

OFFICIAL WELCOME ADDRESS TO NEW ALUMNI 2005

Honourable Minister Mr Raymond Lim, Prime Minister's Office and
Second Minister for Finance and Foreign Affairs,
President of NUS, Professor Shih Choon Fong,
NUS Faculty Members,
NUS Graduating Class of 2005,
Fellow NUSS Members,
My Colleagues in the NUSS Management Committee,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good evening and a very warm welcome to our second NUSS New Alumni Dinner 2005.

1. On behalf of the Management Committee of NUSS, it is my pleasure to extend a very warm welcome to Minister Raymond Lim and to thank him for honouring us with his presence, at this evening's function.
2. The Constitution of NUSS has, as its main objective, the promotion of the interests and development of the National University of Singapore (NUS). We, as a graduate body, are here to serve and be a good friend of our alma mater, the National University of Singapore. We have, for many years now worked symbiotically with and built a special bond with our alma mater NUS. Since year 2000, National University of Singapore Society (NUSS), has held an annual commencement party to congratulate and welcome into our fold each graduating class. Together with this year's New Alumni Dinner Party held on 8th July at Kent Ridge Guild House and this party, we have received an overwhelming attendance of about 900 fresh graduates in total. Now, for the fifth year running, we continue this tradition as well as see this as a significant time for both young graduates and the members of NUSS.

3. In 2004, we celebrated the National University of Singapore Society's golden jubilee. We have come a long way from our humble beginnings. This historic milestone recognised NUSS and our successful efforts to be the foremost graduate society in Singapore. It is also a point in time for us all to reflect and commit ourselves as a graduate society to assist as best as possible, if invited and allowed to, to serve NUS, the larger Singapore Community and even the World at large. After all, the Mission Statement of NUSS is "to excel as the foremost graduate society in Singapore and make significant contributions to the National University of Singapore, to the Nation and to the World." This evening, welcoming 2005's graduating class represents for NUSS another journey to 50 years of excellence and National University of Singapore Society's newest members.
4. This year is also most significant in that it is the 100th year of existence of NUS and its predecessor institutions. We are happy as an alumni body of NUS to celebrate the centennial year of NUS. To date, I am pleased that together with NUS, our membership portfolio consists of about 75 percent of NUS graduates. Established since 1905, the National University of Singapore is today, after many years of humble and steady progress, acknowledged as one of the finest universities in the world. Today, NUS is ranked 18th in the World University Rankings of 200 best universities by *The Times* of London. This means our local graduates have a better profile in the world of graduates and in the eyes of the working world.
5. With 13 faculties, an enrolment of more than 22,000 undergraduate and 8,000 graduate students, this year NUS awards 8,415 degrees, 5,780 Bachelor's, 2,350 Master's and 285 PhD degrees. As you will be our latest batch of alumni members, NUSS offers even more membership privileges to you today. NUSS intends to continue to keep the environment that you have grown to enjoy and offer you more networking facilities, advantages and keep you connected to NUS while

you make significant contributions to Singapore. Joining NUSS would be a sensible investment for young graduates.

6. Continuing the Society's mission to its members, we now present a NUSS-AEC scholarship programme that gives NUSS members the unique opportunity to attend an MBA course with University of Birmingham, a prestigious business school. This is the first part-time course in Singapore for our members and this will also be the start of more opportunities to come for NUSS.
7. A few moments ago, you viewed a video that introduces you to the new \$4 million City Guild House at Suntec City. The official opening of Suntec City Guild House stands as the latest facility conveniently located in the heart of town. The availability of this additional facility demonstrates our growing progress and capability to serve the needs and aspirations of our ever-expanding membership. In addition, we have our flagship in Kent Ridge Guild House and also Adam Park Guild House.
8. Further, NUSS has created some links with the alumnis of some leading universities in Asia and, it is hoped that we will expand this to the global alumni communities. These initiatives further establish our sustainability as a long-standing alumni body over the past decades and NUSS' ability to stay relevant to changing needs for a more dynamic and value-added gateway.
9. These developments and progress show why NUSS has a relatively young membership. Around 41 percent of our Society members are aged 35 years and below. And to date, we have a membership of about 12,000 graduates which includes National University of Singapore and also local and foreign university graduates. This creates a more dynamic and vibrant graduate society.
10. Since our inception in 1954, the National University of Singapore Society is recognised as the country's oldest and

largest Society for the alumni body of graduates from NUS and its predecessors.

11. As the youngest cohort of NUS graduates, you are now part of the proud family of around 150,000 NUS Alumni Members, and ever expanding.
12. Our keynote speaker tonight is the Honourable Minister Raymond Lim. Minister Lim, you represent the academic possibilities that many aspire to achieve as a Rhodes scholar and as an exemplary Minister holding various important portfolios. You are (or rather were) a keen sportsman, I believe in athletics and rugby. Today I suppose your priorities got to be adjusted because of your busy schedule. In community work and public service your continued contributions to our nation is appreciated.
13. I would like to extend my gratitude to you for graciously accepting NUSS' invitation to be our Guest of Honour. Your address is an important part of our celebrations and it is both an honour and privilege for NUSS and graduate participants to have you in our midst.
14. Tonight, is as significant an event for NUSS as it is for NUS. We are fortunate to welcome President of NUS, Professor Shih Choon Fong to this evening's function. I would like to extend my gratitude to you for graciously accepting NUSS' invitation to give an Opening Address. Along with the NUS centennial anniversary, it is a special time with the homecoming of Bukit Timah campus since May 2005. As many will enjoy the exceptional heritage that this campus once brought to now NUSS and NUS alumni members, it represents new memories to come for NUS undergraduates and staff today. NUSS also looks forward to carrying on the unique friendship that we share with NUS for a guild house at BTC in the future. As NUS moves towards becoming a global knowledge enterprise, I would like to congratulate you and your team for NUS' continued vision to

create an excellent environment that helps students realise their full potential.

15. Before I invite Professor Shih Choon Fong on stage, on behalf of all our guests attending this dinner, I would also like to extend my sincere thank you to all the NUSS staff members, including all the personnel who prepared the sumptuous buffet spread for all of us tonight, the Secretariat and the front desk, for all the enthusiasm and hard work you have put in to prepare for this event and to ensure each step of the way was considered with care, and to make tonight's function memorable and a success.
16. Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the President of NUS, Professor Shih Choon Fong. Thank you.

Chandra Mohan K Nair
President
NUSS
23rd July 2005
Suntec City Guild House