



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **SMU holds inaugural Virtual Graduation and Career Fair for Class of 2020 to mark its graduation milestone**

**SINGAPORE, 24 July 2020 (Friday)** – Singapore Management University (SMU)’s Class of 2020 celebrated its graduation today with a Virtual Graduation and Career Fair specially curated by the University and held virtually for the first time, in light of the Covid-19 situation. The event aims to commemorate an important milestone of the graduates by providing them with a memorable and valuable experience, offer a platform where they can relive and rejoice in the best moments of their journey with SMU, as well as an opportunity to interact with potential employers.

The Virtual Graduation and Career Fair was organised in addition to the physical Commencement ceremonies which will be held at a later date when circumstances allow.

The 2921-strong Class of 2020 comprises 1884 Bachelor’s degree graduates, 989 Master’s degree and Juris Doctor degree graduates, and 48 Doctorate degree graduates. Among the Bachelor’s degree graduates, 56 of them will be receiving double degrees. Together, they represent SMU’s 17th batch of graduates since the University was established in 2000.

#### **Virtual Graduation Event**

The day of celebration kicked off with a speech by SMU Chairman Mr Ho Kwon Ping and an Ask-Me-Anything session with the Class of 2020. Mr Ho said that the graduates have demonstrated qualities of adaptability and resilience to complete their SMU education during these challenging times, the same qualities will stand them in good stead as they embark on their careers. He encouraged them to continue to build and strengthen their skillsets in order to ride the waves of change in the post-pandemic world.

This was followed by a virtual panel session on “Navigating through the post-pandemic world of work – do we have what it takes?” with a pre-recorded message by Minister for Defence Ng Eng Hen. The panel included SMU President Professor Lily Kong; Mr Edmund Lin, Partner and Director, Global Head of Financial Services, Bain & Company; Mr Andie Rees, Managing Partner, Southeast Asia, Odgers Berndtson; and Mr Gilbert Tan, Assistant Director-General, National Trades Union Congress and Chief Executive Officer, Employment & Employability Institute. Moderated by Associate Professor Eugene Tan from SMU School of Law, the panel discussed how graduates can rise above the challenges in a radically different post-Covid-19 world, as well as the relevant qualities, skills, and mindsets needed to find purpose and meaning to thrive in the next normal world of work.

The second panel session discussed “What are the job skills that are required by fresh graduates to succeed in a post-pandemic world?”. The session started with a pre-recorded message by Minister for Education Ong Ye Kung, followed by a panel discussion by Dean of SMU Lee Kong Chian School of Business Professor Gerard George; Mr Joel Fastenberg, Head of Human Resources for Singapore and ASEAN, Citi; SMU alumnus Mr Aldric Chen; and Ms Tricia Duran, Head of HR, Unilever Asia Pte Ltd. Moderated by Professor Annie Koh, SMU Vice President for Business Development, the panel discussed the attitudes, aptitudes and action plans required by the fresh graduates to prepare for career success and jobs of the future.

Other highlights of the Virtual Graduation Event were:

- Virtual Degree Presentation - a digital avatar of each graduate is created from his or her selfie to provide the graduate with a customised experience of going onstage in full graduation regalia to receive the degree folder from his/her Dean, who is also in digital avatar form;
- SMU Memories Gallery - set in a VR-simulated version of SMU’s Li Ka Shing Library where graduates walked down a virtual memory lane to view the curated photos and videos submitted by fellow graduates for the SMU Memories Contest. Graduates voted for their favourite photos and videos in the ‘Favourite place on campus’, ‘Best Global Exposure/Co-curricular Activity/Community Service moment’, and ‘Best SMU moment’ categories, and the winners walked away with attractive prizes;
- MobileAR photobooth - uses augmented reality (AR) tools to call up the graduate’s avatar on the mobile phone so as to capture photos of the precious moments of the occasion with family and loved ones;
- A virtual Dedication Space for graduates to pen or record their messages of appreciation and encouragement to their loved ones, peers, professors and the University on Instagram and SMU Facebook.

**Virtual Career Fair**

Rounding off the day was a Virtual Career Fair featuring over 50 companies comprising multinationals, small-and-medium sized enterprises and start-ups who shared their insights about their company and industry, networked with the graduates, as well as offered full-time positions and SG United Traineeships.

This is the third virtual career fair that SMU has organised for our graduating cohort since March this year. It is part of SMU’s overall efforts to assist our graduates secure permanent or contract employment amid the softening market conditions brought on by the pandemic. Other measures include sourcing and posting full-time jobs for graduates on SMU’s in-house internship/job portal; reaching out to employers to facilitate permanent and contract employment recruitment, as well as to our alumni on offering traineeship and employment opportunities; and continuing to offer access to the SMU in-house job portal and personalised assistance by individual career coaches.

SMU is also providing our Class of 2020 with learning and development opportunities. Housed within a dedicated microsite by the Office of Alumni Relations are online resources, webinars, virtual workshops, podcasts, as well as articles and references published by SMU’s Schools and Centres. Additionally, the Class of 2020 will enjoy four complimentary Continuing Education and Training (CET) modules by SMU Academy, the university’s professional training arm; the ‘Skilled for the Future’ series of virtual micro-workshops co-organised by SMU Academy and Office of Alumni Relations; and discount on Postgraduate Professional Programme fees.

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**About Singapore Management University**

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and to produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU's education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning

Home to over 10,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and post-graduate research programmes, SMU, is comprised of six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in multidisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU emphasises rigorous, high-impact, multi- and interdisciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities around the world, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector. SMU's city campus is a modern facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. [www.smu.edu.sg](http://www.smu.edu.sg)