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## SMU celebrates first batch of SMU warriors scholarship graduates completing postgraduate degrees with flying colours and prepared for second careers

16 Jul 2015

*Commemorative celebration pays tribute to pioneers and welcomes new scholars in the year of SG50, SAF50 and SMU15*



*[Featured Photo: The inaugural batch of graduates from the first-of-its-kind SMU Warriors Scholarship (SWS) (those in graduation gowns) beaming with pride at the SMU Warriors Graduation and Conferral Celebration, in the presence of SAF colleagues, classmates, families and SMU friends.]*

The Singapore Management University (SMU) has more reasons to celebrate in Singapore's golden jubilee year, besides SMU's 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary – it saw the inaugural batch of graduates from the first-of-its-kind SMU Warriors Scholarship (SWS) ahead of Singapore's 50<sup>th</sup> National Day. These 'warriors' are retiring Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) personnel, aged around 50, who commenced SMU postgraduate studies last year and completed their studies this year. Four of the 'warrior' graduates celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> birthday with the nation this year.

Donning graduation gowns, the 'pioneer' graduates attended not one but two SMU celebrations on 15 July 2015 in the presence of SAF colleagues, classmates, family and SMU friends – the SMU Warriors Graduation and Conferral Celebration, and the SMU Commencement. The earlier was specially arranged for the warrior graduates and new scholars, while the latter was SMU's graduation ceremony for all graduates from undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

Launched in 2014, the Scholarship programme saw a total of 10 scholars who forged ahead and completed one of the following SMU postgraduate degrees – the Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA), Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science in Innovation (MI), Master of Tri-Sector Collaboration (MTSC), and Master of Science in Wealth Management (MWM).

A total of 22 SWS Scholarships have been awarded so far, in the EMBA, MBA, MI, MTSC, MWM, and Master of Science in Communication Management (MCM) programmes. This includes eight new scholars who were conferred the Scholarship this year, some of whom were present to receive the award at the Celebration.



*[Photo: (Left to right) Colonel Ng Wai Kit, a new SMU Warriors Scholar who was awarded the Scholarship this year, receiving his award from Professor Phillip Zerrillo, SMU Dean of Postgraduate Professional Programmes.]*

The SWS initiative recognises SAF personnel who are nearing the 50-year-old retirement age – the unsung heroes who had contributed significantly in Singapore’s nation building and defence to ensure peace and stability. It provides new skills and knowledge to expand their horizons and help them transit from their illustrious military careers to new work roles.

Professor Rajendra Srivastava, SMU Provost and Deputy President (Academic Affairs) said, “In today’s fast-paced and ever-changing global economy, we need to keep abreast with new developments and continue to upgrade our knowledge and skills. Our partnership with the SAF has been an excellent one where we engage the SAF personnel in an interactive learning environment to sharpen their skills. They enrich the class by bringing their wealth of experience and disciplined leadership to the class. The interaction with other students also gives them first-hand exposure to various sectors in the world of business. We hope to deepen our relationship with the SAF as our contribution to the next 50 years of nation building.

We are happy that our collaboration with the SAF in talent training and development is bearing fruit, and that SMU can be a springboard for outstanding leaders to move from success to success. This is SMU’s way of giving back to society, paying tribute to pioneers and collaborating with industry players for mutual enrichment.”



*[Photo: Rear-Admiral Giam Hock Koon, Commandant SAFTI Military Institute, applauding the 'Warriors' during his congratulatory speech.]*

Rear-Admiral Giam Hock Koon, Commandant SAFTI Military Institute, said that the SAF not only provided military training to its people to safeguard Singapore's peace and security, but also placed emphasis in investing in the continuing education of its people. "We believe in developing our people to their fullest potential. These sponsored studies (under the collaboration between the SAF and local universities) range from certificates and diplomas, to Masters and Doctoral degrees. It is a manifestation of the SAF's Core Values – 'Professionalism' and 'Care for Soldiers'... We are very grateful to SMU for being a wonderful partner of the SAF in supporting our continuing education objectives," he said.



*[Photo: (Left to right) Colonel (NS) Yong Wui Chiang and Colonel (NS) Chin Pak Chuen Jeff, were among the first batch of graduates under the SMU Warriors Scholarship who completed postgraduate studies this year.]*

Some of these pioneer graduates have progressed into new capacities, while others are getting ready to embark on new roles. Colonel (NS) Yong Wui Chiang is one of these outstanding candidates, who finished the EMBA with a summa cum laude and a high GPA. Previously the Army Chief Knowledge Officer, he has moved to another Ministry as Director of Strategic Planning.

Colonel (NS) Chin Pak Chuen Jeff, inspired after taking the Master of Science in Innovation (MI), has co-founded a technology start-up. The enterprise is launching DingGo, a mobile application that aspires to become the Uber of the food and entertainment industries, which instantly connects 'nearby customers' with 'last-minute available seats'. An SMU MI postgraduate team led by Jeff won third place in Asia Venture Challenge, an Asia-wide business plan competition fostering entrepreneurial spirit, in March 2015 in Bangkok with the business idea. Since then, the start-up has been selected for incubation by SMU's Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and MediaCorp's The Mediapreneur incubator programme for innovative business ventures.

For the full list of SWS graduates and new scholars, please refer to the **Appendix**.

**Appendix – List of Graduates and New Scholars under SMU Warriors Scholarships**  
**Graduates (as of July 2015)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>SMU Postgraduate Programme</b>
1	Brigadier-General	Benedict Lim	Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA)
2	Colonel (NS)	Yong Wui Chiang	Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA)
3	Colonel (Retired)	Lim Seng Hock	Master of Business Administration (MBA)
4	Lieutenant Colonel	Chua Thiam Beng	Master of Tri-Sector Collaboration (MTSC)
5	Major	Goh Chong Tong	Master of Tri-Sector Collaboration (MTSC)
6	Lieutenant Colonel (Retired)	Lai Chyh Jau	Master of Tri-Sector Collaboration (MTSC)
7	Major	Velayutham Vijaya	Master of Tri-Sector Collaboration (MTSC)
8	Colonel (NS)	Chin Pak Chuen Jeff	Master of Science in Innovation (MI)
9	Lieutenant Colonel	Yeo Hock Seng	Master of Science in Innovation (MI)
10	Colonel (NS)	Tay Chee Bin	Master of Science in Wealth Management (MWM)

**New Scholars (in 2015)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>SMU Postgraduate Programme</b>
1	Colonel	Ng Wai Kit	Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA)
2	Colonel	Benedict Ang	Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA)

3	Colonel	Derric Low	Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA)
4	Lieutenant Colonel	Sunilkumar s/o S A Pillai	Master of Tri-Sector Collaboration (MTSC)
5	Senior Lieutenant Colonel	James Tan Ming Chong	Master of Tri-Sector Collaboration (MTSC)
6	Senior Lieutenant Colonel	Shang Kok Keong	Master of Tri-Sector Collaboration (MTSC)
7	Colonel	Alfred Koh Teow Huat	Master of Science in Innovation (MI)
8	Colonel	Lim Bock Aeng, Arthur	Master of Science in Innovation (MI)

### **About the SMU Warriors Scholarship**

Earlier in January 2014, SMU and the SAF officiated an agreement whereby SMU will sponsor up to 20 postgraduate scholarships per year for retiring SAF personnel, for a period of three years, through the SMU Warriors Scholarship programme. The scholarships, which are multi-disciplinary and cover some 21 postgraduate programmes at the University, are bond-free. The estimated scholarship value is approximately S\$1 million per year (the actual value depends on the programmes that scholarship recipients apply for and are admitted into).

In a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on 25 November 2014, SMU and the SAF established a three-year partnership through which SMU will support the SAF's Continuing Education (CE) Master's programme by admitting qualified SAF personnel to the University's postgraduate degree programmes. Four SMU Master's programmes were added to the SAF CE Master's current offering. They are: Master of Science in Communication Management, Master of Science in Innovation, Master of Information Technology in Business – Analytics and Master of Tri-Sector Collaboration. The programmes are funded by the SAF through its CE Master's programme, with SMU offering credit exemptions to SAF personnel who have completed the Command and Staff Course or the Command and Staff Course (Executive) at the Goh Keng Swee Command and Staff College.

For more information about the SMU Warriors Scholarship, please see <https://saf.smu.edu.sg/smu-warriors-scholarship/about>