

**SPEECH BY MS LOW YEN LING, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY,  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY,  
AT THE SINGAPORE JUNIOR CHEFS CLUB'S SINGAPORE TOP YOUNG CHEF  
COMPETITION FINALS, 15<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2017, 3PM AT  
TEMASEK CULINARY ACADEMY,  
TEMASEK POLYTECHNIC**

Mr Edmund Toh, President, Singapore Chefs Association (SCA)

Ms Ong Jing Qin, President, Singapore Junior Chefs Club (SJCC)

Mr Elvin Chew, President Mentor, Singapore Junior Chefs Club and Chief  
Competition Organiser

Competition Judges and Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am delighted to be here with you this afternoon for the Singapore Top Young Chef Competition (STYC) Finals. It was indeed a very intensive competition by the 6 finalists. The finesse with which these promising young chefs have conceptualised and prepared a 3-course meal in the span of 6 hours is remarkable.
2. The food services industry plays an important role in our economy, adding vibrancy to Singapore's tourism landscape. The industry offers a wide range of innovative dining concepts, cuisine and service offerings, as well as interesting business models to address the increasing complexity of consumer needs. Hence, this provides tremendous growth and development opportunities for both business owners and chefs. Competitions such as the STYC are excellent platforms for young talented chefs to learn new trends, build networks, and exchange ideas.
3. As expectations shift and consumer preferences change, it is encouraging to see these young chefs keeping up with culinary trends, innovating, and perfecting their own unique recipes. We hope this will drive the creation of the next uniquely Singaporean dish, which will further cement Singapore's reputation as a food paradise.
4. Through the Singapore Tourism Board's Association Development Fund, young chefs are supported in their participation in renowned international culinary competitions to hone their craft and learn from the best chefs in the world. I am happy to note that the winner of the STYC competition will be given the chance to understudy the Singapore National Culinary Team at the 2018 Culinary World Cup in Luxembourg. The winner will also be given opportunities to understudy and work with companies in the food services sector and explore further collaborations.

5. This is an exciting time for our local food scene. Singaporeans' love for food will continue to fuel the Food Services sector. As part of the Food Services Industry Transformation Map (ITM) launched in September 2016, strategies had been mapped out to capture opportunities for the industry's sustainable growth. Food companies are increasingly leveraging technology to boost efficiency and enhance customers' dining experiences. This also led to job opportunities in the sector. Towards this end, we also worked closely with industry partners to nurture our young talent to support the manpower needs of food services companies. In particular, trade associations like the Restaurant Association of Singapore (RAS), Singapore Chefs Association (SCA) and its youth arm - the Singapore Junior Chefs Club (SJCC) – play a key role. They facilitate the connection with industry players, look out for new career opportunities for the young, assist members to develop capabilities, and improve productivity standards in their respective workplaces.
6. Mathew Tham, 24, is an example of a homegrown chef who received training from SCA when he was a core member of the Singapore National Junior Culinary Team. The team was top in the inaugural Alen Thong Golden Coffee Pot Young Chef Challenge 2016 in Abu Dhabi. During the training process, the Employment and Employability Institute (e2i) supported the team through various training classes to strengthen their skills and techniques. Mathew also received immense support from his school, At-Sunrice GlobalChef Academy, mentors, and employer, LeVeL33 restaurant. This year in February, Mathew was named champion of the International Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM) Young Chef Olympiad where he competed in India against global competitors.
7. In closing, I would like to commend the STYC organising committee for the successful organisation of this event. Let me offer my congratulations to the STYC champion and the rest of the contestants for having come so far. All of you are winners in your own right and I wish you every success in your culinary journeys. Thank you.