

**SPEECH 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**

Our Guest of Honour, Mr. Lee Yi Shyan, Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry

Honorary Chairman, Mr. Goh Kai Kui

Past President, Mr. Henry Tan

Honourees, Sponsors, Donors, Partners

My Fellow Board of Governors

Distinguished Guests

Ladies & Gentlemen

A very good evening to one and all.

Thank you for taking time off your busy schedule to be here today to attend the SOE Awards Dinner 2014.

It is a great honour for me to see SOE grow over the years and unceasingly achieving its mission to honour home-grown entrepreneurs and to inspire budding entrepreneurs among the student and youth.

SOE's programmes such as the Student Entrepreneur Programme and Student Interviewer Programme are what we consider as fuels that keeps our passion burning. These two major programmes of SOE have inspired us to voluntarily invest our time, skills, efforts and resources to inspire the next generation to take the road of entrepreneurship and maximize their potentials as individuals.

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The Student Entrepreneur Programme is an SOE sponsored programme which aims cultivate passion, resiliency, innovation and true leadership among the younger generation by conveying the basic understanding of starting and running a business through highly engaging and fun activities tailor fitted to the specific needs and profile of each group of students. One of the highlights of the SEP is the 'Entrepreneur Talk' wherein the students get to learn from our SOE Honourees as they share the experiences and impart valuable lessons to the children.

SOE's Student Interviewer Programme aims to shape and inspire future generation of entrepreneurs by opening doors for tertiary students to get first-hand information from successful entrepreneurs. Here they get better understanding on the challenges and setbacks faced by the entrepreneurs, as well as the determination and perseverance to succeed based on their personal experience. As our economy is going through a major restructuring project, entrepreneurs play a key role in the progress of our economy. They bring in new innovations, ideas and concepts to overcome all odds to stay in business. We hope that this experience may be an inspiration to the youth and challenge them to look upon the journey as an entrepreneur as a viable career option.

Not all successful businesses started as big enterprises. Actually, many started small and faced countless of challenges before it reached stability. Our honourees this evening stands as a living testament that anything is possible and the Spirit of Enterprise Awards recognises the bitter sweet success of your entrepreneurial journey and we are grateful to be a part of it. My heartiest congratulations to each and every one of you, a round of applause to our 31 outstanding 2014 Honourees, please.

Each year, SOE together with Nexia TS Public Accounting Corporation, seek to recognise exemplary businessmen for their outstanding entrepreneurial and learning journey and to uphold them as an inspiration for others to follow. With this, I would also like to congratulate this year's SOE-Nexia TS Entrepreneur of the Year Award winner, Mr. Andrew Kwan, Group Managing Director of Commonwealth Capital Pte Ltd.

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We would also like to commend the SOE-Charles & Keith Best Student Interviewers Awardees 2014, Ms. Kelyn Tan from the Singapore Institute of Management - University of Birmingham and Ms. Manorama Singh from the Singapore Management University.

For all the events that SOE carries out, we are supported by a very generous group of sponsors and donors who help to fund our community outreach programmes.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the following:

- Main Partner, Nexia TS Public Accounting Corporation - For supporting our SOE-Nexia TS Entrepreneur of the Year Award
- Education Partner, Charles & Keith (Singapore) Pte Ltd - For their contribution to the Charles & Keith Best Student Interviewer Award
- Strategic Partner, Credit Suisse AG - For their contribution to the SOE Talk
- Scholarship/Bursary Partner, Mr. Michael Sengol
- SOE Awards Major Partner, VISA Worldwide Pte Ltd
- SOE Awards Event Partner, Pernod Richard Singapore – Chivas 18

Our official partners who are in the hall of fame known as "The Friends of SOE".

I will also like to extend my personal appreciation to our Guest-of- Honour,

Mr. Lee Yi Shyan, Senior Minister of State for Trade & Industry and National Development for gracing the awards dinner, as well as the SOE Board of Governors for their tireless contribution and playing their part in dedicating their resource, time and effort to ensure that SOE stays true to its course.

I would like to take this opportunity to give special commendation to SOE Award's Chairman, Mr. Sa'at Ismail who has generously invested much of his time, effort and money in helping SOE in so many ways. Throughout the years, he has bigheartedly

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mobilised his team, partners, suppliers and friends to contribute what they can to serve the cause of SOE. He has also assisted in running the Fundraising Golf Challenge this year, in designing and planning all marketing collaterals, and documenting all SOE major events. A big round of applause for Sa'at, please.

The Spirit of Enterprise has always reached for greater heights and bigger possibilities, focusing on getting our message to more people. For all the honourees, continue your entrepreneurial journey, despite the challenges and trials. With your hard work and positive mind-set, you are all winners of success!

Tonight is your night.

Tonight, let us celebrate.

Cheers.

Thank you