

5th SWHF Induction Ceremony & Gala Dinner

Speech by Dr June Goh, President, SCWO

Our Guest of Honour, Patron of SCWO, President Halimah Yacob,
Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Associate Professor Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim,
Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners,
Singapore Women's Hall of Fame honourees,
sponsors and supporters,
members of SCWO
and friends

Thank you all for joining us tonight at our 5th Singapore Women's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Gala Dinner, which is part of our International Women's month celebration.

As Singapore marks International Women's Day this year, we reflect on some of the bigger challenges that women currently face and how SCWO can help create the awareness to address them.

I would like to congratulate BoardAgender on releasing their latest Board Diversity report earlier this year. The study showed that female representation on boards in Singapore has albeit improved – 10.3% as of June last year, still has a long way to go. We are aiming for 20% in 2020 – which also means that much work is needed to address the underlying issues hindering women from being on boards.

Although more women than ever are in the workforce, studies have shown that many still leave their jobs, or turn down opportunities, due to caregiving responsibilities. As such, women will be at a disadvantage when they reach retirement age.

Addressing this, SCWO will be looking closely into these potential aging concern: aging women in the near future will have less money/savings compared to men, stemming from increased life expectancy, higher medical costs, and inadequate healthcare and lower CPF

As we look forward, The Singapore Women's Hall of Fame, launched in 2014, recognises and celebrates the contributions of women to Singapore's growth and development. A key aim is to share their stories to inspire more women, and indeed all Singaporeans, to chart their own paths in life, to be bold and visionary and to pursue their passions.

The 12 we are honouring tonight, have done precisely this.

This evening is particularly special as we have a distinguished inductee here with us. I would like to thank our Patron and 1st woman President of the Republic of Singapore, Mdm Halimah Yacob for gracing our celebrations tonight. Being the first female Speaker of Parliament and now the President, you are, indeed, an exemplary role model for women in

Singapore today. You have been a wonderful supporter of women's rights and the work we do at the SCWO. It is indeed our great honour to have you as our Patron. Thank you, Mdm President.

This year, we also recognise a group of individuals and corporates companies who have supported the SCWO over the past 10 years; and we call them Friends of SCWO. THANK YOU. Your benevolent contributions has helped the Star Shelter to support women and children who are survivors of domestic violence. The funds received, has also allowed the Maintenance Support Central to provide assistance to those who face difficulty in receiving maintenance, and supported our work in promoting female leadership and board diversity and and our many other programs and services.

To the twelve women who are going to be inducted tonight, and to the other 140 inductees in the Hall of Fame, some of whom are with us today – Leaena Tambyah, Koh Kheng Lian, Dr Kanwaljit Soin, Aziza Ali, Dr Anamah Tan, Dr Jennifer Lee, Ivy Singh-Lim, Dr. Aline Wong, Dr Geh Min, Stella Kon and Ann Wee – thank you for being such an inspiration to us. Your meaningful and valuable contributions have showed us that with passion, courage, and commitment, we can achieve much more.

We salute all of you!

This induction ceremony would not have been possible if not for those who work behind the scenes; my gratitude towards the members of the SWHF Working Committee chaired by Margaret Thomas, Resource Panel and the Selection Panel, chaired by Professor Tommy Koh, for their work in identifying the women to be honoured and for the SCWO team who put this dinner together. Thank you.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish you a pleasant evening and BON APPETITE!