailand.

- 16 Today, Jagateesvaran is a confident young man with a heart for helping others. He recently conducted a free workshop at the community centre, teaching Java programming. The workshop was so well received that he is planning to run another one in June.
- 17 Jagateesvaran, you have inspired us with your drive to excel and rise above your circumstances. We are very pleased for you currently pursuing a Diploma in Game Development & Technology at Nanyang Polytechnic and are closer to fulfilling your dream of being an IT programmer.

Creativity and Innovation

- 18 Next, I would like to accord special mention to the 34 **Lee Kuan Yew Technology Award** winners. Driven by a passion to improve the lives of others, these students have applied their learning at ITE to come up with practical and innovative solutions to everyday problems. I look forward to viewing the project exhibits of the LKY Technology awardees at the foyer later. I invite all of you to join me in honouring and celebrating their innovation by visiting their booths.

Conclusion

- 19 As we celebrate the achievements of our students, I would also like to express my gratitude to all the parents and teachers here. Our students' successes would not have been possible without your belief in them and your care and support for them. Thank you for standing beside and behind our students and helping them to shine.
- 20 To our award winners, we are very proud of your achievements but more importantly we are proud of your strength of character to rise above the odds and your compassion to care for others. I am confident that all of you will find success in life, and inspire many others to follow in your footsteps.
- 21 Congratulations once again, and I wish you all the very best.
Thank you.