

**SPEECH BY GUEST OF HONOUR MS JASMIN LAU
MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND
MINISTRY OF DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION
AT TAN KAH KEE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS
PRESENTATION CEREMONY ON 17 JULY 2025**

Mr Lawrence Tan, Chairman, Tan Kah Kee Foundation

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

Ms Low Khah Gek, Chief Executive Officer, ITE

Distinguished guests, donors, family and friends of the
scholarship recipients

Recipients, ladies and gentlemen

Introduction

1. A very good evening to all of you. Thank you for inviting
me to celebrate this special occasion.

Legacy of Mr Tan Kah Kee

2. Mr Tan Kah Kee once said in Mandarin “国家之富强
，全在于国民，国民之发展，全在于教育，教
育是立国之本”

3. In English this means that education is the foundation of a nation's prosperity.

4. It is with this belief that the Tan Kah Kee Foundation was established in 1982 to promote and support education for all. Over the last 43 years, more than 400 postgraduate students have received scholarships amounting to over \$5 million. This allows them to pursue higher learning and make meaningful contributions to society.

5. This evening, I would like to express our gratitude to the Foundation for carrying forward Mr Tan Kah Kee's ideals in education, and to all donors for your generosity.

Encouraging Scholars to Give Back to the Community

6. The Tan Kah Kee Postgraduate Scholarship programme, established in 1982, continues the legacy of Mr Tan Kah Kee and other pioneers, who dedicated themselves not just to education but also to giving back to society.

7. To our 34 scholarship recipients who will be receiving your awards today, congratulations on this significant achievement.

8. Each of you was selected based on your outstanding track record in academics and community service, as well as your vision and commitment to doing good for the community.

9. Take Dr Sarah Tan, for example. As a medical doctor with a strong passion for public health, Sarah co-founded a ground-

up initiative to prevent and delay childhood myopia progression in low-income families. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she led the distribution of care packs that helped impart good eye habits to vulnerable children. This initiative has benefitted over 1000 families.

10. Sarah will be pursuing her Masters in Public Health with the aim of driving meaningful changes in the community through her new knowledge. I wish you all the best and I look forward to the positive contributions you will continue to make in healthcare!

11. To all scholarship recipients, Sarah's journey shows how you can create meaningful social impact through excellence in your own chosen fields. This scholarship represents the belief in your potential to shape the future.

12. As you continue your studies, do remember that with this opportunity comes responsibility – the responsibility to uplift other people, and to use your knowledge and skills to contribute meaningfully to society.

Lifelong Learning

13. In 2023, the Tan Kah Kee Foundation Lifelong Learning Scholarship was launched to support outstanding ITE alumni in their journey of growth and continuous learning.

14. Lifelong learning to me is like a river that never stops flowing – always moving and adapting to new terrain, and it will chart new paths. It has become even more critical in

today's age with artificial intelligence (AI) and rapid technologies. All of us, myself included, will need to adapt and acquire new skills.

15. Today, we celebrate the 22 of you who will be receiving the Lifelong Learning Scholarships. You have not only demonstrated commitment to learning at different stages of your life but also contributed to the community in your own ways.

16. Take Samuel Ho's experience for instance. He was inspired to make join the healthcare sector after his own hospitalisation experience due to an accident. During his studies at ITE, he exemplified the spirit of lifelong learning and excelled in the Nitec in nursing. As President of the Student Nurses Chapter of the Singapore Nurses Association, Samuel contributed actively to community health initiatives for the elderly, while mentoring younger classmates.

17. Samuel is currently pursuing his diploma in nursing at Nanyang Polytechnic, and hopes to be clinically trained as an Intensive Care Unit nurse (ICU) one day. All the best to you, Samuel!

18. Another recipient of the Lifelong Learning Scholarship is Wan Akashah. He is often described as someone who demonstrates dedication and resilience despite facing challenges in life. Currently pursuing the Work-Study Diploma in Facilities Management, he has already been commended by his employer for applying the skills he learnt in ITE to pilot initiatives that help reduce energy consumption.

19. Wan Akashah hopes to continue his journey of lifelong learning after graduation, to drive meaningful engineering practices within the industry. His aspirations reflect a crucial reality in today's fast-changing world – the ability to adapt and learn continuously and then to apply these skills in the industry that you work in.

20. This is why I was very happy to hear from Prof Eugene that a new scholarship – known as the Tan Guan Kai Lifelong Learning Scholarship – has been established this year. This scholarship, sponsored by Ms Peggy Tan, the granddaughter of Mr Tan Kah Kee, will benefit two awardees who demonstrate the spirit of lifelong learning. Thank you Ms Tan for paying it forward!

Conclusion

21. Once again, I would like to congratulate all scholarship recipients here today as well as your family members and parents who have groomed you over the years and given you the heart and the passion to serve. I encourage you to embrace new growth opportunities, strive to keep pace with the fast-changing world, and continue giving back to society in your own ways as you further your education journey.

22. Thank you.