

Dinah Chan (Aquathlon)
Sportswoman of the year 2008

Good evening Prof Shih, distinguished guests, fellow teamNUS athletes and my dearest friends. I am very honoured to be receiving this award today. It is definitely a superb graduation gift and one that I am very grateful to the Committee for awarding me.

Three years in NUS has gone in a flash. I can still remember telling myself that I wouldn't participate in anything very competitive when I came into NUS, maybe just run for my hall of residence, Kent Ridge Hall. Well, as you can see, I ended up joining the swim team, followed by the aquathlon team and then running for the track & field as well as cross country team.

In addition to that, I was an active member of Kent Ridge Hall, being in the block committee in my first year, freshman welcome orientation camp committee in my second, and also a handball player for the hall. It was definitely difficult to juggle so many things and to keep up with my studies at the same time. I recall the times when I felt so tired from the previous day's trainings and had to struggle to stay awake during class (I'm sure all of you know what I'm talking about). And during the holidays, it was even worse cos all the trainings clashed. I tell you, that was the most terrible thing – deciding which training to go for without compromising too much on the other sport. Anyway, by God's grace, I managed to survive all of that, and I'm now a graduate of NUS, with a Bachelor of Science.

I believe that my ability to do excel in this area of sport is a great gift from God. My faith in Him is what pushes me on and gives me the strength to go on when I feel like giving up. To be able to swim and run and do well in both is my privilege and I do it to give God the praise and glory for all the victories I've achieved.

Of course, God has also placed many wonderful people in my life, and they are called friends. In these 3 years, there were so many people who have helped me in one way or another. I have a long list of people to thank. First, I'd like to thank the aquathlon team for giving me the chance to be in the team, for being so understanding when I couldn't attend trainings when there were clashes and for nominating me for this award. Thanks nic, josh and Alvin! To the swim team, thanks for the friendships and wonderful memories of torturous, yet enjoyable swim trainings when we suffered but improved together. To the track & field team, I'll certainly miss the times at the track where we encouraged each other as we ran around in ovals. Thank you weelee, angela and zhiyun for the wonderful friendship. And to the sportsman of the year, thank you for helping me realise my potential.

Finally, to my fellow athletes out there: Enjoy your trainings and the process of it. Treasure your teammates and friends. Manage your time well, be disciplined, and most importantly, believe in yourself. Easier said than done, but it is definitely possible.

Thank you.