

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **BCA ACADEMY GRADUATION CEREMONY – 40% increase in BCA Academy’s Specialist Diploma graduands**

**Singapore, 14 November 2016** – More professionals from the built environment sector are seeking to enhance their industry knowledge and acquire niche skills at the BCA Academy. The BCA Academy graduation ceremony saw around 400 diploma graduands and 1,000 specialist diploma graduands receiving their graduation certificates today.

2. In a recent survey conducted by the Academy, it was reported that 84% of its diploma graduates secured jobs within the first six months of graduation.

3. For the specialist diploma courses, the Academy registered a 40 per cent increase in the number of graduands, a strong indication of the industry’s demands for marketable skills and the Academy’s relevance in providing these skill sets.

4. Besides diploma & specialist diploma programmes, the Academy also works closely with industry partners to develop a diverse range of programmes and courses that would enable its graduates to enjoy a variety of job opportunities both locally and internationally. The Bachelor in Construction Management (Building) is one such programme, jointly developed with the University of Newcastle Australia, with emphasis on the game-changing Building Information Modelling (BIM) technology. 92% of the first cohort of graduates gained full employment within six months of graduation. BCA Academy believes that being able to keep ahead of the industry’s changing needs is what makes it the choice educational institution for the built environment sector.

5. Valedictorian of the 2016 Diploma cohort and gold medal award winner, Ooi Jing Kai shared that he knew next to nothing about the business of air conditioning

and mechanical ventilation that his father left behind for him to take over when he passed away. Jing Kai was only 25 at that time. He decided to enrol himself in BCA Academy's Diploma in Mechanical Engineering (Green Building Technology) programme. Juggling the business and his academic demands, Jing Kai went on to achieve a perfect cumulative grade point average. Jing Kai found strength in the face of adversity, and has inspired many of his peers and lecturers alike.

6. Valedictorian of the 2016 Specialist Diploma cohort, Mr Aslam Bin Salim, was a BCA-industry joint scholarship holder who continually seeks opportunities to upgrade himself. Upon completing his Specialist Diploma in Architectural Technology programme while working with SD Architects, Mr Aslam decided it was time to go back to school full-time and will be pursuing his Bachelor's degree in Interior Design at the Singapore Institute of Technology.

7. Other outstanding and inspiring graduands of the 2016 Diploma and Specialist Diploma cohorts include:

- Ms Chua Xiao Yuan, the inaugural Chairman Award winner, found her true calling at the BCA Academy after initially taking up another course of study. She decided to pursue her interior design dream with the Academy's Interior and Landscape Design programme with support from her family and friends.
- Mr Chia Xun An, who, despite his health problems, was determined to make something out of his life and his interest in the built environment. Mr Chia's interest in the built environment grew into passion and he has since applied for the Bachelor of Construction Management (Building) programme. Last year, he published a book, titled "The Black Box" with the aim of helping those who are struggling with such health problems realise that they are not alone.
- Mr Kong Ching Chye is hearing impaired but managed to overcome the odds with the help and support of his peers and lecturers and is currently employed as a BIM modeller.

8. For more information on the outstanding graduands of the 2016 Diploma and Specialist Diploma cohorts, please refer to the Annex.

9. The built environment sector is in the midst of transformation and has taken many leaps forward over the years. “In the era of change today, advances in technology have changed and will continue to change the way we build and construct. BCA Academy will continue to work closely with the industry to equip the workforce with competent professionals and to provide opportunities for growth and upgrading of relevant skills so that professionals can continue to add value to the sector,” said Managing Director of BCA Academy, Er. William Tan.

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## **ANNEX – PROFILE OF OUTSTANDING BCA ACADEMY GRADUANDS**

### **DIPLOMA GRADUANDS**

**Name: Ooi Jing Kai**

**Course: Diploma in Mechanical Engineering (Green Building Technology)**

**Award: Valedictorian, Gold Award**

Valedictorian of the 2016 Diploma cohort, Ooi Jing Kai's journey to receiving his diploma and gold medal award was not by chance. Jing Kai took over the family business due to the unexpected demise of his father, and he accepted this life-changing responsibility readily. Armed with a Science degree back when he was just 25, Jing Kai knew next to nothing about the business of air conditioning and mechanical ventilation that he was about to oversee. He decided to enrol himself in BCA Academy's Diploma in Mechanical Engineering (Green Building Technology) programme. While pursuing his diploma full-time, he was also managing his family business. Juggling the business and his academic demands, Jing Kai went on to achieve a perfect cumulative grade point average. Jing Kai found strength in the face of adversity, and has inspired many of his peers and lecturers alike.

**Name: Chua Xiao Yuan**

**Course: Diploma in Interior and Landscape Design**

**Award: Inaugural Chairman Award, Gold Award**

Ranked within the top 15% of her course in the first semester of her studies at Temasek Polytechnic's Diploma in Interior Architecture and Design programme, Xiao Yuan was selected to take up the Diploma Plus programme, which recognises students who display academic aptitude. However, at the end of the second semester, Xiao Yuan realised that her true calling was in interior design, rather than architecture. Xiao Yuan then decided to withdraw from the polytechnic and instead joined BCA Academy's Diploma in Interior and Landscape Design programme to pursue her passion. Xiao Yuan participated in an external individual project in collaboration with the Restrooms Association (Singapore) and Marina Bay Sands in which she was given the opportunity to submit designs for Marina Bay Sands' restrooms and the atrium of the Marina Bay Sands Shoppes. Xiao Yuan received an appreciation letter from Marina Bay Sands, commending her contributions.

**Name: Kong Ching Chye**

**Course: Diploma in Construction Information Technology**

**Award: Merit Award**

Being hearing impaired did not deter Kong Ching Chye from pursuing his interest in the area of Building Information Modelling (BIM). With the support of his friends and lecturers who patiently wrote or typed messages to communicate with him, Ching Chye was able to overcome his own challenge. Even before graduating with his Diploma in Construction Information Technology, Ching Chye is currently already employed in a local BIM consultancy firm as a BIM Modeller.

## **SPECIALIST DIPLOMA GRADUANDS**

**Name: Aslam Bin Salim**

**Course: Specialist Diploma in Architectural Technology**

**Award: Valedictorian, Merit Award**

Mr Aslam Bin Salim received the joint scholarship from BCA and SD Architects and Associates in 2012, when he was pursuing his Diploma in Architecture at the Singapore Polytechnic. Mr Aslam then went on to join SD Architects after graduating from polytechnic. At the same time, he enrolled himself in the Academy's Architectural Technology Specialist Diploma programme where his eagerness to excel earned him excellent results and the Valedictorian title. Mr Aslam believes in seeking out opportunities to keep improving and upgrading himself. He has thus decided that it is time to go back to school to pursue a full-time Bachelor's degree in Interior Design at the Singapore Institute of Technology. Mr Aslam attests that the education he received at BCA Academy has equipped him with a solid foundation especially in the area of 3D Modelling and architectural detailing, which he finds very relevant and applicable not only on the job but also in his current studies.

**Name: Chia Xun An**

**Course: Specialist Diploma in Interior and Landscape Design**

Mr Chia Xun An was diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder at the tender age of 10. Years later he was further diagnosed with another type of illness - Borderline Personality Disorder. Despite his diagnosis, Mr Chia would not allow it to adversely affect his life although he often drew stares and unkind remarks from the people around him. With sheer determination and diligence, Mr Chia continued to pursue his interest in the built environment after completing his Diploma at the Ngee Ann Polytechnic, by enrolling in BCA Academy's Specialist Diploma programme in Interior and Landscape Design. The more Mr Chia got in touch with the built environment, the more he felt that he has found his calling. He has since applied for the Bachelor of Construction Management (Building) programme, a joint collaboration between BCA Academy and the University of Newcastle, Australia. Rather than shy away from his health issues, Mr Chia wants to take every opportunity to raise awareness of mental health conditions and hopes that Singapore, as a society, will continue to become more inclusive and embrace differences rather than discriminate against them. Last year, Mr Chia published a book which he had written and illustrated and which provides an insight on the effects of depression from his perspective. He aims to get more people to understand what it is like to be living with mental health conditions. He also hopes that the book can help those who are struggling with such issues realise that they are not alone.