

Speech by CS at Student of the Year Awards 2020/21 Presentation Ceremony (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr John Lee, at the Student of the Year Awards 2020/21 Presentation Ceremony today (July 17):

Gary (Chief Executive Officer of the South China Morning Post, Mr Gary Liu), Winfried (Chief Executive Officer of the Hong Kong Jockey Club, Mr Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges), students, teachers, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It gives me great pleasure to join you today at the Student of the Year Awards Presentation Ceremony.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Student of the Year Awards. It is a significant milestone in honouring excellence among our youth. Educational distinction dominates the awards to be presented today. But they also honour outstanding achievements in arts, culture and sports. Together, the awards speak of Hong Kong's unwavering commitment to education and our youth.

"Overcoming Obstacles, Celebrating Resilience" is the slogan of this year's Awards. It underscores the extraordinary challenges that our youth and our community have faced these past two years, from widespread social disturbances to the COVID-19 pandemic. Equally important, it highlights what they need to succeed – in school, as in life.

I am pleased to note that our students have confronted these challenges with courage and resolve. Their excellence amid these testing times makes us all proud.

The Awards also pay tribute to the education system – to our schools and teachers and to the Education Bureau. They promote values education, the essential importance of instilling moral and civic ideals in our youth, with a view to developing our students into leaders of the 21st century with resilience and a sense of national identity.

In this time of unprecedented adversity, such values have never been more vital for our youth, and for Hong Kong indeed.

Speaking of adversity, COVID-19 is still with us. While we have come a long way in recent months, the only sure way to post-pandemic world – to the flourishing future we all look forward to – is mass vaccination.

More than 40 per cent of our eligible population has now received at least a first jab, but we are still far from where we want to be. Where we

need to be. I appeal to you all to vaccinate yourselves as soon as you can, and to encourage your family and friends to do so, too.

Allow me now to thank the organisers, the South China Morning Post and the Hong Kong Jockey Club, for their inspiring commitment to education and to the youth of Hong Kong. For putting together another exemplary Student of the Year Awards and doing so in such difficult circumstances.

My congratulations to all our Student of the Year winners for your exceptional accomplishments. And my sincere appreciation to the principals, teachers and parents, who have, no doubt, given invaluable support, guidance and encouragement to all the awardees and finalists. And I wish you all good health and happiness.

Thank you very much.

