



## Media Release

### **SMU graduates 14<sup>th</sup> and largest batch on home ground**

*Singapore, 11 July 2017 (Tuesday)* – Singapore Management University (SMU) kicked off four days of graduation celebration for the Class of 2017 today at the Opening Ceremony of *SMU Commencement 2017*. The ceremony, which was graced by Guest-of-Honour Mr K Shanmugam, Minister for Law and Home Affairs, was held on SMU campus – a first in the University’s 17-year history.

SMU Commencement marks the beginning of a new journey for SMU graduates. The 2,759-strong Class of 2017 comprises 1,776 Bachelor’s degree graduates, 36 Juris Doctor graduates, 920 Master’s degree graduates and 27 Doctorate degree graduates. They represent SMU’s 14<sup>th</sup> and largest batch of graduates since the University was first established in 2000. Held at the SMU School of Law building, the celebratory event was attended by 900 graduates, award winners, as well as family and friends of the graduates.

This year, Tan Yiwen from the School of Social Sciences was named the SPH Valedictorian, and Shaun Teh Chi Thong from the School of Information Systems was named the SPH Magazines Salutatorian. Both stood out with their outstanding leadership skills, significant contributions to co-curricular activities and the community-at-large, good character records, excellent oratorical skills and excellent academic results (both achieved Summa Cum Laude).

Each year at the Commencement ceremony, SMU also recognises students from each School who have embraced the values of Commitment, Integrity, Responsibility, Collegiality, Leadership and Excellence with the CIRCLE Awards. Winners of the CIRCLE Awards are also distinguished by their all-round excellence in Student Life, Student Leadership, Community Service and Academic Studies. They have been actively involved in serving and giving back to SMU and the community at large. In addition, they have demonstrated leadership abilities, are upright in character, and well-respected by peers, staff, and faculty.

Addressing 143 Bachelor of Laws graduates and 36 Juris Doctor graduates from the School of Law who were conferred their degrees this afternoon, SMU Chairman Mr Ho Kwon Ping reminded the graduates that they are starting their careers at a time of great change in the work landscape. He said, “Legal research will be conducted by sophisticated search engines and artificial intelligence algorithms, leaving only the most creative, adaptive, and forward-thinking legal minds with some borrowed time, to create an irreplaceable uniqueness about their own abilities.”

“Though no profession will be completely safe from disruptive change, you do have what others have called the ‘SMU advantage’. These are the attributes of self-agency, creative problem-solving, and innovative thinking which have for 17 years been the hallmark of the SMU pedagogy,” Mr Ho added.

In his remarks, SMU President Professor Arnoud De Meyer, highlighted that 2017 is a milestone for SMU as an institution and for Mr Ho Kwon Ping, who became the University’s Chairman in 1997, exactly two decades ago. As he applauded Mr Ho and his team of pioneers for establishing the

school with remarkable speed and passion, he also urged graduates to stay connected with the SMU Community and the wider community-at-large.

“The government, civil servants, tax payers – almost everyone in Singapore and many beyond have contributed something to getting you here today. The university core and community service have prepared you to become responsible and valuable members of that society. Support and get involved in community service projects and charity. Get involved in grassroots organisations and take an active interest in politics and policy making – Singapore and the world need the ideas, creativity and energy of youth to solve fundamental social, political, economic and environmental challenges facing us today,” said Professor De Meyer.

#### Graduation Class Gift 2017 (GCG17) – raising money for the SMU Bursary

Each year, the graduating class raises funds collectively for the SMU Bursary Fund as a celebration of their SMU journey. All amounts raised towards the fundraising target of \$50,000 will go directly into supporting 10 undergraduate students who are facing financial difficulties.

The theme of GCG17 is *‘Leave Your Mark. Take With You The Good Times.’* *‘Leave Your Mark’* is a new initiative where the graduating donor is invited to pen a message – be it a thank you note or an inspiring quote – which will then be engraved onto individual metal plaques along with their names, and subsequently affixed permanently to the seminar room tables. This way, undergraduates can be inspired by the spirit of giving when they see the plaques. Additionally, through *‘Take With You The Good Times’*, where sales proceeds from selected memorabilia at The SMU Shop will be donated to the SMU Bursary Fund, graduating students will also be able to help fellow juniors in need. The SMU Bursaries will be awarded in Academic Year 2017/2018. This year’s collection continues until December 2017.

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#### Enclosures:

- Speech by SMU Chairman, Mr Ho Kwon Ping
- Speech by SMU President, Professor Arnoud De Meyer

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#### **About Singapore Management University**

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU’s mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning, and for its technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes.

Home to around 10,000 undergraduate, postgraduate, executive and professional, full- and part-time students, SMU is comprised of six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in interdisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU has an emphasis on generating rigorous, high-impact, and relevant multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities from USA, Europe, China and India, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector, through its research institutes, centres and labs. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community.

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