

Speech by CS at Student of the Year Awards 2022/23 Presentation Ceremony (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, at the Student of the Year Awards 2022/23 Presentation Ceremony today (July 15):

Catherine (Chief Executive Officer of the South China Morning Post, Ms Catherine So), Gabriel (Executive Director, Charities and Community of The Hong Kong Jockey Club, Dr Gabriel Leung), Tammy (Editor-in-Chief of the South China Morning Post, Ms Tammy Tam), Advisory Board members, honourable judges, parents, principals, teachers, finalists and students,

I am so happy to join this annual event again, sharing the joy and achievements of our city's outstanding young talent.

First, I would like to thank the South China Morning Post and The Hong Kong Jockey Club for jointly presenting the Student of the Year Awards. And my warmest congratulations to all the finalists and award winners – well done!

Over the years, this event has built its reputation for celebrating the achievements of outstanding senior secondary students in various fields, as well as their contributions at school and in the wider community.

The awards convey the important message that our society values not only academic results, but also the talents and personal qualities of young people.

No doubt, the finalists and award winners are the role models for our young generation. And I trust that you will continue to strive and become Hong Kong's leaders of tomorrow.

No less important, I thank the schools that have gone the extra mile in providing a caring and enabling environment to unleash students' potential. My big thanks go to the principals and teachers of the schools receiving the Special Award for Most Nurturing Environment.

This year's theme, "Take action to drive positive change", is an inspiring call to action for young people, who are the future, hope and pillars of Hong Kong.

The theme also salutes the ability of young people to adapt to changing circumstances like the pandemic. With the concerted efforts of the Government and society at large – young people included for sure, Hong Kong has fully resumed normality.

The current-term Government attaches great importance to youth development. Last December, we published the first-ever Youth Development Blueprint, outlining the mission, vision and guiding principles of our long-term youth work. It carries over 160 actions and measures to offer holistic support for the development of young people at different life stages.

Overall, the Blueprint encourages and empowers all sectors of society to work together to promote youth development – from nurturing young people's all-round abilities, strengthening their physical and mental well-being, to fostering their positive values and civic awareness.

And good progress is being made, I am pleased to say, on various fronts.

A good example is the wide range of Mainland and overseas internship and exchange activities available for young people, following the full resumption of normal travel of people between Hong Kong and the rest of the world. In 2023-24, the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau has pulled together over 41 000 places under such internship and exchange programmes.

I encourage you all to grasp these opportunities, through the Youth Development Commission's website, to broaden your horizons and achieve self-enhancement. And such exposure will surely help you contribute to building a better Hong Kong, as a stronger super-connector between Mainland China and the international world.

Ladies and gentlemen, my congratulations, once again, to all the finalists and award winners this year. Your achievements are the result of your hard work, dedication and passion. I am sure you will continue to take action to drive positive change, as this year's theme goes, in your future endeavours.

On that note, I wish you all the best in the year to come. Thank you very much.

