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SKILLSFUTURE SINGAPORE, DEPUTY SECRETARY
(SKILLSFUTURE), MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CHAIRMAN OF
IAL COUNCIL AT THE IAL GRADUATION CEREMONY 2019, 21
OCTOBER 2019, 7.00PM, SINGAPORE CHINESE CULTURAL
CENTRE AUDITORIUM**

Graduands

Family members of graduands

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good evening to all of you

A significant milestone and graduation ceremony

1 This evening's graduation ceremony is a personal milestone for all of you who have worked hard and persevered, balancing the demands of work, life and studies. First of all, my heartiest congratulations to each of you. This occasion is also significant for another reason, being the first graduation ceremony that IAL is holding since it became an autonomous institute of the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) in April this year.

2 When we made the decision to move IAL from SkillsFuture Singapore to SUSS, it was with the firm belief that this would be a synergistic partnership — IAL, with its expertise in adult training and education, as well as its industry networks, and SUSS, with its resources, network and multi-disciplinary academic strengths as a university for lifelong learning. The assets of both institutions complement and

invigorate each other. Now that the restructuring and post transition phase have been completed, we can all look forward to broad-based collaboration in areas such as research, learning design and curriculum development in adult learning, and enterprise networking.

3 Looking back, this transition has not been easy, for it requires IAL to make a leap from being part of a statutory board to a university environment. Likewise, for the graduands, you have crossed hurdles and overcome challenges, to acquire a new set of knowledge and competencies. I am confident that the next chapter for IAL and all of you will be filled with new, exciting possibilities.

A wider network with SUSS

4 Now that IAL is part of SUSS, IAL's system has expanded to integrate with SUSS' wider network. For graduands, this means a bigger platform and springboard for your personal and professional development, whether it is access to learning and pedagogical resources, peer and professional networks, or new programmes in different disciplines.

5 With the support of SUSS for all IAL programmes and the recognition by SkillsFuture Singapore for IAL's WSQ programmes, IAL's certifications now stand in stronger stead than before. On top of that, its programmes will continue to upgrade and evolve to address the needs of our Training and Adult Education (TAE) community, aligned with the national focus on SkillsFuture. Similarly, with IAL's research work plugged into SUSS' research ecosystem, I am confident we will see even stronger, industry-relevant offerings as pedagogy is strengthened and the research

teams from both sides engage in exchange and peer-sharing, as well as put forth joint research projects on adult learning and TAE practices.

Forging ahead with IAL

6 Key industries such as manufacturing are facing changes with increasing economy headwinds. As the national institute for adult educators, IAL needs to continually keep pace with changes. It is imperative for IAL to respond quickly to the needs of the community to ensure our TAE professionals are able to play a useful role in reskilling and upskilling the workforce. In this aspect, IAL has been embarking on initiatives to raise the professional standing of TAE professionals. One example is the rollout of the new WSQ Advanced Certificate in Learning and Performance (ACLP) in June this year.

7 As of October, close to 500 learners have enrolled in the programme. We have received positive feedback with 92% of them giving the programme a thumbs up. This is encouraging for IAL and the adult educators who are facilitating it. Some of the popular topics in ACLP are those that address growing trends in the industry, such as the integration of technology-enabled components and workplace learning. New elements such as self and peer assessment as part of developing “learning-to-learn” capacities have also proven to be a hit. Continuing market demand for the course shows that IAL has taken a right, timely step in developing this certification.

8 Another exciting update is the new Master of Learning and Professional Development programme, to be conferred by Griffith University in partnership with IAL. This programme which is slated for

launch in the first quarter of next year, has been developed in response to emerging roles and skillsets identified under the TAE Skills Framework. Graduates will be equipped with skills to lead innovative and pedagogically sound interventions, which will enhance work performance of their stakeholders. Subsequently, IAL will also be working closely with SUSS to jointly accredit and issue formal qualifications, and roll out programmes that might interest you. In all, these developments illustrate IAL's commitment to continually strengthen its product offerings.

9 I am also delighted to share with you an upcoming initiative from IAL. The institute has embarked on digital badging for Adult Education professionals. Digital badging will validate and endorse skills developed through professional practice and offer credentialing of the skills that individuals possess. Through a one-stop assessment process, eligible individuals can earn skills and role badges mapped to the TAE Skills Framework, and be recognised under the national Adult Education Professionalisation initiative. Nearly 50 participants from IAL's enterprise partners, training providers as well as Adult Education professionals are taking part in the pilot due to be completed in November. This initiative, in addition to what are already in place, will further boost capability building and professionalisation of the sector.

10 For the graduands, now that you are armed with your hard-earned certifications, you are ready to put what you have learnt into practice. Remember, in this line of work, continuous maintenance of your professional image and standing is critical. You are now teachers and mentors for working adults. I encourage you to be at least one step ahead of your learners to facilitate and optimise their learning.

11 Let me offer some advice to upkeep your professional standing. Firstly, seek continuous learning and professional development. This will deepen your skills and sharpen your tools. Secondly, innovate purposefully. You may start by designing on-the-job learning or integrating blended learning in your offerings. Lastly, always stay inquisitive and extend your knowledge beyond the TAE sector. You are training adults in a variety of industries and sectors. Understanding macro trends in jobs and skills will allow you to see the shifts in job demands.

Conclusion

12 IAL is at a new beginning, just like all of you graduands. Singapore is well-known for its strong tripartite model for our labour movement, with the government, employers and labour unions working in concert to ensure the best outcomes for all parties. Similarly, hand-in-hand, IAL-SUSS, SkillsFuture Singapore and the TAE sector will chart the future for continuing education and training. Graduands like yourselves will play an important role.

13 As you move on to develop your career, and extend your network, IAL will likewise be constantly upgrading to serve our graduands and alumni better. Whether you are looking at resources, networks or programmes, IAL and SUSS will always support your needs in your professional journey. Do stay connected with IAL, and I wish you all the best for the future.

Thank you