

**MESSAGE BY MR. THOMAS FERNANDEZ,
PRESIDENT, SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE (SOE)
THE SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE AWARDS 2014
FRIDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2014, 7.00PM
MANDARIN ORCHARD SINGAPORE, GRAND MANDARIN BALLROOM**

Why is it important to promote entrepreneurship? This is one of our guiding questions whenever we interview an entrepreneur for the SOE Awards.

And we hear different answer from every entrepreneur we interview, but what remains constant are the multiple voices we hear in support of what we continue to try to achieve, year after year.

Since 2003, SOE has been an advocate of support for home-grown entrepreneurs who are active change-makers and innovators, recognizing their achievements in their respective industries. Innovation and creativity are key to sustainability in this restructuring economy.

This year, we give due credit to our 31 honourees for their excellent ideas, and for sharing their exemplary stories with us. It is truly an inspiration to see that they have managed to turn their ideas into reality and cross the hurdles they have faced on their entrepreneurial journeys.

Growth is often equated with progress and success. But at SOE it is more than that. We always aim to give back to society and develop our next generation of entrepreneurs. We do this because promoting entrepreneurship in our country is our passion.

As entrepreneurs who invest in our own businesses, the SOE Board of Governors believes in investing in the future – by planting seeds in young minds and guiding them. SOE has actively promoted entrepreneurship among the young over the year through its Student Interviewer Programmes. Our mentorship

programmes and entrepreneurship talks also reach out to young people, enhancing their characters and competencies in preparation for whatever future endeavours they may choose to pursue.

None of these advocacies would have materialized if not for the support of our partners. We give our greatest appreciation to our Friends of SOE: Nexia-TS, Credit Suisse and Charles & Keith. We are also extremely grateful to our bursary sponsor, Michael Sengol; and SOE Awards Main Sponsors, VISA and Pernod Ricard Singapore. To our past honourees and board members who have actively participated in our activities – we thank you. Your immense belief in and support of SOE has constantly motivated us to honour and inspire.

It is an honour for SOE to work with our outstanding entrepreneurs and to help them to reach even greater heights. We hope that in our own small way, we can drive the entrepreneurial spirit so that it may reach ever more individuals and inspire them to make their dreams reality.

Cheers to a brighter future ahead of us!