



**Welcome Remarks by
Professor Lily Kong, SMU President
SMU Patron's Day 2019
SMU Hall
Friday 25 January 2019**

Excellency, President of Singapore and Patron of SMU, Madam Halimah Yacob
Mr J Y Pillay, Chancellor of SMU
Mr Lim Chee Onn, Pro Chancellor of SMU
Mr Ho Kwon Ping, Chairman of the SMU Board of Trustees
Members of the SMU Board of Trustees
Distinguished guests
SMU faculty, staff, alumni and students

Good evening.

I hope you have enjoyed your meal and good conversation at your tables and beyond.

I believe some of you took the opportunity earlier in the day to visit the students' Patron's Day festivities on Campus Green, which are continuing into the night. They take the theme titled "Sense-sational" and explore how we can experience the world through our senses and in different, unexpected and unusual ways.

It parallels what a good university education should strive to achieve – to open hearts and minds to new experiences and perspectives, encourage us to see things differently, perceive and understand opposing points of view, to experience more of the world and its cultures, to appreciate our own gifts, capabilities and potential, and that of others. The exhibits and activities on Campus Green link to SMU's conviction to make meaningful impact on our students and through our students, faculty and staff.

I was excited to see SMU Malay Language & Cultural Club's Rentak percussion group give Madam Halimah a rousing welcome when she visited Campus Green earlier. While Rentak promotes traditional Malay rhythms through the use of native drums, their original compositions and edgy performances give a new twist to their cultural identity and how it is perceived.

We are proud to be the venue partner on Campus Green for the Sama Sama Art Exhibition, which defines the narrative of migrant workers as unconventional leaders. Part of a campaign in collaboration with NGO HealthServe, it guides viewers to see migrant workers in a different light and to see them in more than their working roles in Singapore. Sama Sama, which means "together" in Malay, draws parallels between the aspirations of migrant workers and ourselves partly through the creative use of interactive smart mirrors. We see ourselves in them – and them in us.

The Makers' Market showcases the entrepreneurial spirit of our students, alumni and staff – with stalls offering everything from terrariums to health foods. Singapore relies on the creativity, ambition and enterprise of businesses like these to drive the



economy forward. Just as their imagination and inventiveness contribute vibrancy to our Patron's Day celebrations – stimulating our five senses in the "Sensesorium" -- they enrich everyday life and society off-campus too.

All that you have seen and heard here today – on Campus Green, at the exhibition, and over the course of this evening – shows how SMU, through our students, alumni, faculty and staff imagines a better world and strives to make a difference. Having recently been appointed as SMU's fifth President, I am committed to ensuring that we will continue to do so to make that difference.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge that everyone here is part of the SMU community, or as we often say, the SMU family. We all have our roles to play and contribute in different ways to help SMU pursue its vision. So thank you all for joining us this evening and for your support. Your contributions and involvement help SMU to make meaningful impact.

Please enjoy the final performance, and have a good evening.

END.