

**NUS Commencement 2025**  
**Commencement Dinner Speech by NUS President, Professor Tan**  
**Eng Chye**  
**Tuesday, 22 July 2025, Dining Hall, College of Alice & Peter Tan and**  
**Residential College 4**

NUS Pro-Chancellor Mr Po'ad Mattar and Mrs Mattar;

NUS Chairman Mr Hsieh Fu Hua and Trustee Ms Chew Gek Khim;

Honorary Graduates Ambassador Dr Chan Heng Chee, Dr Noeleen Heyzer and Dr Wong Ngit Liong;

Graduates;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good evening to everyone. Tonight marks the culmination of the 2025 Commencement ceremonies, and there were 35 of them, where more than 17,400 students celebrated a major milestone.

Our heartiest congratulations to all our graduates! It's been an incredible journey – packed with late nights, tough assignments, personal hurdles and probably more than a few moments of doubt. Over the past two weeks, we've heard and read about your stories of determination, resilience and courage, and are proud that you have all stayed the course.

This journey was not walked alone. To the faculty, staff, mentors, friends, and families who have supported these graduates throughout their journey – your steadfast guidance, encouragement, and belief in them played a vital role in their achievements.

In a world where learning is lifelong, Commencement is just the first of many milestones to come. And as you prepare to take flight, I would like to share a few thoughts that I hope will stay with you.

During your time at NUS, most of you would have developed strong and deep roots academically, socially and personally. These were all shaped by faculty or friends who inspired critical thinking, by connections and friendships that will last a lifetime, and most importantly, by the self-discovery of who you are and whom you aspire to become.

While roots have given you a solid foundation and have nourished you, your wings will carry you into the future.

Wings that will uplift you to dream boldly, explore possibilities, and rise to new heights.

They'll take you from simply answering questions to asking the deeper ones of how, what, and why. These will be the impetus to spark ideas, create meaningful impact and to serve your community. And while the flight may be unpredictable, you can always lean on your roots to keep you steady.

Amidst the excitement and hustle of charting your career path, it is easy to forget that burnout is real and rest is productive. So, build a life that includes pauses, boundaries, and, importantly, room to breathe.

For those who don't have all the answers right now, embrace the unknown. Growth begins with a single step forward, followed by tiny, consistent ones. Trust in your roots, spread your wings and lead with your heart, with purpose lighting your way.

This was the case in 1905, 120 years ago, when we started out as a small medical school for the community. Even as we have evolved and redefined our identity as an educational institution, we remain committed in our mission to serve our country and society.

Congratulations once again on this very important milestone and welcome to the NUS alumni family!

You are the generation that will shape what comes next, leading us to NUS150... and beyond.

May I invite everyone to join me in toasting the Class of 2025.

Cheers!