

## **SPEECH BY MS SRI MARDIAH BINTE SUHARMAN ON BEHALF OF 2024 LIFELONG LEARNING SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS**

Mr. Murali Pillai, Minister of State for Law and Transport,

Mr. Lawrence Tan Han Tong, Chairman of Tan Kah Kee Foundation,

Mr. Ng Chee Hwa, Vice-Chairman of Tan Kah Kee Foundation & Donor for the Ng Teng Yeng Lifelong Learning Scholarship

Professor Eugene Tan, Chairman of Tan Kah Kee Foundation Scholarship Committee,

Ms. Low Khah Gek, CEO of ITE,

Principals of ITE Colleges,

Distinguished Guests, Fellow Recipients, Ladies & Gentlemen,

A very good evening to all of you,

My name is Sri Mardiah, and I feel privileged to be given the opportunity to speak on behalf of all Lifelong Learning Scholarship recipients. I would like to start by thanking Mr. Ng Chee Hwa, who have provided an additional ten Ng Teng Yeng Lifelong Learning Scholarship awards on top of the ten Tan Kah Kee Foundation Lifelong Learning Scholarship awards for this year. My deepest gratitude to the panel of interviewers; Professor Ren Ee Chee and Ms. Juliana Lim, both from Tan Kah Kee Foundation, and Mr. Soh Sze-Wei from ITE, for recognising our potential and awarding us these scholarships.

Congratulations too, to the rest of the recipients.

I am truly humbled by the foundation's belief in our potential and their unwavering commitment to support our educational pursuits. This scholarship will represent a significant milestone in our academic endeavours. Your support will not only make a difference in our educational journey but also reaffirm our commitment to lifelong learning and personal growth.

I want to share with you a personal journey of transformation and the power of pursuing one's passion.

I was working with a prestigious airline, Qatar Airways. As a Flight Attendant Director, I had the privilege of making people's travel experiences memorable and enjoyable. It was a fulfilling and rewarding career but deep down, I knew that I wanted to do much more. I was then at a crossroad. I needed to choose and decide whether to paint colours in the sky or pursue a noble profession in nursing.

It was a difficult decision – leaving behind the familiar and abundant opportunities to see the world to embark on a new path. But I wanted to make a difference in a more profound

way; to have a direct impact on people's lives and well-being. So after 14 years of flying, I decided to do a mid-career switch to nursing. It will be a career that is lasting, fulfilling and meaningful to me.

During my study stint at ITE College East, I have been fortunate to go for attachments at hospitals, where I have had opportunities to witness the incredible strength and resilience of patients, their families and the healthcare professionals who work tirelessly to provide compassionate care.

Transitioning from the skies to the classrooms and to the hospital wards has been a learning experience and undoubtedly worth it. The knowledge and skills I acquire through my nursing studies combined with the practical experiences I have gained during my hospital attachments, have allowed me to connect with patients on a deeper level and provide them with the care they deserve.

As I continue this path, I am committed to furthering my education and gaining more practical experience to enhance my skills as a nurse. I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead and the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those in need.

To conclude, I would like to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to my beloved ITE College East Lecturers, and Nursing Course Manager; Ms Mae Tang who has come to support me today. Their guidance, expertise and unwavering support have been invaluable throughout my studying journey. They have consistently encouraged me to pursue my passion for nursing and have provided me with the necessary tools and knowledge to succeed.

Without their dedication and belief in my abilities, I would not be where I am today. Their belief in my potential has motivated me to work harder and strive for excellence. Their expertise, encouragement and tireless efforts to provide a stimulating learning environment have played an instrumental role in shaping my educational journey.

To my fellow recipients, it is my honour to be amongst you today. Each one of you has attained exceptional achievements and demonstrated unwavering commitment to excellence. As we move forward, let us remember that this scholarship is not just a monetary reward, but a recognition of our potential to create a better future. Together, let us inspire, innovate and impact our communities.

All the best and thank you.