

NTU Students' Union President Speech for Freshmen Welcome Ceremony 2008

[Ceremony 1]

Good Morning

Dr Su Guaning, President of NTU

Members of the academic procession

And fellow undergraduates

A very warm welcome to all freshmen! As you embark on a brand new chapter in your life as an undergraduate student in NTU. These last three years at NTU have meant the world to me and as I begin on my final year, I look into your fresh faces with reminiscence and memories.

NTU is not only a place full of opportunities but also fresh starts. Whoever you may or may not be in the past, all these can change, here in NTU. NTU seeks to nurture each and every one of you here. There is a wide range of programmes available that will not only enrich your life as an undergraduate, but also provide you with valuable life experiences. For example, NTU offers enriching overseas experiences with global programmes such as the Overseas Attachment programme and the Global Immersion Programme. Those eager to broaden your academic learning can also take up Double Majors or complete the various types of minor programmes that are made available to you. Apart from minors, a host of broad-based electives like Forensic Science, Astronomy, Foreign Languages and Arts Appreciation are also available.

Many of you would have just completed the Orientation Camps and gotten your first taste of communal living in our Hall of Residences. Residing on campus will be a much-cherished experience as the friendships you build and the bonds you cultivate will last a lifetime. For myself, I was allocated to Hall 15 and haven't moved out since. I am active in hall activities such as the inter-hall games, various events and dinners and in the course of these activities, I have enjoyed the company of numerous friends and neighbours from all around the world.

For me, serving in the Students' Union has really been an enriching experience that has allowed me to recognise my leadership potential and hone my management skills. As a

junior officer in my first term, I experienced the changes that came about with new policies and as President during the last academic year, I have gained valuable experiences, learnt meaningful lessons and made many good friends along the way.

I'm sure many of you here will share the same sentiments as I do. As I spot many new faces here beaming with excitement, I believe you will find life as an NTU student fulfilling and one that is filled with opportunities and choices. Activities with the Students' Union, various Academic Clubs, Hall Committees and organizations will cultivate and further enhance your experience here, so do come forward and participate in the activities organised by the various clubs. They include societies like the Cultural Activities Club, the Sports Club or the highly-decorated Welfare Services Club. With the additional 40-over interest-based clubs, ranging from the Chinese Society, the Outdoor Activities Club, the Motoring Club, AIESEC to the Red Cross, you can expect to meet and better understand their missions through the upcoming Union Welcome Carnival.

A friend of mine reminded me of this quote from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound up in sorrows and in miseries. On such a full sea, are we now afloat, and we must take the current when it serves or lose our ventures."

I gather what that quote means is that life passes us by so quickly and opportunities are rare. Because of that, we have a duty to be vigilant in protecting our dreams. Furthermore, we should not only embrace the opportunities to succeed but also the opportunity to laugh, to see the enchantment in the world, and most importantly, to live. Because life doesn't owe us anything. As a matter of fact, I think we owe something to the world. And, if we can just believe in ourselves and our dreams, we can succeed. Believe in yourselves and seize the opportunities NTU can give you.

I wish you all the best in your upcoming years in NTU!