

Speech by SMU President Professor Arnoud De Meyer
At the Hotel 81-Choo Chong Ngen Bursary
Presentation Ceremony & Appreciation Dinner
26 August 2015, Wednesday

A very warm welcome to
Mr Choo Chong Ngen, family members and guests,
Students and colleagues from SMU,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good evening.

Thank you very much for joining us today to celebrate the generous gift of Mr Choo Chong Ngen in establishing the Hotel 81-Choo Chong Ngen Bursary. This gift is of special significance to SMU for two reasons. First, the bursary is established in conjunction with SMU's celebration of our 15th anniversary this year. Second, this gift by Mr Choo is the single largest bursary gift to SMU from an individual donor. On behalf of SMU, I would like to thank Mr Choo for your generosity.

As most of you know, Mr Choo is a successful businessman and philanthropist who believes strongly in the value of education and the need to give back to the community. These are also the values which are close to our hearts at SMU. Having not had the opportunity of a formal education when he was young, Mr Choo now aspires to create a level playing field for the financially disadvantaged students, so as to help them realise their full potential through higher education. We are certainly very grateful for his kindness and generosity.

We are also grateful to Ms Carolyn Choo, our dear SMU Masters in Professional Accounting alumna, who has encouraged her father, Mr Choo, to support financially needy SMU students. Mr Choo is also known for his enterprising and tenacious spirit.

Carolyn has shared that since young, she has seen how hard her father has worked, and these are the values which she would like to pass on to her children as well.

Mr Choo's generous endowed gift of \$2 million will support a total of 24 bursaries for SMU undergraduates, in perpetuity. It will help us ensure that no deserving student misses out on the opportunity of an SMU education because of financial need. Mr Choo's generous support will take them on an educational journey that is holistic, enriching, and meaningful, enabling them to achieve their education and career goals. We are deeply encouraged that Mr Choo shares the same belief in the difference the SMU pedagogy brings to groom our students into ethical, confident and socially conscious young individuals. This will in turn nurture our next generation of entrepreneurs, business and community leaders.

Today, we are very pleased that our inaugural batch of 24 student recipients from our six schools are able to meet and thank their benefactor in person. We have also some of our Deans and Associate Deans of the respective schools here to thank Mr Choo on behalf of their schools.

Let me end by once again express our deep appreciation to Mr Choo for his generous support. I am sure that this gift will empower many students in the years to come.

Thank you and enjoy your evening.

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