

**SPEECH BY MR MOHD AZMI MUSLIMIN, CHAIRMAN OF MERCU
LEARNING POINT AT THE LAUNCH OF THE MERCU-SMU
EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP ON THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2015
AT 11.15AM AT THE SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY**

Assoc Prof Dr Yaacob Ibrahim
Minister for Communications and Information,
Minister-in-Charge of Cyber Security & Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs

Mr Azmoon Ahmad
Chairman, Association of Muslim Professionals (AMP) Group

Mr Mohd Anuar Yusop
Executive Director, AMP

Prof Arnoud De Meyer
President of Singapore Management University, SMU

Board of Directors

Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good morning.

Firstly, thank you for being here today to join us at the launch of the first-ever scholarship that MERCU is introducing together with SMU to benefit Malay undergraduates studying in SMU.

I would also like to record my appreciation to Minister Yaacob for taking time out of his busy schedule to be with us here today.

Please allow me to begin my speech by sharing some of the best “*pay it forward*” stories from around the world.

- One lady contacted a hospital to see if there were any needy families that could use some flights which she wouldn't be able to use. As a result, one family was able to travel across Australia to be with their very sick family member in hospital.
- One boy noticed a car was just about to receive a summons ticket. He asked his mum if he could top up the parking meter to stop the person from getting booked. It saved someone a \$79 fine.
- A handicapped lady had a 10-minute neck and shoulder massage on a massage machine and left some tokens so the next person could have a massage for free.

“*Paying it forward*” is doing someone a favour - an unconditional act of kindness. The receiver will then pass it to another person with another act of kindness. This will then create a chain of favours being passed on.

As we celebrate SG50, AMP, SMU and MERCU Learning Point Pte Ltd are pleased to announce the launch of the MERCU-SMU Excellence Scholarship.

MERCU, a wholly-owned subsidiary of AMP, together with a Singaporean investment professional and a Singaporean banker, have come together to contribute S\$600,000 to establish the MERCU-SMU Excellence Scholarship for full-time Malay Singaporean undergraduates in SMU.

SMU's broad-based and rigorous curriculum delivers both depth and breadth, and equips students with a total skill-set consisting of hard knowledge skills, soft people skills and the "heart" skills. Its emphasis on giving back to society where all students have to complete 80 hours of community service and take a class in Ethics and Social Responsibility, together with the global exposure and internship opportunities that it offers its students, resonate with our beliefs of the qualities an excellent university should possess.

The establishment of the MERCU-SMU Excellence Scholarship is a small step we are taking in the hopes that others will be encouraged to come forward and give back to the community. This Scholarship aims to provide financial support for needy SMU Malay undergraduates whom we hope will "*pay it forward*" to the larger community. The criteria for the selection of candidates will not only be based on their academic excellence but also on their acumen in contributing to the community.

MERCU Learning Point is a private education organisation that provides childcare and student care services. As an organisation that believes education is the key to success, we have contributed S\$300,000 towards this Scholarship initiative. With 1-to-1 government matching, the S\$1.2 million endowment fund will generate returns to fund three annual scholarships of S\$12,000 each. The Scholarship will offer financial support for the recipients' school fees and other study-related expenses.

MERCU is excited to be part of this amazing journey. We aim to stand shoulder to shoulder with the community in helping those striving towards higher learning. We call out for everyone to be part of the ripple effect of kindness and to *“pay it forward”*.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr Azmoon Ahmad, Mr Anuar Yusop and Mr Henry Chua for their hard work in making this scholarship a reality.

I would also like to congratulate the three inaugural recipients for the scholarship today – Nur Amalina Saparin, Muhammad Hafiz Kasman and Khairul Ashraf Khairul Anwar. I hope that this scholarship will inspire you to give back to the community in the future.

Thank you.

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