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### SMU Celebrates its Sixth Batch of 1,374 graduates

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **SMU celebrates its sixth batch of 1,374 graduates**

*Singapore, 11 July 2009 (Saturday)* - The Singapore Management University celebrates the graduation of 1,374 graduands at the University's sixth Commencement ceremony held this afternoon at Suntec City. This is SMU's sixth and largest batch of graduates – at 18% more than the 1,167 graduands in 2008 – who will be stepping out into working life. Commencement 2009 is graced by Guest-of-Honour Mr Lim Chee Onn, Senior Advisor of Keppel Corporation Limited. Also present at the event was SMU Pro-Chancellor Mr J Y Pillay.

Admitted mostly in 2005, this batch of students was the first to complete their entire education at SMU's City Campus. 535 graduate with a Bachelor of Business Management, 204 with a Bachelor of Accountancy, 136 with a Bachelor of Science (Information Systems Management), 136 with a Bachelor of Science (Economics) and 93 with a Bachelor of Social Science. This year, a total of 143 graduates or 13% of the undergraduate cohort are awarded double degrees in various combinations of business management, accountancy, economics, information systems management and social science.

In addition to the 1,104 bachelor degree graduates, SMU also confers postgraduate degrees on its largest ever group of 270 master's students. 158 graduate with a Master of Science in Applied Finance, 50 with a Master of Science in Wealth Management and 36 with a Master of Professional Accounting. The remaining 26 graduate with a Master of Science in Finance, Master of Science in Economics, Master of Science in Applied Economics and Master of Science in Management.

SMU President Professor Howard Hunter says, "It is a great pleasure to graduate our sixth and largest batch. The 1,374 graduates are now part of a growing community of 5,000 alumni, all of whom will be able to stay meaningfully engaged with one another and with SMU through our newly launched net community. As we expand our offerings at the postgraduate level, this is also our biggest batch to date, double that of last year. I am confident that the Class of 2009 will make a positive difference in the world. I look forward to seeing them online and also back on campus."

## **Valedictorian Vincent Ha Kwang Yuen**

Awarded annually to the highest ranking student of each graduating cohort, this year's SPH Valedictorian Award goes to Mr Vincent Ha Kwang Yuen (夏光远) who graduates *Summa Cum Laude* with a double degree in Business Management and Accountancy. He was on the Dean's List for 2006, 2007 and 2008 and won the Deloitte Meritorious Award, the equivalent of the Dean's List in the School of Accountancy, in 2006 and 2007. Vincent also hails from the pioneer batch of Lee Kong Chian Scholars, a prestigious scholarship programme at SMU. But he wasn't always a top student. "As a late bloomer, I was neither a straight-A student nor an outspoken leader in my previous schools. SMU has been a part of my success story," says Vincent.

And it has been a story that has gone beyond just achieving impeccable grades. Vincent has always wanted to help the less fortunate. And he rallied others with the same vision to pursue the cause. In August 2005, he set up a community service club known as University YMCA, or Uni-Y for short. The Founding President and his team have organised activities to benefit the local community. He has also represented Singapore's YMCA in forums in Mumbai and Hong Kong. Currently, he is volunteering on The Kings of Freedom Project, an initiative to bring and house four panels of the Berlin Wall at Bedok Reservoir Park. Foreign Minister George Yeo is the project's Patron.

Vincent also believes in pushing personal boundaries, and he combined that with his videography skills in the Zero Limits 2006 France Cycling Expedition. He documented the SMU team's 1,300km expedition, sometimes cycling across France with only one hand on the handlebar.

But his firm grip on videography led Vincent to set up a music and video production business – Big Three Productions. He has done work for corporates and not for profits. He is also a founding partner of SCREME, a school café, which he started with fellow third-year students in 2008. Ever the entrepreneur, Vincent is embarking on another online business venture. This, while joining a team of traders in August as a partner to manage a private fund. They hope that one day they can establish a charitable trust for Singapore youths.

## **Salutatorian Tong Junjie**

This year's recipient of the SPH Magazines Salutatorian Award – given annually to the second highest ranking student from the graduating cohort – is Mr Tong Junjie (唐君杰). He graduates *Summa Cum Laude* with a double degree in Accountancy and Economics. An avid sportsman who counts sports diving and tennis among his hobbies, Junjie was Captain of the SMU Windsurfing Team. He also distinguished himself musically. Junjie plays the violin and viola, and is the President of SMU Obligato, the University's String Ensemble. As Concert Master, he also organised a successful, sold-out, inaugural performance in 2008.

That apart, he has performed in numerous events, including at the Istana. Throughout his SMU years, he was also active in the Accountancy Society, including being vice chairperson of the freshmen retreat in 2006 and he is currently chairing the Accountancy Yearbook Committee and raising funds for the School's alumni scholarship.

"When I entered SMU, I just wanted to complete my accountancy degree and become an auditor," Junjie recalls. "The university entrusted us to make our own choices, and our simple path to a degree evolved into multiple avenues." Apart from spending a term on exchange at the University of Bath, Junjie also travelled to Yunnan to teach English in a village school as part of the SMU overseas community service outreach programme.

During his years at SMU, Junjie received the Goh Foundation Scholarship, the Institute of Certified Public Accountants Scholarship, he was the inaugural winner of the Sunil Sreenivasan Scholarship, and clinched three other awards. His perfect 4.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) score placed him on the Dean's List and also helped him clinch the Deloitte Meritorious Award in 2006, 2007 and 2008.

He will start work at management consultancy firm McKinsey & Company in September as a Business Analyst.

### **Senior Class Gift 2009**

The graduating class of 2009 is making a collective Senior Class Gift to SMU to celebrate their transition from students to alumni. This is a tradition started in 2004 by the pioneer batch of SMU graduates to encourage each graduating cohort to give back to their alma mater to help needy SMU students. This year, contributions from the Senior Class Gift will be channelled towards a new "Graduating Class of 2009 Scholarship". The award will sponsor the tuition fees of deserving undergraduate for one year of study at SMU. For now, more than 60% of the graduating class of 2009 contributed to the Senior Class Gift, exceeding last year's participation rate of 48%. The collection continues till October 2009.

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## **About the Singapore Management University**

Incorporated on 12 January 2000, Singapore Management University (SMU) aims to groom outstanding business leaders and creative entrepreneurs capable of excelling in a rapidly changing and dynamic world. The University is known to be a pioneer for its interactive pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes which remains its unique hallmark. Today, SMU is home to more than 6,000 students and comprises six schools: Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Accountancy, School of Economics, School of Social Sciences, School of Information Systems and School of Law. SMU offers bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. degree programmes in business and management-related areas, ranging from Accountancy, Economics, Finance, Wealth Management, Law, Information Systems and Social Sciences. It also has a dedicated Office of Research, a number of institutes and centres of excellence, and provides public and customised programmes for working professionals through Executive Education. Collaborations with leading institutions, including The Wharton School, Carnegie Mellon, the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Chicago, allow SMU to draw on academic and research strengths across all major disciplines. The SMU campus is a state-of-the-art facility located right in the heart of Singapore's civic and business district.

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