



Media Release

SMU celebrates the graduation of the Class of 2022

Singapore, 26 July 2022 (Tuesday) – Singapore Management University (SMU) kicked off four days of graduation celebration for the Class of 2022 today at the Opening Ceremony of SMU Commencement 2022. The ceremony was graced by Guest-of-Honour Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Education, who addressed the graduands via a pre-recorded message.

The event was held on SMU campus today with 1,170 graduates, award winners, as well as family and friends of the graduates in attendance.

SMU Commencement marks the beginning of a new journey for SMU graduates. The 3,268-strong Class of 2022 comprises 1,995 Bachelor's degree graduates, 1,222 Master's degree and Juris Doctor degree graduates, and 51 Doctorate degree graduates. Among the Bachelor's degree graduates, 77 of them received double degrees; and one of them became the inaugural graduate of the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science programme, which welcomed its first intake in August 2019. Altogether, they represent SMU's 19th and largest batch of graduates since the University was established in 2000.

SMU also conferred upon Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, Singapore's seventh President and SMU's Honorary Patron, the Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) for his tremendous contributions to Singapore and the University.

Mr Samuel Chan Zheng Wen, who graduates with double degrees - Bachelor of Law and Bachelor of Business Management, was named the University Valedictorian for being the most exceptional student in the graduating cohort. He received the [Kwek Hong Png Valedictorian Award](#) and [SPH Valedictorian Award](#). Ms Esther Chong, who also graduates with double degrees - Bachelor of Social Science (major in Politics, Law and Economics) and Bachelor of Accounting received the [SMU Salutatorian Award](#) for being the second highest ranking graduating student in the Class of 2022. Both stood out with their outstanding leadership skills, significant contributions to co-curricular activities and the community-at-large, good character records and excellent academic results (both achieved Summa Cum Laude).

In delivering the citation for Dr Tony Tan, SMU Chairman Mr Ho Kwon Ping highlighted the pivotal role played by Dr Tan in championing the development of higher education in Singapore as Minister for Education, Minister-in-charge for National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological Institute (1981-1983) and Deputy Prime Minister overseeing higher education (1995-2005).

Mr Ho Kwon Ping said, "Under Dr Tan's guidance, university education in Singapore became more globalised and was made accessible to more Singaporeans regardless of their family or financial background. He was the driving force behind creating SMU as Singapore's third university to meet the rising number of graduates required to service our economy. He helped to differentiate it from Singapore's two existing universities, NUS and NTU, in that SMU was modelled after American universities and distinguished by broad-based education, departing from the British models on which they were founded. It was also the country's first publicly funded autonomous university, rather than a government statutory board. This gave it greater autonomy in faculty recruitment, remuneration

and administration, and SMU introduced bold changes with respect to research, curriculum design and teaching pedagogy. The establishment of SMU spurred competitiveness in the sector that has driven Singapore’s universities to compete confidently among the world’s best. Dr Tan continued to guide the development of SMU, including during his years as Patron from 2011 and then as Honorary Patron and Distinguished Senior Fellow since September 2017. He maintains an office at SMU and continues to interact with the SMU Community.”

In his acceptance speech, Dr Tony Tan said, “It has been a great satisfaction to see SMU grow – from basically what was a plan on a piece of paper into now a thriving institution – well recognised in the world, well respected by employers, and well sought-after as a partner in research and industry. Thank you, everyone, for the honour you have given me today. I also thank you for the many contributions of SMU and its alumni to Singapore and the world. I am proud to be associated with the staff, students and alumni of this dynamic university.”

Addressing graduates from the School of Social Sciences who were conferred their degrees this afternoon, Mr Ho Kwon Ping said, “When we first set up SMU, we never thought that a few years later we would have a Law School encouraged by Dr Tan. Nor SMU-X, which became in some ways a game-changer. And now, SMU has set up a new and innovative College for Integrative Studies, and also a soon to be launched College for Graduate Research Studies. We just cannot sit still, it seems.”

“Each of you now enter the job market in a world unrecognisable from just a few years earlier. The multiple shocks arising from the worst health crisis the world has ever seen, the worst disruption to global trade in decades, the most seriously, the most precarious geo-political tensions since World War 2 – have combined to create what many have called the perfect storm of global instability. It is easy for me to repeat the cliché that every crisis contains an opportunity. But clichés are exactly that because they do have some truth to them, and it is for each of you to seek out, and to turn into reality, the opportunities which await you in this unprecedented time of uncertainty,” he added.

In her remarks to the graduates, SMU President Professor Lily Kong reminded the Class of 2022 that this is but one part of their learning journey. Prof Kong said, “Don’t forget that education is a lifelong process – you have learnt how to learn. This has prepared you for a successful career in which you are already having to adapt to the demands of an ever-changing world. You will continue to have to adapt, through lifelong learning as well as seizing and creating opportunities. You will need to constantly hone your skills and upgrade your knowledge. We hope that you will continue your lifelong education journey with us, through our rapidly increasing range of postgraduate, executive, and professional and continuing education programmes.”

SMU CIRCLE Awards

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.

Leave Your Mark 2022 – SMU’s Annual Graduating Class Campaign

SMU’s graduating class also comes together each year to make their first gift to SMU, in support of their juniors who require financial assistance. More than 300 alumni have supported this in the past three years, raising over \$100,000 and funding the bursaries of 13 undergraduate students.

A graduating class tradition since 2016, graduands do not just give back monetarily, but also leave their words of wisdom and advice permanently engraved on plaques in SMU seminar rooms for future generations. This year, a competition was held by SMU student publication, The Blue and Gold, in support of Leave Your Mark 2022. Creative and inspiring quotes were collected from the SMU student community for graduands to use on the plaques. Please refer [here](#) for more information on Leave Your Mark 2022.

Enclosures:

- Annex 1: Honorary degrees – past and present
- Welcome Address by SMU Chairman, Mr Ho Kwon Ping
- Citation Reading for Honorary Degree recipient Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam
- Speech by SMU Honorary Patron, Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam
- Speech by SMU President, Professor Lily Kong

Media contact

Huang Peiling (Ms)
Senior Assistant Director, Corporate Communications
Office of Corporate Communications & Marketing
Contact: 9845-3361
Email: plhuang@smu.edu.sg

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 to produce broad-based, creative, and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU's education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative, and project-based approach to learning.

Home to over 12,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and postgraduate research programmes, SMU comprises seven schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Computing and Information Systems, School of Law, School of Social Sciences and College of Integrative Studies. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters', and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with its schools, as well as in multidisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU emphasises rigorous, high-impact, multi- and interdisciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities around the world, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector. SMU's city campus is a modern facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government, and the wider community. www.smu.edu.sg

Annex 1**Honorary Degrees – past and present**

S/N	Student Name	Programme	Classification	Degree Award Date
1	YONG PUNG HOW	Doctor of Laws	Honoris Causa	14 July 2007
2	LEE SENG GEE	Doctor of Humane Letters	Honoris Causa	14 July 2007
3	JOHN SEELY BROWN	Doctor of Laws	Honoris Causa	25 July 2013
4	CHAN SEK KEONG	Doctor of Laws	Honoris Causa	25 July 2013
5	RATAN NAVAL TATA	Doctor of Business	Honoris Causa	17 March 2014
6	SELLAPAN RAMANATHAN @ S R NATHAN	Doctor of Letters	Honoris Causa	15 July 2014
7	KATHERINE ANN SCHIPPER	Doctor of Accountancy	Honoris Causa	15 July 2014
8	JOHN RODNEY NILAND	Doctor of Letters	Honoris Causa	17 August 2018
9	TONY TAN KENG YAM	Doctor of Laws	Honoris Causa	26 July 2022