

main article

DIFFERENCE VIBRANCY EDGE

SMU's fifth cohort graduates and includes the pioneer groups from the School of Social Sciences and Master of Professional Accounting.

Speaking to 1,167 graduands at [Commencement 2008](#), distinguished Guest of Honour Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen engaged the audience by speaking about the prospects of the graduates against the backdrop of a volatile economic environment. His call to the students was Carpe Diem. "Seize the opportunities", he said, "And put to full use the education and skills you have received at SMU and proceed boldly".

Held on 12 July 2008 at Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre, Commencement 2008 recognised the achievements of the graduating students – of which 1,033 received bachelor's degrees in Accounting, Business Management, Economics, Information Systems Management and Social Sciences, with 90 receiving double degrees. The University also conferred 135 postgraduate master's degrees in [Applied Economics](#), [Applied Finance](#), [Economics](#), [Finance](#), [Professional Accounting](#) and [Wealth Management](#).

The Class of 2008 SPH Valedictorian Award was Yeo Zhong Yi, who graduated Summa Cum Laude with a [Bachelor of Business Management](#) with a second major in accounting. Zhong Yi was the recipient of [Goh Foundation Scholarships](#) and the [OCBC Outstanding Student Award](#) in 2006. He was on the Dean's List both in 2004 and 2005 and received a Community Leadership Excellence Award in 2007. As an academic tutor and soccer coach Zhong Yi worked with the Children-At-Risk-Empowerment Association.

Also graduating Summa Cum Laude with a [Bachelor of Science in Information Systems Management](#) with a second major in business management was the Class of 2008 SPH Magazines Salutatorian Ngiang Boon Loong. As the recipient of a SMU Community Service Scholarship and the Singapore Computer Society Best First Year Student Award, as well as active participation in many SMU organisations and committees as a facilitator, coordinator and SMU advocate, Boon Loong had demonstrated in myriad ways how much he has contributed to SMU and the community at large.

SMU [President Howard Hunter](#) closed the auspicious ceremony by reminding the students about the strong ties they have formed at SMU. "As alumni", he said, "You continue to be part of an extended family that includes SMU faculty, staff, alumni, students, parents and friends".



Guest of Honour Dr Ng Eng Hen speaking to the Class of 2008 at Commencement on 12 July 2008



Class of 2008 Valedictorian, Yeo Zhong Yi

"SMU is to be commended for making community service an integral and consistent part of its curriculum through programmes, and not just one-off projects. I hope that more of you will be motivated to do your part for the local and global community, using the skills and entrepreneurial spirit you have gained [at SMU]. Social entrepreneurship, driven by your ideas and ability, can give many less fortunate people across the world hope for a better future."

- Dr Ng Eng Hen at SMU Commencement 2008