

**Speech by Professor Lily Kong, SMU Provost,
At the official launch of Prinsep Street Residences
Held on 11 October 2018**

Ms Denise Phua, Mayor of Central Singapore District;

Mr Dennis Tan, Head, Consumer Financial Services Singapore, OCBC Bank;

Mr Paul Beh, SMU Trustee;

Partners;

Friends from the media;

Students and faculty;

A very good afternoon.

1. I am very delighted that so many of us are gathered here today for the official opening of Prinsep Street Residences, or PSR as we affectionately call it. The past few months have been intensive for various project teams in SMU, which have dedicated their time and effort to give PSR a 'face-lift'. I must say, the results of the makeover have been transformational.
2. PSR has been refreshed into a beautiful estate with modern amenities and advanced technology, while retaining its original charm and flavour. You will also be proud to know that the PSR estate is now Green Mark Platinum certified by the Singapore Building and Construction Authority, making the entire SMU campus 100% Green Mark Platinum certified.
3. Since August, 255 students of diverse backgrounds, nationalities, and from different disciplines and years of study, have made PSR their new home and are now enjoying communal living, right in the heart of the city, minutes away from the SMU campus. Above all, beyond its charming architecture, strategic location and communal design, what's unique about PSR is the programming that has been thoughtfully curated and incorporated to nurture a co-live, co-learn and co-work community.

4. It is gratifying to hear that although it has only been two months since they moved in, some of the residents are already coming up with proposals to form interest groups, or try their hand at running meal services at PSR. There are also many others who are keen to co-create their learning journeys here. This is precisely the kind of energy and buzz that we wanted to see in PSR. I am confident that by this time next year, many of the residents' ideas would have taken off, and PSR would have grown into a vibrant, tightly-knit community where innovative ideas thrive.
5. Beyond that, through programmes and activities, such as workshops; fire-side chats with industry guests; mentoring and career talks by alumni; community trails; and local and overseas community service projects, we hope to build a *community for the Community*, and nurture students to become change agents by giving back to the Bras Basah Bugis district.
6. For example, a community trail was organised in September to introduce them to the non-profit organisations and social enterprises operating in the precinct. It was an eye-opener for many students – not only were they surprised at the number and the diversity of such organisations in their immediate community, they also learnt about the gaps and opportunities, and the needs and challenges faced by these organisations. We will organise more of such trails in future; I believe the exposure will spark off interesting ideas on how they can make a positive difference in the community.
7. Another dimension that we are developing is the conscious interlacing of academic learning with student experiences at PSR. For example, the community trails mentioned earlier dovetail nicely with a newly-launched course in 'Urban Cultures' under SMU's new Core Curriculum, that explores the possibilities and challenges of urban life over time and space. I see strong potential in weaving the two.
8. At PSR, our vision is to create a favourable residential learning-and-living space that allows students to engage in meaningful, intellectual discourse, and develop their *independent* minds while being *dependable* in deeds. As they curate and execute projects to help the community, they will also learn to *think* deeply and broadly while

acting to create value at home and abroad. These are precisely the distinctive identities that we hope to nurture in our graduates.

9. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank OCBC for sharing and supporting our vision. Thanks to their generosity, 10 students from the current batch of residents have been identified to be FRANK Residents @ PSR. FRANK by OCBC will sponsor one year of their residency as well as fund projects developed by them to benefit the community. This is a very meaningful partnership that will bring tangible impact. We hope to forge more of such collaborations with like-minded partners, so that more students and beneficiaries can benefit.

10. I am a firm believer that the co-live, co-learn and co-work environment will be a transformative experience for students. To all our residents here, I encourage you to seize the opportunities and actively participate in the myriad activities made available. Keep an open mind and embrace the diversity of your new 'family'. Along the way, you will pick up important skills that will help you thrive in the future; and at the same time develop the 'heart' to give back and to create meaningful impact for those around you. This will be a place where you will build character, develop life-skills and forge friendships for life.

11. Once again, I would like to congratulate everyone who has played a part in 'building' this new home and community. I look forward to seeing PSR becoming a key player and contributor in this neighbourhood, and beyond. Let us imagine a community of students committed to making the larger community around them better.

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