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### SMU Celebrates its 7th Batch of 1,514 graduates

Singapore Management University

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **SMU celebrates its 7th batch of 1,514 graduates**

*Singapore, 21 July 2010 (Wednesday)* - The Singapore Management University celebrates the graduation of 1,514 graduands at the University's seventh Commencement ceremony held this afternoon at the Resorts World Convention Centre. This is SMU's seventh and largest batch of graduates. Commencement 2009 was graced by Guest-of-Honour Dr Narongchai Akrasanee, the former Minister of Commerce and Senator of Thailand, and currently, Chairman of the Board of MFC Asset Management. Also present at the event was SMU Pro-Chancellor Mr Yong Pung How.

Admitted mostly in 2006, this batch of students has seized the opportunities presented by an SMU education in the academic arena and beyond. The holistic education anchored on an all-round development of each student, has even been validated by the 2010 Graduate Employment Survey. In spite of last year's graduates joining the workforce in the midst of a crisis, nearly 100 per cent of them found jobs within six months of graduation. These SMU graduates also outperformed graduates from other universities in starting salaries. Leading the pack are information systems management graduates who are highest paid among all graduates from the three local universities with an average salary of S\$3,445. Similarly, accountancy graduates topped those of other accountancy schools in the other universities with salaries of S\$3,073. On a whole, the graduates are hired in a wide spectrum of professions such as banking & finance, accounting, consulting, MNCs, services, public and social sectors, with 52.7% in banking, finance, auditing and accounting.

Among the 1,514 total graduands, 1,203 are bachelor degree graduates. SMU has also been steadily growing its postgraduate programmes, both at the master's and doctoral levels and is conferring postgraduate degrees on its largest ever group of 311 master's students. For the first time, it is graduating students from the Master of Business Administration, the Master of IT in Business (Financial Services) and the Master of Science in Operations Management. They are the pioneers of the respective programmes. (Please see annex for details.)

Speaking at the event, SMU President Professor Howard Hunter reminded graduands, who have had an education that emphasised all-round development,

including in ethics and social responsibility, of their higher calling. “You have received an excellent education with the understanding that you will use that education as leaders - Leaders in addressing the most serious problems of your era – global warming, the development of alternative energy, management of scarce resources, such as water, preservation of a dependable and secure financial system, equitable distribution of economic opportunities and the maintenance of peace. Those of us older than you will be looking to hand over responsibility to you. Those who are your peers and your juniors will be looking to you for innovative, responsible leadership. I have confidence that you will meet our many expectations,” he says.

### **Valedictorian Russell Tan Jiming**

Awarded annually to the highest ranking student of each graduating cohort, this year’s SPH Valedictorian Award goes to Mr Russell Tan Jiming (陈济铭) who graduates *Summa Cum Laude* (the highest grade attainable) in 3.5 years with a degree in Business Management, majoring in Finance.

He was on the Dean’s List for 2007, 2008 and won four other awards in his four years at SMU. He was also awarded the Li and Fung Scholarship for an overseas exchange programme at the University of Virginia, US. In his final year, he won the Energizer Scholarship.

Beyond just achieving impeccable grades, Russell says it was the SMU education that wrought a transformation in him; from an introvert to someone who will speak up and is willing to lead. “Before SMU, I was more introverted, disliked public speaking and shunned responsibility,” he says. “All that changed dramatically in SMU, and I am very grateful with how the university empowered me with the tools and opportunities to reinvent myself,” he explains.

An avid soccer player since he was 10, Russell was Vice President (Events) of the SMU Men’s Soccer. He went on to become President of the SMU Sports Union, a body representing all the sports co-curricular activities in the University. During his term in the SMU Students’ Association, he was part of the organising committee of the first-ever SMU Challenge in 2008 which brought students and staff together in a Cyclethon to raise funds for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

He was an active member of the University’s business case club, Cognitare, where he represented the School in overseas competitions. In one of them, the CIBER Case Challenge 2009 in Ohio, US, he even won Best Speaker. He helped organise Singapore’s first varsity case challenge, the Citi Case Challenge, in 2009.

His excellent performance during his internship at the Corporate Finance Department of Deutsche Bank in 2009 eventually led to a job offer, the first by

that department for an SMU student. He will be starting work in late July with a training stint in New York.

### **Salutatorian Tan Lay Khim**

This year's recipient of the Salutatorian Award supported by SPH Magazines – given annually to the second highest ranking student from the graduating cohort – is Tan Lay Khim (陈丽琴). She graduates *Summa Cum Laude* with a double degree in Accountancy and Business Management.

During her years at SMU, she received the prestigious SMU Scholarship and five other awards. Her perfect 4.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) score placed her on the Dean's List and helped her clinch the Deloitte Meritorious Award, the equivalent of the Dean's List in the School of Accountancy, in all her four years at SMU – from 2006 to 2009.

A believer in giving back to the community, she was Vice-Chairperson for the Freshman Orientation Community Service project, Dominoes of Dreams, in 2007. She was moved by that experience to organise even more community service projects as President of TriTouch Connexion. "From a relative unknown in junior college to the confident individual I have become, I am grateful for the nurturing and opportunities that SMU has given me to blossom and grow," says Lay Khim. "Without the SMU Scholarship, I would not have had the financial capability to enter SMU. Thankful for these opportunities, I made it a personal goal to contribute to SMU and the community," she adds.

Lay Khim was the Co-Chairperson (2008-2009) for the SMU Audit and Assurance Team, a student body that audits clubs and societies for financial compliance as well as operational effectiveness. In an attempt to witness how theories can be applied in real life, she also started a partnership with three other friends dealing in facial care products. Although ownership and operation of the partnership were relinquished to her other partners subsequently, the experience was invaluable. She was able to apply these in two consulting projects she undertook for SMEs under the UOB-SMU Entrepreneurship Alliance in 2010. In recognition of her contributions to the SME sector, community service, co-curricular activities, and her outstanding academic performance, she was also awarded the Luxasia VIE Award for all-round excellence.

Having received so much, Lay Khim intends to pay it forward through her passion for research and teaching in accountancy. Under SMU's Faculty Development Scheme, she will be pursuing a doctorate degree in Accountancy in the US with hopes of returning to SMU after her studies to share her knowledge and demystify accounting for students and the wider community.

### **Senior Class Gift 2010**

The graduating class of 2010 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 2010 Scholarship". The award will sponsor the tuition fees of deserving undergraduate for one year of study at SMU. About half of each year's batch has been contributing to the Senior Class Gift. This level of participation is unprecedented in Singapore and even in the US where giving to one's alma mater is an established tradition. This year's collection continues till October 2010.

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### **About the 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. It is known to be a pioneer for its interactive and technologically-enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes which remains its unique hallmark. Home to 7,000 students, SMU comprises 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, offering a wide range of bachelor's, master's and PhD degree programmes in business and other disciplines. With an emphasis on generating rigorous, high impact cross-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance, SMU faculty collaborates with leading foreign researchers as well as partners in the business community and public sector through its research institutes and centres. Through executive education, the University provides public and customised training for working professionals in meeting the needs of the economy. Close relationships with leading universities, including The Wharton School, Carnegie Mellon, the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business, allow SMU to draw on their academic and research strengths in various collaborations. The SMU city

campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with the business and wider community.  
[www.smu.edu.sg](http://www.smu.edu.sg)

## **ANNEX**

<b>School</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Graduands</b>
LKCSB	Bachelor of Business Management	573
SOA	Bachelor of Accountancy	190
SOE	Bachelor of Science (Economics)	167
SIS	Bachelor of Science (Information Systems Management)	158
SOSS	Bachelor of Social Science	115
	<b>Total undergraduates</b>	<b>1203</b>
LKCSB	Master of Business Administration	45
LKCSB	Master of Science in Applied Finance	135
LKCSB	Master of Science in Finance	3
LKCSB	Master of Science in Management	3
LKCSB	Master of Science in Operations Management	4
LKCSB	Master of Science in Wealth Management	36
SOA	Master of Professional Accounting	32
SIS	Master of IT in Business (Financial Services)	26
SOE	Master of Science in Applied Economics	18
SOE	Master of Science in Economics	9
	<b>Total postgraduates</b>	<b>311</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1514</b>

This year, a total of 151 graduates or 10% of the undergraduate cohort are awarded double degrees in various combinations of business management, accountancy, economics, information systems management and social science.

Apart from the University's Valedictorian and Salutatorian awards, this year, SMU has introduced School-level Valedictorian awards supported by DBS.