

FEATURES

NTU Graduating Class of 2022: Striding Into the Open Road



Only around 700 graduates attended the ceremony in person this year due to the pandemic, yet every attendee participated with joy and enthusiasm.

Every year National Taiwan University welcomes graduates, guests, and alumni from home and abroad to attend its spirited commencement ceremony. This year's ceremony, which honored the virtues of "selflessness," "dedication," and "altruism," was held on May 21 at the NTU Sports Center, to celebrate the achievements of the 10,096 graduates of the Class of 2022.

Reflecting on the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, NTU President Chung-Ming Kuan reminded the graduates to make a positive difference in the world, contributing to society and caring for the welfare of others. "Since this is a time like no other, you deserve a commencement ceremony that's one-of-a-kind. In times like these, we need songs and poetry to comfort and heal us," asserted President Kuan. The President then recited a poem by the renowned Taiwanese poet Yang Mu from *Songs of the Little Dipper* and several stanzas from "Song of the Open Road" by the American Poet, Walt Whitman, encouraging every graduate to stride towards their future with vigor and tenacity.

This year's commencement speaker was Dr. Chih-Han Yu, Chief Executive Officer and Co-founder of Appier. Dr. Yu graduated from NTU Department of Computer Science and Information Engineering in 2001 and received a master's degree in AI from Stanford University and a doctorate in computer science from Harvard University. With over 20 years of experience in AI, Yu used his acquired skills and knowledge to build a technology company that leveraged and promoted the power of AI. In 2016, Yu was selected as a young global leader by the World Economic Forum, making him the only Taiwanese to receive this award and Appier the only Asian AI company to make the list. Now, Appier has grown from a lean startup to a rapidly expanding SaaS company with footprints throughout Asia, Europe, and America, and completed its IPO and listing on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in 2021.

"It's okay to fall behind and even be at the bottom, as long as you can catch up in the future," said Yu as he shared his own academic and entrepreneurial journey with the graduates. "Once you achieve your short-term goals in a certain field, you must step out of your comfort zone, move up to the next league, and start challenging yourself with impossible missions," Yu said. "Going beyond yourself gives you the chance to learn more and gain valuable life experiences." "Everyone has their strengths and weaknesses," said Yu, "though it's not a fair game, one must never quit. If you show proactiveness, diligence, and passion, with time, you will find yourself surpassing those who were once ahead of you," said Yu.



President Kuan delivering the opening remarks.



Dr. Chih-Han Yu, Chief Executive Officer and Co-founder of Appier delivering his speech.



Graduates raising their caps and bidding each other a fond farewell.

Student commencement speaker Chung Ming Liu from the Department of Political Science stated that though it was a year full of uncertainties, frustration, and challenges for the class of 2022, they did not lose sight of their goals. Despite working between online and offline courses and facing countless unprecedented challenges, students pieced together a unique and memorable college and life experience. The fragmentation and divergences presented by Covid gave them a valuable lesson on responsibility, flexibility, and how to manage frustration and anxiety. "The future may be full of changes and setbacks, yet we are ready to make headway and hope," said Liu.

Rolando Ruiz Becerri, an international student from the Department of Chemical Engineering, also inspired the graduates with his own experience. Five years ago, he left his homeland to pursue his studies in Taiwan. Adapting to the environment was a stressful journey, yet just like diamonds form under pressure, he believes it is the pressure that will allow the graduates to shine like diamonds. During his time at NTU, Becerri found his passion for science and even began his own YouTube channel Pulche Podcast to share the fun of science with the public. He thanked NTU for equipping him with professional knowledge and turning him into a global citizen who can bridge different cultures. He hopes he can contribute his expertise to developing sustainable energy in the future. "There's a saying from my hometown, Temoaya: You can bend me, but I won't break."



Participants celebrating at the end of the commencement ceremony.

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