

ADDRESS BY MR NG CHER PONG, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SKILLSFUTURE SINGAPORE AND DEPUTY SECRETARY (SKILLSFUTURE), MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AT THE IAL GRADUATION CEREMONY 2018, 5 OCTOBER 2018, 7.00PM, SINGAPORE CHINESE CULTURAL CENTRE AUDITORIUM

Graduands, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good evening to all of you.

Introduction

1. It is my pleasure to join you here at the Institute for Adult Learning (IAL) Graduation Ceremony 2018. It is a particularly special occasion because we are celebrating three major milestones this evening.
2. First and foremost, the graduation. I know from my colleagues at IAL that it has not been an easy journey – because many of you have had to juggle the demands of work, family and continuous learning. So, today marks a major milestone in your development and progression as a CET professional, regardless of whether you have obtained a diploma or master degree. My heartiest congratulations to each and every one of you on your achievements!
3. As we celebrate your accomplishments, I would also like to invite you to thank those who have supported you throughout your learning journey – your families, friends and colleagues. Their encouragement and understanding are important sources of strength and inspiration, together with the peer support from your fellow learners.
4. Now that you are all set for the next phase of your professional journey, I encourage you to stay connected with IAL. The institute is fully committed to supporting all of you in your continual learning and to help you develop, sustain and deepen your professional craft. As fresh graduands, you may be interested in tapping on the networking opportunities that IAL has made available through the Adult Education Network. This is a platform which now has more than 6,000 members, forming

special interest groups, with opportunities to attend a wide range of professional development workshops and explore business opportunities. To strengthen your professional standing, we invite you to participate in the Adult Education Professionalisation initiative, in order to be certified as Associate or Specialist Adult Educator, and tap on the development opportunities available. More than 1,400 Adult Educators have already come on board and I would urge you to do likewise. To support the professionals in this sector, particularly new entrants, IAL also offers a complimentary career advisory service for those of you who may require it. So, notwithstanding this graduation ceremony, you have every reason to continue to stay in touch with IAL.

Partnering with NIE – a Significant Step Forward

5. Second, at this year's graduation ceremony, we are welcoming the first cohort of 16 graduates from our new Master's programme – the Master of Arts in Professional Education (MAPE). This is the first postgraduate programme offered by NIE, in collaboration with IAL. The arrangement with NIE is that IAL delivers two modules, covering topics such as quality assurance processes, facilitating learning and performance improvement at work. The programme therefore draws on the strengths of both NIE and IAL in the continuum of learning contextualised to Singapore's needs. It imparts critical skills in mentoring and coaching, innovative training, assessment and design practice.
6. Along with the other three Master's programmes offered by IAL, professionals in this sector now have the opportunity to deepen their skills in different areas of specialisation. Ms Eunice Lim is one of many who exemplifies this. She has just graduated from the inaugural MAPE intake. Eunice made a bold move into the TAE sector from real estate after discovering her passion for people development and training. She embarked on various training and development programmes, keeping abreast of the latest trends and pedagogical knowledge. Today, she contributes to the TAE community, imparting her expertise to SMEs as a SkillsFuture Mentor and developing training roadmaps on a voluntary basis. On top of that, she has to juggle her work with her role as a mother of three. I am sure this challenge of balancing

responsibilities in work, family and professional development – resonates with many of you seated here. I encourage everyone here to continue with the same positive and upbeat mindset that has led you to your achievements tonight.

A Decade of Driving TAE Professionalisation

7. Third, but certainly not the least important, this year also marks the 10th anniversary of IAL's establishment. IAL has grown from a 'start-up' to become a national institute that specialises in raising the professionalism of Adult Educators, and in driving innovation across the sector. We started with only one key offering – ACTA. Since then, we have grown from strength to strength. Over the years, we have expanded the range of programmes and initiatives, from diplomas and master's degrees specialising in different domains of adult learning, to facilitating professional networks, organising signature events such as Adult Learning Symposium, and even setting up the iN.LAB as a focal point to catalyse learning innovations physically. We have also upgraded from our rustic premises at Kay Siang Road to much more modern facilities at the Lifelong Learning Institute.
8. We could not have come this far without the support of our partners and learners, and I would like to thank everyone involved, including my IAL colleagues for their commitment and teamwork in always striving for excellence. As IAL sets its sight on continuously strengthening its support for the Adult Educators community, the institute will have to continue to transform.

The Future of IAL, the Future of TAE

9. Today IAL is no longer a start-up, I firmly believe IAL's next decade will be even more exciting and dynamic. Key to IAL's success is retaining the vibrancy and spirit of a start-up is vital for IAL – almost existential in nature – because IAL needs to lead and show the way for the sector in supporting the transformation that is happening across almost every industry. We will therefore be seeing closer collaborations with companies, as we break away from the traditional paradigm of limiting learning to classrooms. Instead, we need to make learning more pervasive at workplaces, including the SMEs. IAL will be working closely with the recently-

launched National Centre of Excellence for Workplace Learning, or NACE, on this. There will also be continued emphasis on learning innovations, to support the sector in meeting the learning needs of a more diverse group of enterprises and individuals. To ensure IAL stays ahead, spot emerging areas and seize good opportunities, we will continuously review our current range of offerings and decide which to retain, which to revamp, and which to retire.

10. The challenges we face in adult learning are certainly not any less daunting than other industries confronted with rapid technological disruption and fast-changing workforce needs. However, we are determined to ride the wave and challenge the headwinds boldly. Whatever IAL's future holds, I hope all of you, our IAL graduands, will stay tuned, be part of our alumni and grow together with us.

11. Once again, my heartiest congratulations and thank you.