

GIVING TIME AND TREASURE

Celebrating Singapore volunteerism and philanthropy

Joachim Sim



A gift to



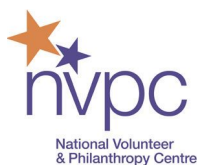
National Volunteer
& Philanthropy Centre

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khimsim@singnet.com.sg

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FOREWORD

“

*The paradox of our times
is that we have taller buildings, but shorter tempers,
wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints.
We spend more, but have less.*

”

- Excerpt from quote commonly attributed to Dr Bob Moorehead ¹

Interestingly enough, the paradox of our times today lies in the fact that as society advances, we seem to be merely gaining petty conveniences while really missing out on our priorities in life. Sadly odd, don't you think?

Thank you Joachim for defying this paradox of our times. By bringing to fruition this publication on giving excellence within Singapore, Joachim exemplifies that giving can be made a priority.

Among these pages of gems, I hope you find resonance and inspiration from ordinary people like you and me, powerful corporates with massive influence, both formal and informal non-profit organisations, all united in contributing to the compelling narrative of a City of Good. Beyond monetary gifting, you will find that they give through various ways – offering time, skills, voice and commitment to social issues they care about. Deep within our hearts, I believe we need to recognise that we can leverage on our different strengths and talents to foster a Singapore that we can all be proud to call our home.

Having celebrated Singapore's Golden Jubilee of nation building just last year, we are now at the crossroads of defining the next chapter of Singapore's cultural identity. Paying it forward, I am convinced that one critical avenue in gaining traction in our nation-building efforts lies within all of us – the ability to give together as one Singapore, to foster an all-inclusive giving nation. People, societies and corporations, working in tandem with government policies, to care for the hearts and minds of all Singaporeans.

It has been reasoned that human depravity is perpetuated not purely through acts of violence and cruelty but likewise, through one's nonchalance, apathy and ignorance of social issues. We may empathise, but our corresponding actions could often be diametrically opposite, by virtue of us prioritising other seemingly more pressing issues over caring and giving.

Our choice is therefore our most powerful gift. A giving nation begins with you and me. Giving is an expression of a desire to make a positive difference in society. Ultimately, a giving nation is created through a community of engaged and compassionate citizens. I hope *Giving Time and Treasure* will inspire you to make giving a priority today. Why not start now at Giving.sg?

Yours Truly,



Melissa Kwee

CEO

National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre

[1] Moorehead, 1995, *Words Aptly Spoken*, a 1995 collection of prayers, homilies and monologues

PREFACE

This book is about giving through volunteerism and philanthropy. It features the giving experiences and outstanding achievements of individuals and groups/organisations that have contributed their time, talent, money and in kind to benefit many people of diverse backgrounds who needed help. These givers share a common sense of care, compassion and community.

I initiated, conceived, wrote and produced the book as a gift to the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) as our national advocate for giving. I see my role as a propagator of good deeds who aims to celebrate and inspire giving. It's a book for NVPC but not a project by NVPC, although it features recipients of its President's Volunteerism & Philanthropy Awards (PVPA).

The publication is a product of volunteerism and philanthropy, through the work of people who believe in giving and the generous sponsorship of philanthropic organisations that makes the book's development and production possible.

Printed copies will be given at NVPC events and through PVPA recipients to promote giving among Singaporeans. Digital copy of the book is also being given away online through NVPC's website to reach a wider audience.

It's said that the real problem in the world is not the lack of resources but the absence of attention or priority being given to things that matter most. Amid the many paradoxes of life, the exemplary givers featured in the book have chosen to make things that matter most to them their priorities. These individuals and organisations decided to take up many of the social causes and are helping to enable the disabled, uplift the underprivileged, reach out to the marginalised, empower the vulnerable, level up the disadvantaged, aid the poor, support those with special needs, engage the elderly and assist the less fortunate in many different ways.

To get to the heart of the matter and tell their stories in an impactful and inspiring way, I have adopted a semi-case study approach that is structured (well-scoped with a similar outline and common sub-headings) and substantive (with more facts and figures). This approach facilitates comparative studies of their cases.

Each story was developed from a propagator's (outside) perspective, based on information given by the individual or organisation and other stakeholders – giving philosophy, precepts, practices (strategic plan, programmes and projects), priorities (what matter most) and provisions (budgets), where applicable. Some ideas are repeated in the story to reinforce some of the key learning points. I have also looked at the giver's impact, innovation and sustainability.

Giving is exemplified by these individual PVPA recipients featured in the book: Mohamed Faizal (Youth); Toh Soon Huat (Adult); Ngiam Tong Yuen (Senior); and Chan Wing Cheong (Special Recognition). Group PVPA recipients featured are: Keeping Hope Alive (Informal Group); HealthServe (Non-profit); St John's Home for Elderly Persons (Non-profit); CapitaLand (Corporate); and NTUC Income (Corporate). Their stories illustrate the wide range of contributions possible, from those by one man to those by a multinational corporation.

For *Mohamed Faizal*, giving back is not about dedicating inordinate periods of time or financial resources, but about a desire to make a difference to the community in ways and means that are aligned with one's daily needs and commitments. He founded and fund two scholarships for promising secondary school and junior college students from low-income families, as he sees education as a social leveller.

Toh Soon Huat chairs Sian Chay Medical Institution as a volunteer and is expanding its network of traditional Chinese medicine clinics offering free medical consultation and low-cost medication to benefit more sick, needy and elderly people. What's remarkable about him is that he could have kept all the wealth he had accumulated from his business success. Instead, he chose to use it to save a healthcare charity from closing down and to dedicate himself to philanthropy.

Ngiam Tong Yuen has been promoting senior volunteerism among active agers as a senior volunteer at RSVP Singapore for many years. He sees skilled seniors as a 'gold mine' that could be tapped to benefit society.

A long-serving volunteer for more than 20 years, *Chan Wing Cheong* believes in giving back to society by contributing his time and expertise to social causes at the leadership, policy and practice levels. After helping to improve the lives of vulnerable youth, his attention is now focused on the disadvantaged elderly.

Keeping Hope Alive was founded and is led by Fion Phua, a down-to-earth person who speaks her mind in a matter-of-fact way. Every Sunday morning, the group's volunteers visit poor HDB residents staying in one- and two-room flats to provide help with their immediate needs. The story tries to capture her 'tone-of-voice' in telling her giving experience.

Making migrant workers' welfare its priority is *HealthServe*, which seeks to "help the last, the lost and the least" among them. It provides meals, shelter and healthcare to meet the immediate needs of those who are injured and unable to work for their daily wages.

In the case of *St John's Home for Elderly Persons*, what matters most is the welfare of homeless elderly people, many of whom have no relatives to look after them. It takes in the most needy cases, as every place given means someone else is being turned away.

Singapore-based multinational company *CapitaLand's* corporate philanthropy and employee volunteerism extend across the world where it operates. It sees children as our future and is focused on helping those from underprivileged backgrounds get a good start in life. Its programmes help with their healthcare, education and shelter needs.

Social enterprise *NTUC Income's* corporate social responsibility revolves around how its surplus is being made while helping others, and not how its surplus is being spent to help others. It is making insurance accessible, affordable and sustainable for all Singaporeans, particularly children and low-income families, whether they are uninsured, under-insured or uninsurable.

All the individual givers are motivated by a personal sense of gratitude to society that had given them much earlier in life. They share a common sense of humanity and a spirit of care for the less fortunate. For example, senior volunteer Ngiam Tong Yuen contributes through RSVP Singapore because he wants to give back to the country that gave him so many opportunities, including a scholarship to fund his university studies. He considers himself much luckier than others who grew up under similar conditions.

Some of the givers share what they hope to see in future. For example, *HealthServe* views an increase in the number of beneficiaries it helped as not necessarily a

positive sign, as it eventually wants to see fewer migrant workers being exploited and needing help, not more. This may seem counter-intuitive, but such a trend may be a (positive) sign that an increasing number of employers are becoming socially responsible (and providing better care for these workers).

In giving to help others who were less fortunate, the benefactors also received and benefited from their giving experience. Those featured in this book learned, among other things, that:

- Personal philanthropy can start small and at any time (Mohamed Faizal);
- Low-cost medical services to help improve the health and well-being of the needy and the elderly enable them to have a better life on their own (Toh Soon Huat);
- Seniors and retirees can volunteer their skills to make a difference to the community (Ngiam Tong Yuen);
- Being a voluntary probation officer is more than just mentoring and policing the probationers. It is also about supporting and encouraging them, and being there when they need someone to talk to and discuss their problems with (Chan Wing Cheong);
- Helping poor people with their immediate needs can give them hope to keep on living (Keeping Hope Alive);
- Volunteerism could ultimately lead to philanthropy, and those who volunteer gain valuable life skills, insights and education from the experience (HealthServe);
- Growing old poses a real challenge to many, particularly for those who are homeless, have no families or whose families are unable to care for them (St John's Home for Elderly Persons);
- Employee volunteerism increases staff's motivation at work and corporate giving enhances a company's image as a socially-responsible enterprise (CapitaLand); and
- Staying focused on the causes it supports and giving where there are gaps can achieve more impactful outcomes, which are a better measure than outputs (NTUC Income).

As a Singapore senior citizen, I am happy that I can offer my time and share my skills in a meaningful way to help advance various causes and propagate social and environmental responsibility by publicising the outstanding examples and achievements of individuals and organisations. (This is the fourth ‘Do Good’ book that I have written and produced.)

I’m grateful to the following individuals and organisations featured in this book for making it a priority to provide the necessary information and photos during the development of their stories:

- Mohamed Faizal, recipient of the President’s Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Youth) (2015);
- Toh Soon Huat, recipient of the President’s Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Adult) (2015) and Dr Benjie Ng Ser Kwei, Executive Director of Sian Chay Medical Institution;
- Ngiam Tong Yuen, recipient of the President’s Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Senior) (2015), and RSVP Singapore;
- Chan Wing Cheong, recipient of the President’s Special Recognition Award (2014), and TRANS Family Services;
- Fion Phua (founder) and Ho Hsiu Mei (volunteer) of Keeping Hope Alive, recipient of the President’s Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Informal Group) (2015);
- Dr Goh Wei Leong (co-founder and Chairman), Colin Chia (Executive Director) and Nhaca Le Schulze (Communications Manager) of HealthServe, recipient of the President’s Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Non-profit) (2015);
- Goh Beng Hoe (General Manager) and Pek Chew Lian (Community Partnership/Fund-Raising Manager) of St John’s Home for Elderly Persons, recipient of the President’s Award for Philanthropy (Non-profit) (2014);
- Lydia Ang (Senior Manager, Group Communications) and Tim Mou Hui (Manager, Group Communications) of CapitaLand Limited, recipient of the President’s Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Corporate) (2015); and

- Theodore Teo (Senior Manager & Head, Corporate Social Responsibility) of NTUC Income, recipient of the President's Award for Philanthropy (Corporate) (2014).

It's a blessing for me to know them and to be inspired by their giving experiences. I am also grateful for the opportunity to learn from them.

I would like to record my deep appreciation to NVPC for accepting this book as a gift and for endorsing its publication. Special thanks go to NVPC CEO Melissa Kwee for contributing the Foreword, and to the NVPC team comprising Charlotte Goh, Tan Su San, Rachel Chan and Melody Lee for reviewing the stories. NVPC has spent efforts and time in introducing me to the selected PVPA recipients, providing their background information and commenting on the drafts of the stories, as it values the opportunity offered by the book in helping it to advance its cause.

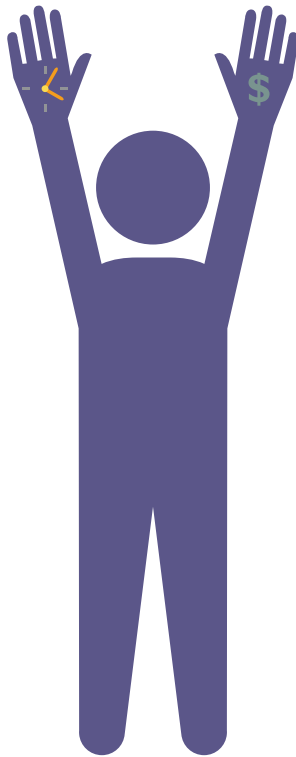
This project would not have been possible without the generous sponsorship of Singapore Pools for the book's development, and City Developments Limited for its production. I like to express my heartfelt thanks to them.

We can give or share what we have – be it time, talent or treasure. Those who don't have can also give, by getting others to give through mobilising volunteers and raising funds from philanthropic organisations for charitable causes. Indeed, happiness is not about having more but about giving more. More caring individuals and organisations may mean there is less need for charities.

It is not just about giving to help others, but also showing a good example to inspire others to follow. Perhaps it is not how much we give but how much love for humanity we put into giving. Beyond documenting giving in deeds, it is hoped that this book will in a small way contribute towards the evolution of a giving culture in Singapore. In the final analysis, giving is fundamentally not about the money or time given but about Singaporeans as a compassionate society and Singapore as a caring nation.

Joachim Sim
August 2016

GIVING BY INDIVIDUALS



PERSONAL PHILANTHROPY CAN START SMALL AND AT ANYTIME

“ *Passion ensures that after a long week at work, I am excited about the difference that I can make in the causes that I believe in, instead of dreading the efforts required of me.* ”

- Mohamed Faizal

Mohamed Faizal was the recipient of the 2015 President's Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Youth). Besides founding and funding two school scholarships, Faizal's outstanding efforts to advance the cause of education as a social enabler include volunteering in various education-related roles. The 35-year-old law graduate of the National University of Singapore and Harvard Law School funded his university education through loans, scholarships, bursaries and part-time work. He works at the Attorney-General Chambers as a Director in the Criminal Justice Division.

Committed to a Good Cause

Faizal wants to bridge the gaps in society through education. This has spurred him to make a difference to the community by contributing what he can financially and volunteering his service in a sustainable way.

Giving through Voluntary Work and Philanthropy

For Faizal, no contribution is too small and no time is better than now when it comes to giving to help others. Soon after starting work, he founded and personally funded the Bedok View Secondary School Scholarship in 2007. This was followed by the Tampines Junior College Scholarship in 2014.

Both scholarships are disbursed by the two institutions annually, and usually presented to recipients on their Speech Days. Each award provides a sum of money to each student recipient. It is different from conventional scholarships as it explicitly considers the family income and social background of each scholarship candidate, among other selection criteria.

Besides funding the two scholarships out of his own pocket, Faizal uses the fees, honorariums and other payments he received for his various engagements to supplement them and for building up reserves for future needs. The fees that he donated included the remuneration for his work in designing and conducting conflict resolution courses in Suva, Fiji in 2007. He conceptualised a teaching course and provided a non-government organisation with teaching tools to develop negotiation skills among villagers for resolving their Niger Delta disputes in Nigeria.

The honorariums Faizal donated included those he received for his services in:

- Adjunct teaching roles at the National University of Singapore's Faculty of Law, Singapore Institute of Legal Education and Singapore Mediation Centre (since 2006); and
- Ad hoc lecturing and training in dispute resolution for community mediators from Community Mediation Centres (since 2006, as part of his role as an adjunct faculty of the Singapore Mediation Centre).

In addition to contributing through his scholarships, Faizal has given his time as a volunteer in a number of roles. He chairs the School Advisory Board of Bedok View Secondary School since 2013. He was a member of the Committee for University Education Places Beyond 2015 that was chaired by then Minister of State for Education Mr Lawrence Wong and comprised 15 representatives from the public, private and people sectors. (The committee, announced in 2011, was tasked to “examine how the university sector can better provide opportunities for Singaporeans to obtain a university education. This included studies of feasible models and strategies, international trends and Singapore's own unique context”.)

Faizal also serves as a member of the MUIS Appeal Board since 2013. He previously chaired the Mendaki Club's Youth Endeavour Awards (2011) and its Young Minds' Club (2007-08). As he wanted to give back to the legal community, he volunteered his service as international articles editor of the New York International Law Review, of which he is the only non-US-based editorial board member, in 2012.

Organised for Giving

For Faizal, there has never been any problems balancing his various obligations as he is passionate about the initiatives he is involved in. “Passion ensures that after a long week at work, I am excited about the difference that I can make in the causes that I believe in, instead of dreading the efforts required of me,” he shared. He believes that giving back is not about dedicating inordinate periods of time or financial resources, but about a desire to make a difference to the community in ways and means that are aligned with one's daily needs and commitments.

He worked with Bedok View Secondary School and Tampines Junior College to draw up specific criteria for the scholarships. However, he has left the administration of the awards and the selection of their recipients to the two institutions, as he believes they would have first-hand knowledge about whether the students shortlisted represent the values embodied by the scholarships.

Making Impact at Multiple Levels

The two scholarships started by Faizal have a direct effect of expanding student development opportunities at the school and junior college by enabling their recipients to pursue them. Indirectly, more students have benefited from the injection of additional funds contributed by other parties who were encouraged by his giving example.

Faizal believes in measuring the long-term success of his scholarships by the number of similar schemes that could be replicated in other secondary schools and junior colleges. He hopes that, through his example, more Singaporeans would be inspired to give back to their alma maters or to the cause of education. Educating the next generation of Singaporeans is not the responsibility of the government only, and everyone can play a part.

In helping many promising students to succeed in life through education and to learn to give back to the community in the process, Faizal sees his scholarships multiplying their impact on future generations. He plans to sustain them by building up their reserve funds over the years with his regular contributions, to the point where the scholarships could continue without any more financial contributions.

Faizal's impact as a giver is also multiplied through his contributions as a volunteer in various roles. The Young Minds' Club that he previously chaired trains future leaders in the Malay-Muslim community. It collaborates with voluntary welfare organisations to improve the lives of their beneficiaries. For example, it organised a two-day leadership camp for underprivileged Malay-Muslim primary school students and a day programme with the Muhammadiyah Welfare Home. Some of

the club's graduates during his leadership have excelled in their respective fields in local and overseas universities, and are volunteers in various initiatives both within and outside the Malay-Muslim community as well as in national committees.

In addition, the funding and networking opportunities given to recipients of the Youth Endeavour Award that Faizal chaired in 2011 would help to develop them and initiate new programmes for their causes.

Faizal's work in Fiji facilitated the country's implementation of mediation in dispute resolution with the setting up of a dedicated government agency and its national legislative framework for mediation in labour disputes. Similarly, his teaching had advocated peaceful dispute resolution through negotiation in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

Reaching and Helping the Beneficiaries

All promising students of Bedok View Secondary School (BVSS) and Tampines Junior College (TPJC) are eligible to apply for the scholarships set up by Faizal. There is no annual target number of recipients for each scholarship, which has a few recipients each year. The actual number varies and depends on the number of candidates applying for it. Typically, the operating guidelines for funding are exceeded since the intention is to help more students rather than less. According to Faizal, there are plans to increase the cumulative disbursements from the scholarship funds in each successive year.



Secondary 3 student Charlyn Poh Zhi Qi (left) and secondary 2 student Abdul Ghafoor B. Mohamed Zubair receiving the 2015 Bedok View Secondary School Scholarship from Mohamed Faizal. (Photos: Bedok View Secondary School)

Secondary three student Charlyn Poh Zhi Qi, who received the BVSS Scholarship in 2015, has this to say: “I was very happy to receive the scholarship as it helped with my school expenses. I really appreciate the help given. I also felt very proud and honoured to receive the award as my hard work was recognised. It is a good encouragement for me to continue to work hard to achieve my dreams in future.”

Abdul Ghafoor B. Mohamed Zubair, a secondary two student, also received the BVSS Scholarship in 2015. Here’s what he said: “I felt very happy and honoured to have received the scholarship. I worked hard and was grateful to receive this recognition. It encouraged me to be more determined and to work even harder in my academic studies so that I can aim higher to do even better in school. “



Mohamed Faizal with 2015 recipients of the Tampines Junior College Scholarship and its Dean of Students (JC1) Mrs Sze-Seah Chai Ju. (Isadora Ou Kar Ye is second from right while Lee Ming En is at extreme right). (Photo: Tampines Junior College)

Isadora Ou Kar Ye, who was awarded the TPJC Scholarship in 2015, reflected on her achievement: “I am deeply humbled to be given this prestigious award and am very thankful to be recognised for doing well in my JC 1 examinations. The scholarship has spurred me to continue doing everything to the best of my abilities. It has also served as a reminder to myself that nothing comes easy and effort is required in everything I do. I also got a chance to interact with the other scholarship recipients and had the opportunity to make new friends. Overall, it

was an experience I would never forget. Once again, I am honoured to be given this award and would like to thank Mr Faizal and the college for making it possible.”

Another TPJC Scholarship recipient in 2015 is Lee Ming En. He shared: “When I knew that I was going to receive the prestigious TPJC Scholarship, I felt happy and yet privileged because I was one of the few students to be selected for the award. This scholarship motivated me to improve my academic performance as well as my character. I am very grateful to be given this award, which really boosted my confidence in my studies.”

Jeffrey Low, Principal of Bedok View Secondary School, recalled that over the years, Faizal has worked closely with the school to further refine the scholarship by increasing the quantum of the award and reviewing the award criteria to include consideration of a student’s financial background.

Why, How and When It Started

Although he came from a low-income family, Faizal’s parents gave regularly to their mosque and this influenced his sense of responsibility to others since he was young. His friends, mentors and bosses have served as good examples and role models for him to emulate and strengthened his desire to help others.

When he was a student, Faizal realised that getting financial support in secondary schools and junior colleges was much more difficult than in university, where he could get the necessary funding through loans, scholarships and bursaries, and by working part-time. In secondary schools and junior colleges, available sources of funding were far fewer, he noted. During his education there, he personally had received various Ministry of Education’s awards for his outstanding academic results.

While studying at the National University of Singapore (NUS), Faizal thought of giving back to society and about how he could contribute. After benefiting much from the support and assistance given by the community, he saw it as his duty to ‘pay it forward’.

After graduating from NUS, he wanted secondary education to be a stepping stone rather than a stumbling block for students and felt the need to help them. However, he noticed the absence of suitable platforms for individuals to contribute to educational institutions. He also noted the lack of avenues for their alumni to inspire the next generation of Singaporeans, and there was not enough credit being given to such institutions for their important role in the early stages of an individual's education. He knew he needed to find a practical way to help high-potential students from low-income families realise their educational aspirations.

In 2006, he mooted the scholarship idea and approached his alma mater Bedok View Secondary School soon after starting work at the Singapore Legal Service, while he was still paying back the student loans for his university education. To his knowledge, he was the first person to propose the idea to the school.

In 2007, he launched his small-scale scholarship with just \$1,500, to see how such a scheme would be received and how it could be sustained before giving more.

Aligning with Giver's Values and Purpose

Faizal believes that those who have had the privilege of receiving a good education owe it to the community to help the less fortunate, and that no contribution is too small and no time is better than the present to give. Everyone, no matter how rich or poor, busy or not, can contribute in his or her own ways to the community. For him, there is really no good reason to delay contributing due to other pressing responsibilities and obligations.

He wants his scholarships to give promising students from low-income families the chance to complete their secondary education, to appreciate the joy of receiving and to want to give to others when they become successful.

Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

After graduating as a lawyer, Faizal was paying back his substantial university study loans but felt strongly that this should not be a barrier to giving back and doing what he could to help deserving school children in their education.

He's determined to look after his fellow Singaporeans regardless of his personal challenges and problems.

Working with Stakeholders as Partners

The two scholarships were co-created with the school and junior college, which provided guidance, feedback and suggestions. Scholarship requirements and criteria for assessing, shortlisting and selecting recipients were discussed with the two institutions. However, Faizal only supervises their actual selection of scholarship recipients, and they make the final decisions.

He also reviews the selection criteria regularly with the school and junior college to ensure that they remain relevant over time.

Learning and Benefiting from the Giving Experience

From his experience, Faizal learned that one can start to give what one can, even if one has financial and other obligations to take care of. Every small contribution counts and many small contributions can add up to a significant amount. One can make an immeasurable difference even with small acts of giving and caring, he noted.

For Faizal, it's not so much about his perseverance in trying to make a difference to students in need but about the ease with which a Singaporean like him can start to give in a small way and inspire others to do the same. He likes to think that the students who had benefited from his scholarships were grateful for them and would pay it forward. His example in helping others may also inspire them to do the same in future.

Innovating for Greater Impact

Faizal and each of the two institutions jointly developed a unique scholar selection process, which is materially different for the other.

The scholarships reflect the values of hard work, perseverance and doing one's best to overcome difficulties, and aim to inspire their recipients to give back to the

community. To Faizal, these values underpin the principle behind the scholarship of wanting to give a helping hand to those in need of it, while at the same time serving as a means to let the students know that there are others out there who are invested in their lives and who want them to succeed.

Outstanding Achievements to Date

The two scholarships founded by Faizal may be the first of their kind in Singapore. He is not aware of any similar scholarships in other local secondary schools and junior colleges.

Faizal was recognised for giving his time to serve as chairman of Bedok View Secondary School's advisory board by the Ministry of Education with its Service to Education Award in 2015. His contributions to the community through the Mendaki Club and other organisations were recognised through the following awards:

- Ten Outstanding Young Persons of the World (Singapore) Honoree, 2014;
- National University of Singapore Outstanding Young Alumni Award, 2013; and
- Young Outstanding Singaporean Award, 2011.

Sustaining Contributions over Time

Faizal has been giving fresh funds to the two scholarships every year, although they have sufficient reserves to continue for the next few years without additional funding. The additional amounts vary each year, depending on what are needed and appropriate.

While it is clear the amounts disbursed each year will increase in future, whether it would mean more recipients or more money each of them will receive depends very much on how the scholarships will grow over time and the paths they will take. Ideally he would like to see additional funds being used to start a new scholarship at another educational institution to reach more students in need.

Future Plans in Giving

Faizal sees his contributions in the past seven years as only the first step of a very long and bigger journey. He is confident he will be able to increase his contributions in the years to come.

His next goal is to help shape the perceptions of Singaporeans about education of the next generation. He sees this as something for all Singaporeans working hand-in-hand with the government to contribute financially, in kind or with their time and efforts.

In the near term, Faizal hopes to remove as many barriers and provide as many opportunities as possible for high-potential students needing financial help to pursue their dreams and, in the process, to want to make a difference to the lives of future generations.

Faizal wants to encourage Singaporeans to contribute what they can to similar scholarships in secondary schools and junior colleges. He likes to do this by sharing his experience in starting his scholarships with just \$1,500 to help a few needy students, and growing them to benefit more students today. While both scholarships have built up healthy reserves over the years, Faizal would like to advance his cause by scaling up the schemes to involve more schools and junior colleges.

Anticipating and Meeting Future Needs

Faizal foresees a Singapore where there are many helping hands to build an eco-system where both the government and the community are investing in the education of the next generation of Singaporeans.

Giver's Philosophy

Faizal finds this quote by Mother Teresa to be especially meaningfully and applicable for individuals who are thinking of giving to help others: "If you cannot feed a hundred people, then feed one."

Advice for Potential Givers

For those considering giving of their time and sharing their talent, Faizal's advice to them is that the reward of knowing that they have made a difference to the lives of others is a feeling that can never be replicated by the mere receipt of financial reward, however bountiful. He added:

“ *In thinking about how best to be involved, you should look for (or start) initiatives you are passionate about and that have a deep meaning for you. Passion is what ultimately drives you to give back and contribute even as you balance such work with your other commitments. Don't worry about starting small – we all start small.* ”

Beyond words, ideas and ideals, what Faizal did had indeed made a real difference to many young people's lives.

Impact Numbers that Matter

Total amount of money
given to both scholarships
in 2014 and 2015

\$15,000



Total number of scholarship
recipients in both
institutions in
2014 and 2015



Total number of scholarship
recipients in both
institutions from
2007 to 2013



GIVING UP A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS TO DEDICATE HIS LIFE TO HELPING THE NEEDY

“ *Service to humanity is the best form of work. Having care and compassion for the needy is a blessing. Helping others is something that I will never give up doing.* ”

- Toh Soon Huat

Chairman

Sian Chay Medical Institution

Executive Chairman

Novena Foundation

Toh Soon Huat was the recipient of the President's Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Adult) in 2015. In 2008, he volunteered to steer the 115-year-old Sian Chay Medical Institution when it was on the verge of closing down, and has been its Chairman since. He set up Novena Foundation in 2007, before selling his furniture business (that he had built and listed as Novena Holdings in 2000) in 2009 to spend full-time on philanthropic work through the medical institution and his foundation. Today, Soon Huat is devoting his life to helping and sharing with the less fortunate.

Committed to a Good Cause

Toh Soon Huat is committed to helping the sick, elderly and needy, regardless of race or religion, through the Sian Chay Medical Institution (SCMI) and his Novena Foundation.

Giving through Voluntary Work and Philanthropy

Besides volunteering his service as Chairman of SCMI since 2008, Soon Huat helps to promote its cause in the community and to the government, particularly the Ministry of Health. He also assists in raising funds for SCMI.

He had served as Vice-Chairman, Seng Kang Secondary School Advisory Committee (2012-2015) and Vice-Chairman, Singapore Buddhist Lodge Education Fund (2007-2011). He was personally involved in getting donations for the education fund, which contributed \$3.2 million to 5,684 students in primary and secondary schools, junior colleges, polytechnics, Institute of Technical Education, universities and other educational institutions during his four years of service.

Soon Huat led fund-raising efforts for expanding and modernising SCMI's network of TCM (traditional Chinese medicine) clinics. In 2014, SCMI organised its inaugural charity golf tournament and dinner that raised \$1.46 million. The Sian Chay Charity Gala Dinner and Concert in March 2016 received \$5 million of new funding.

In addition, he volunteered his time to advise the Singapore Hua Yuan General Association of New Immigrants from China and Tian Fu Association (Singapore) on integration and welfare of new immigrants. In appreciation of his help, the two associations conferred on him their Friends of New Immigrant Award and Special Contribution Award, respectively.

Over the past 11 years, Soon Huat has helped 28 local civic, community and charity organisations to raise \$44 million, including \$1.8 million for the Boon Lay CCC Community Development and Welfare Fund when he was an advisor to the Boon Lay Fund-raising Gala Dinner organising committee, \$18 million for the Fu Guang Shan Building Fund and \$1.3 million for the Toh General Clan Association Building Fund.

When it comes to giving financially, Soon Huat has been contributing to charities for the past 28 years. Since 2002, he has donated over \$5 million to various charitable organisations – more than \$3.2 million personally and about \$2 million through his company and Novena Foundation.

As Executive Chairman of Novena Foundation, Soon Huat makes regular donations to the charity projects of companies that support SCMI. The foundation has donated over \$2 million to other social causes since 2002, including the PA Boon Lay Building Fund and the Chua Chu Kang Community Development and Welfare Fund.

Organised for Giving

When he became Chairman of SCMI in 2008, Soon Huat recruited corporate and community leaders to help modernise its operations, including fund-raising. Due to financial constraints initially, he seconded his personal assistant at Novena Holdings to assist in its corporate affairs. After its financial situation improved, he built a professional team to manage its operations. It is headed by an Executive Director who oversees a Finance Manager, an IT Manager, a Secretariat Manager, a PR Manager and a Project Manager.

SCMI now has 80 full-time TCM physicians, therapists and assistants at its 11 branches, which also engage the services of volunteers.

The charity plans to automate and computerise its frontline and backroom operations, and to streamline work processes and internal control procedures as part of its upgrading efforts. It is developing an IT system that is able to share patients' information across its network of clinics.

SCMI's core initiative is to develop an integrated TCM network by harnessing information communication technology and HR support. Such a system will ensure that TCM work and supporting functions at the branches – inventory and procurement management, volunteer and donor management, and HR – are better coordinated by the head office, so that TCM professionals can be deployed seamlessly when required to the branches that have greater demand.

Soon Huat currently spends about 70% his time at SCMI and the other 30% at Novena Foundation.



As a full-time philanthropist and volunteer, Toh Soon Huat spends most of his time leading Sian Chay Medical Institution in helping the sick, elderly and needy through its network of clinics. (Photo: Sian Chay Medical Institution)

Making Impact at Multiple Levels

As a philanthropist and volunteer, Soon Huat is helping others directly through his personal donations and voluntary work. He is also giving back to society indirectly through SCMI and Novena Foundation. His contributions through SCMI can be seen from the growing numbers of patients, consultations, prescriptions and acupuncture sessions over the years.

Soon Huat's impact through SCMI is multiplied through the expansion of its network of TCM clinics. He hopes to share SCMI's management and IT systems with other voluntary welfare organisations in Singapore and overseas.

Reaching and Helping Beneficiaries

Soon Huat has been giving directly to individuals and families. For many years, he has been hosting Lunar New Year lunches for senior citizens in Boon Lay and giving 'ang pows' to needy residents.

SCMI opened its first branch in Hougang in 2012. Since then, Soon Huat has expanded its network to 11 TCM branches by the end of 2015 to serve needy and elderly residents in public housing estates, including a cancer treatment centre in Geylang. New clinics in Ang Mo Kio, Marsiling and Woodlands will increase the number to 15 by the end of 2016.

Soon Huat wants to grow the SCMI network farther to 20 clinics to reach out to more elderly and the poor who cannot afford to travel far – 10 in HDB estates and 10 in community hospitals – and one TCM hub in SCMI headquarters, to serve over 350,000 beneficiaries by 2018. Three of them will be specialist clinics – for tumour treatment, treatment of depression and insomnia, and orthopaedic cases.

To publicise its free TCM consultation and low-cost medicine and treatment at its clinics, SCMI distributes a bilingual brochure that provides information on its services, core values, history and branches.



Giving 'ang paws' to needy residents during the Lunar New Year celebration is Soon Huat's way of showing his gratitude to society. (Photo: Toh Soon Huat)

SCMI does not charge patients for consultation by its physicians and one-day supply of medication costs only \$2, while acupuncture treatment and Tuina therapy cost \$5 and \$10 respectively. To discourage patients from collecting and wasting medicine, Soon Huat had made it a policy to charge them a nominal fee for each day's supply of medicine.

Since 1 January 2016, members of Singapore's Pioneer Generation (PG) who were 65 and older in 2014 have been benefiting from its services and medicine at no costs. This is being made possible by the Lee Foundation's donation of \$1 million, which was matched dollar-for-dollar by a government grant. Soon Huat expects the total amount of \$2 million to be enough to fund SCMI's free treatments of PG patients for three years. They made up more than half of the nearly 140,000 patients who visited its clinics in 2015.

The number of beneficiaries that SCMI served has grown 17 times from 2,434 in 2008 (at its only clinic in Geylang) to 34,368 in 2014. The number of medical consultations/treatments grew 19 times from 2,958 in 2008 to 57,197 in 2014, and reached 148,860 in 2015.

Why and When It Started

Coming from a humble background, Soon Huat was grateful that he was able to succeed in business in spite of his early struggles in life. He's the seventh child of a taxi driver and a housewife in a family with 12 children, and had decided on his own to drop out of secondary school to help support the family although he was doing well academically. He set up a small furniture shop in 1984 and grew it to become a publicly-listed company in 2000.

He started giving to charities in 2002 out of his sense of gratitude to his late mother who had brought him up and whose generosity in helping neighbours had inspired him to be compassionate towards others and to give back to society. He's also grateful for his success in business that was due partly to the support and contributions of other people. He believes that life is about sharing and learning, and that corporate social responsibility and personal philanthropy should go hand in hand. He established Novena Foundation in 2007 and became a full-time philanthropist in 2009 after selling his business.

Aligning with Giver's Values and Purpose

A devout Buddhist, Soon Huat believes in being compassionate towards the less fortunate in our community and in contributing his time and treasure to help them as much as he can. He sees the need to provide low-cost medical services to the needy in our society, although Singapore is now a developed country. His personal values are reflected in SCMI's core values of forgiveness, universal love, compassion, gratitude and blessing.

Gratitude is a word that means a lot to Soon Huat, who wrote a book (in Chinese) to share his experience and thoughts about life with others. He wrote on its cover: "I have nothing but gratitude for all the experiences I have had in my life." The book is a compilation of his past postings on Facebook, which he still updates daily.

He leads by example and has been serving SCMI without any remuneration since he started. For him, charity is a social and moral responsibility, and

charitable acts are an expression of compassion and love of our fellow human beings. Such acts also indicate our personal growth and society's progress. He believes in doing good while he can and not donating his assets to charities after he has passed on.

Soon Huat believes that a person cannot spend his whole life doing the same things, especially if it is repetitive and serves only himself or herself. For him, expanding his furniture business with more retail outlets would have amounted to the same thing, unlike that of helping other people to set up their own businesses.

Ever willing to help those who approach him for assistance, his only request is that they do the same when they become successful. He measures success by one's ability to care for oneself, one's family and the community. For him, a person is not considered successful until he helps others, regardless of how many assets he owns.

Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

SCMI was in a financial crisis in 2008 and was unable to sustain its operations with its limited reserves. Soon Huat volunteered to help save it and mobilised his business associates to join him in revitalising it. Together they organised fund-raising campaigns and recruited professional full-time TCM staff for its new branches.

The rapid expansion of SCMI's network of TCM clinics and its community outreach programme requires more funds and manpower. To help sustain its growth, Soon Huat enlarged the base of donors. He will also be launching the Sian Chay Advocate programme to develop a large pool of volunteers to champion SCMI's cause and to support its community outreach programme.

Working with Donors and Other Stakeholders as Partners

Not only has Soon Huat touched the lives of many beneficiaries, he has also encouraged many business and community leaders to contribute their time and money and to join him in his philanthropic endeavours.

He has worked with various grassroots organisations, including those in Punggol South, Ang Mo Kio-Hougang and Boon Lay, to raise funds for expanding SCMI. He also supported two wellness centres managed by the People's Association, including the Punggol South Wellness Centre, which served more than 8,500 beneficiaries in 2014.

Soon Huat engages the media regularly to advance SCMI's cause, raise its profile and give recognition to its supporters and sponsors. For example, SCMI partners SPH to promote "wellness lifestyle and blissful living" through its We Care outreach programme on SPH's UFM 100.3 radio.

In 2015, SCMI worked with Singapore Power to organise the "Love from the Stars" charity gala dinner and concert, which raised over \$6.3 million for All Saints Home, Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities, Viva Foundation for Children with Cancer, SCMI, Singapore Power Heartware Fund and Singapore University of Technology and Design's scholarship programme. More donors became aware of SCMI's charitable work through this event and came forward to contribute. For example, JCI Mandarin Singapore organised a charity gala concert that raised \$178,000 for SCMI in 2015. Unusual Productions accepted SCMI's invitation to be its Charity Ambassador and to organise a charity gala banquet in 2016 to raise \$2 million to help fund SCMI's operations.

In addition, MediaCorp offered to host a charity TV show in 2016 to attract donations for SCMI. Soon Huat had worked with MediaCorp to organise the Thong Chai TV charity show that raised \$7 million in 2010 to finance the opening of two new TCM clinics. He also helped MediaCorp with the Sichuan Earthquake Relief TV charity show, which raised \$10.3 million in donations for rebuilding seven schools (three of them in collaboration with the Sichuan Youth Development Foundation) and a bridge in Chengdu, Sichuan that he personally supervised over three years (2008-2011). After their completion, he visited the schools a number of times to check on the children's welfare.

SCMI was selected as a beneficiary of the President's Challenge and is a member of the Care and Share movement since 2013. It has successfully applied for the maximum matching grant of \$2.25 million.

At its 2015 Flag Day, SCMI rallied about 1,000 volunteers to contribute their time and efforts in collecting donations from the public.

The charity intends to work with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Manpower to champion the designation of 17 March each year as the UN TCM Day to promote global TCM awareness and adoption.

Learning and Benefiting from the Giving Experience

As someone who grew up in a poor family, Soon Huat had realised that sharing and contributing to help others was something that he needed to learn over time, as it was quite natural for him to feel reluctant to do so initially. One could also start giving in a small way.

He had observed that when ageing parents became ill, their children needed to take leave from work to care for them, and this might affect their jobs and income adversely. For needy families, it could lead to a vicious poverty cycle. He also noticed that many of the elderly were often lonely and this could have a negative effect on their well-being.

Soon Huat believes that by providing cheaper TCM services to help improve the health and well-being of the needy and the elderly, SCMI could enable them to have a better life on their own.

Innovating for Greater Impact

Beyond providing TCM consultation and treatment at no or low cost, SCMI's physicians also lend a listening ear to patients' personal problems. By attending to their emotional needs as well, Soon Huat hopes to enhance their well-being, especially that of the elderly.

SCMI was the first and only TCM charity in Singapore to offer Tuina therapy at its TCM clinics. It introduced the therapy in 2012 and now offers it at all its clinics. Tuina is an effective and low-cost therapy that brings relief from pain and stress for its beneficiaries, especially for its older patients.

It also promotes active ageing in the community through its “Wellness Lifestyle, Blissful Living” programme as a form of preventive medicine, based on SCMI’s five core values of forgiveness, universal love, compassion, gratitude and blessing.

In July 2015, the charity set up a chronic disease management centre to treat tumour, diabetes, stroke and other ailments. The specialist centre aims to give patients hope and motivate them to continue with their daily lives, besides easing their post-treatment pain.

In response to the community’s needs, SCMI would be launching its TCM Mobile Clinic in 2016 to reach the elderly and immobile residents who cannot leave their homes.

SCMI plans to use social media to raise funds from the community in the near future. It welcomes legacy donation from living donors or the estates of past donors.

The Sian Chay Advocates as the future ambassadors of SCMI will be serving the patients at its branches and residents in the community.

Outstanding Achievements to Date

Soon Huat believes that prevention is better than cure. SCMI’s “Wellness Lifestyle, Blissful Living” programme is helping residents to lead a healthy lifestyle and enjoy a better quality of life. It will be extending its TCM services to nursing homes, welfare homes and eldercare facilities in future.

Besides raising nearly \$10 million between 2008 and 2015 for expanding SCMI’s operations to benefit more needy residents, Soon Huat initiated and spearheaded a ‘medical fund’ for the Pioneer Generation as they do not enjoy any medical subsidy for TCM expenses.

He sees public awards for his contributions to society like the President’s Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Adult) as a form of motivation and support for continuing with his voluntary and philanthropic work.

Sustaining Efforts over Time

According to Soon Huat, SCMI requires an operating budget of over \$3 million each year. He recognises that one man's resources are limited and the contributions of more people are needed for SCMI to expand its efforts to help more people. He is able to sustain SCMI's services by continuing to raise funds for its operations. He organises events and taps his pool of donors from his business and social networks. Soon Huat is able to draw on their continuing support by engaging donors, setting a personal example (giving up his well-paid job to do charitable work full-time without pay), ensuring transparency in SCMI's accounts and delivering tangible results. Over the years, he has built up a reputation as a well-respected and credible person who can be trusted with donors' money.

In Soon Huat's view, philanthropy represents the value of life and is about a heart of love and compassion. Through SCMI, he seeks to help patients manage their health issues and reduce their burdens. Whenever he sees them recover, he feels a deep sense of fulfilment and accomplishment. "It is something that I will never give up doing," he shared.

To sustain his giving, Soon Huat earns his income from his investments while maintaining a thrifty lifestyle.

In the near term, he plans to open more SCMI branches across Singapore to reach more needy residents who require medical attention.

By 2020, Soon Huat foresees SCMI developing and operating a franchise system as a social enterprise to engage and empower its TCM clinics to improve their productivity and boost its profile in the community. Such a system could possibly serve more than one million beneficiaries in Singapore each year through 100 TCM franchisees, he estimated.

Anticipating and Meeting Future Needs

Soon Huat plans to expand SCMI's network of TCM clinics to 20 to serve 2,000 patients a day in future.



Toh Soon Huat hopes to help more needy and elderly residents by opening more traditional Chinese medicine clinics that offer free consultation and low-cost medication in future. (Photo: Sian Chay Medical Institution)

Beyond medical treatment, he is looking at disease prevention by promoting a healthy lifestyle in the community. To achieve this, SCMI will collaborate with the community to set up more wellness centres to promote its “Wellness Lifestyle, Blissful Living” programme.

Giver's Philosophy and Priorities

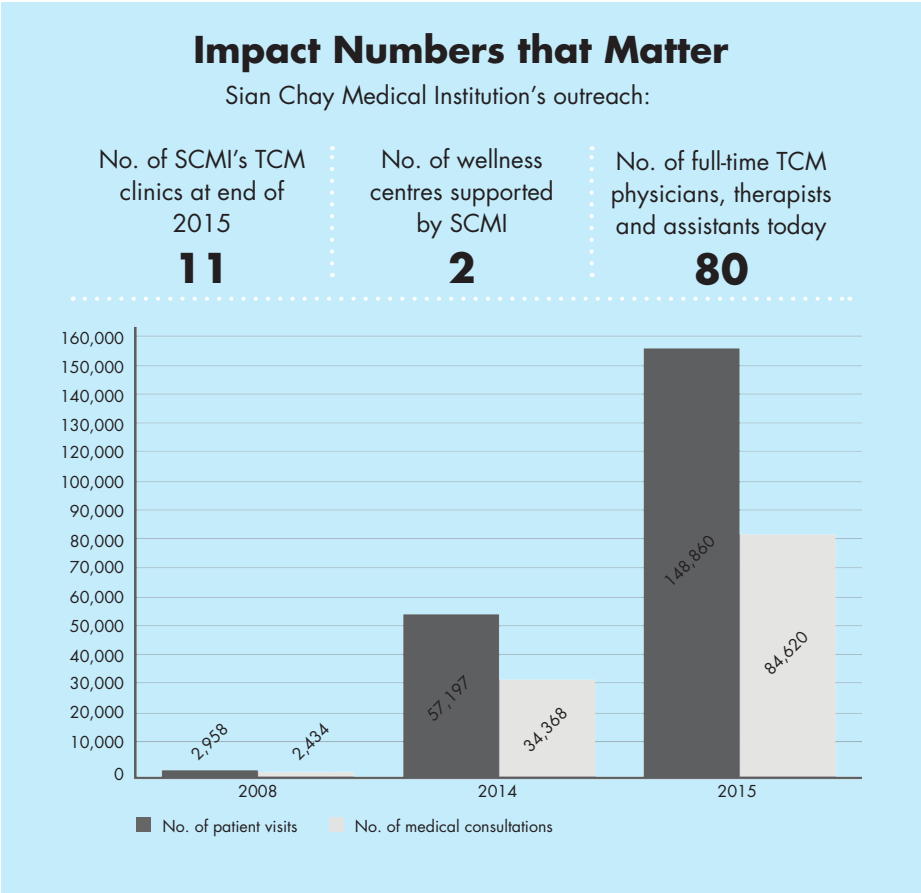
As the leader of a charity, Soon Huat believes in leadership by example and that service to humanity is the best form of work. For him, having care and compassion for the needy is a blessing.

He sees Singapore's ageing population as the greatest challenge facing the community. Thus he considers tackling chronic diseases and mental health issues to be one of the most pressing social needs in future.

Advice for Givers

For people who are thinking of helping others as a volunteer or as a philanthropist, Soon Huat likes them to know that caring-and-sharing is more fulfilling than giving-and-taking.

For those who are already giving through volunteerism and philanthropy, he likes to share with them that cultivation of merit is a lifelong journey and that charity is a merit-making act.





Fund raised for Sian Chay Medical Institution between 2008 and 2015:

\$10 million

Amount raised from
MediaCorp's Thong Chai
TV charity show in 2010

\$7 million

Amount raised from
SCMI's inaugural charity
golf and dinner in 2014

\$1.46 million



Fund-raising for other beneficiary organisations:

Amount raised for 28
local civic, community and
charity organisations in past
11 years

\$44 million

Amount raised from
MediaCorp's Sichuan
Earthquake Relief TV charity
show in 2008

\$10.3 million



Toh Soon Huat's donations to date

\$5.2 million

Personal donations to charities
since 2002

\$3.2 million

Donations to charities through
his company and Novena
Foundation since 2002

\$2 million

SENIORS AND RETIREES CAN VOLUNTEER THEIR SKILLS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

“ *The National Senior Volunteer Month lets seniors participate in volunteering for a day or more, so that they can experience the satisfaction of giving and hopefully become regular volunteers at any of the many voluntary welfare organisations in Singapore.* ”

- **Ngiam Tong Yuen**
1st Vice President
RSVP Singapore

Ngiam Tong Yuen was the recipient of the 2015 President's Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Senior). As a member of Singapore's pioneer generation, Tong Yuen epitomises the spirit of senior volunteerism. He is a volunteer who helps to promote senior volunteerism through his hands-on and leadership roles at RSVP Singapore, the organisation of senior volunteers. Such is his dedication and commitment that he is seen as its 'face' and 'pillar'. RSVP President Koh Juay Meng describes the former Colombo Plan scholar and professional engineer as a "humble" and "passionate" force that's driving volunteerism among the 'old' and 'new' retirees.

Committed to a Good Cause

Tong Yuen spends most of his time as a senior volunteer at RSVP Singapore promoting and championing senior volunteerism as a leader and mentor. His willingness to volunteer his time and skills whenever there's a need has endeared him to many as an icon and a role model of senior volunteerism.

Giving through Voluntary Work and Philanthropy

Besides volunteering and contributing his knowledge, skills and services through RSVP Singapore, Tong Yuen contributes to professional bodies and organisations, including Professional Engineers Board (PEB), Institution of Engineers Singapore (IES, as vice-president) and Society for Loss Prevention (SLP, as honorary secretary). He volunteers his services whenever he's asked by IES. For example, he serves as an assessor for IES' Engineering Accreditation Board for tertiary institutions offering chemical engineering degrees, including National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University. After stepping down as a PEB Board member, he serves when he's needed in special committees, including one that is looking at the registration of chemical engineers. He is a long-serving honorary secretary of SLP.

As and when he's needed, Tong Yuen has also volunteered in various other committees, such as PUB's Water Network, SPRING Singapore's Management Systems and Standards Committee and the Workplace Safety and Health Council's sub-committees. These included those looking after the chemical industry, and the safety and health of older workers.

In addition, he and his wife Jean volunteer to play host to exchange students at the National University of Singapore (NUS) every semester. Each year, they also volunteer to host foreign students on Singapore scholarships during their four-year undergraduate studies, and foreign officials who are in Singapore to attend training courses arranged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Over the past 10 years, the couple have been arranging meals with these students and officials and taking them to places of interest. Every year, they also host a Lunar New Year gathering for the students who are in town.

RSVP's programmes address social needs or gaps in our society and help to keep seniors mentally active. Tong Yuen's roles at RSVP cover policy making, programme development and implementation, and project execution. He has been a six-term member of the RSVP Board and will complete his 12th year of service in 2016. He is involved with its various committees, including Volunteer Management (training new volunteers), Fund Development, Learning Journeys (as a guide) and Senior Guiding (as chairman). The last committee develops volunteering opportunities with places of interest for RSVP members.

He also chairs its social enterprise RSVP ProGuide, which generates revenue to help fund its programmes and operations, and the organising committee for RSVP's Senior Volunteer Week, which promotes senior volunteerism by getting its members to socialise and bond with non-members through volunteering activities over a period of one to two weeks. There are more than 40 activities each year, and they include learning journeys, entertaining old folks in welfare homes, food distribution during Ramadan and cleaning of public parks.

In 2015, Tong Yuen chaired the working committee for RSVP's first National Senior Volunteer Month – a bigger and grander version of its Senior Volunteer Week – as part of Singapore's SG50 celebrations, with the support of the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and the Ministry of Health. Over 50 activities were held over several months for RSVP's biggest-ever project, which was officially launched by President Tony Tan Keng Yam in August that year. Among the activities was an inter-generational heritage event at a primary school where RSVP conducts mentoring sessions. For the first time, the expatriate community

took part in RSVP activities, including a charity cookie-baking event with spouses of 10 countries' ambassadors participating and a lunch-cum-social gathering for foreign workers.



Ngiam Tong Yuen (centre) chairing a RSVP volunteer committee meeting. (Photo: RSVP Singapore)

Tong Yuen chaired the organising committees of RSVP's last two Flag Days, when he personally sold flags and sought donations from foundations and companies. He serves as a senior guide and helps with script-writing and preparation of learning materials for RSVP Learning Journey Programme. He regularly gives presentations at its monthly induction session for new members, as well as gives public talks on active ageing and senior volunteerism.

Besides volunteering at RSVP, Tong Yuen has been giving small but regular donations to support its administrative functions and numerous programmes. He also donates regularly to some voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs), including Singapore Children's Society, Kidney Dialysis Foundation and Boys' Town.

In addition to supporting NUS' scholarship programmes, Tong Yuen funds a scholarship at his alma mater University of New South Wales for native Australian students. The Mr and Mrs Ngiam Fook Quee Memorial Scholarships for Economics and Social Work were set up by him, his siblings and their families as a way to remember their parents. Each award funds a four-year honours course.

Organised for Giving

In spite of his busy schedule volunteering at RSVP, Tong Yuen is able to allocate his time to serve a number of professional bodies and organisations.

Making Impact at Multiple Levels

As he supported RSVP's long-term objective of promoting senior volunteerism, Tong Yuen agreed to spearhead its Singapore Volunteer Week since 2012. In 2015, RSVP wanted to widen its scope to reach more seniors and decided to organise the National Senior Volunteer Month. He explained: "These events let seniors participate in volunteering for a day or more, so that they can experience the satisfaction of giving and hopefully become regular volunteers at any of the many VWOs in Singapore. While episodic volunteerism has its place, what RSVP does is to persuade a person to commit to a voluntary programme for a considerable period."

He speaks frequently on senior volunteerism to groups and people he meets, to encourage more senior citizens to give their time and offer their skills to help those who are less fortunate.

In Tong Yuen's view, the best way to get more people to volunteer is to set a good example for them to follow. Hence his hands-on approach to volunteering. Although he does not participate in every RSVP activity, Tong Yuen contributes indirectly through its board and management committees. He helps to deploy RSVP members as volunteers for the various programmes after they have been trained by RSVP.

While it is difficult to measure the impact of his volunteering work quantitatively, Tong Yuen likes to believe that qualitative indicators through word of mouth matter much to encourage more people to think of volunteering and to give it a try.

Reaching and Helping Beneficiaries

In nearly all cases, RSVP partners other organisations to help meet their specific needs. Its partners include primary schools (mentoring), Institute of Mental

Health (reaching out to recovering patients), Senior Activity Centres/Care Corners (befriending lonely senior citizens), hospitals (helping patients and their relatives/visitors) and homes of beneficiaries (Ageing in Place programme with Khoo Teck Puat Hospital). Other beneficiaries include visitors to places of interest, students and senior citizens attending RSVP Learning Journeys and foreign travellers at Changi Airport.

Two programmes take place at RSVP's premises – IT training to help senior citizens use digital devices and the Volunteer Training Centre, which has classes almost daily to build capacity and develop the competence of senior volunteers.

Tong Yuen thinks one possible way of reaching more beneficiaries is for RSVP to set up branches so that it is more convenient for seniors to volunteer and serve their neighbourhoods. He envisages that a branch could be set up if a volunteer leader and a small core team of experienced volunteers could be identified and tasked to run it. Once the concept is proven, other branches could be set up. It all depends on whether there are enough senior volunteers, he added.

Why and When It Started

As a member of the pioneer generation, Tong Yuen feels fortunate to have the means and abilities to continue serving his country and its people through volunteerism. In his own words: “I volunteer because I want to give back to the country that gave me so many opportunities, including a scholarship to fund my studies at tertiary level. I have been much luckier than others who grew up under similar conditions. I have much to give.”

His personal conviction about giving led him to want to give back to society. He has always shown genuine care and concern for other senior volunteers. For example, RSVP President Koh Juay Meng cited an incident when Tong Yuen quickly went to a senior volunteer photographer, who was taking a shot while standing on a stool, and held the stool to make sure that it would not move and cause the photographer to fall and hurt himself.

The same motivation drives his volunteering work at RSVP and professional bodies. He started as a mentor to students at Kuo Chuan Presbyterian Primary School more than 10 years ago, before taking on a leadership role to apply his management skills as RSVP's Vice-President about five years ago. Then, he saw the opportunity to develop the large pool of well-qualified and experienced people who were getting ready to retire as potential senior volunteers for RSVP's current and future programmes. He estimates their number to be in the hundreds of thousands.

Aligning with Giver's Values and Purpose

For Tong Yuen, retirement is about 're-tiring' oneself to volunteer for a good cause, as his personal example has shown. As RSVP's aim of serving the community through senior volunteerism aligned with his personal objective of giving back to society, he readily volunteered with RSVP after he retired for the second time in 2001 at the age of 62.

Founded in 1998, RSVP aims to encourage and motivate senior volunteers to stay engaged and committed over a period of time in projects that address social needs. It believes active and engaged seniors are healthier and happier. While the organisation recognises that ad hoc volunteering work may help to keep seniors engaged in community service, it prefers long-term volunteers as its programmes require training or special orientation. In the befriending programmes, beneficiaries tend to become attached to volunteers and are upset when the volunteers drop out. Frequent changes also add to the administrative loads at the partner organisation (VWO) and RSVP.

Tong Yuen believes that VWOs should be earning some income so that it is not totally dependent on donations and grants from government agencies, companies and individuals. Thus he readily volunteered to sit on the founding board of RSVP's social enterprise, RSVP ProGuide, which he currently chairs. ProGuide's profits are ploughed back to support RSVP's community programmes. Its consultants and trainers are senior citizens who offer their services for a nominal fee.

Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

Based on Tong Yuen's experience, recruiting and motivating volunteers are among RSVP's biggest challenges. "How can senior volunteerism be sustained?" he had pondered. RSVP is very much influenced by its members who bring many years of HR experience. It therefore applies good HR practices to motivate and retain volunteers. It has a Volunteer Management System encompassing many facets – selection and recruitment, training, communications, team building, recognition and appreciation. For instance, celebrations of volunteers' achievements are frequent. By using innovation and imagination, it keeps operating costs low.

While RSVP has built a strong core group of senior volunteers who have served for many years, growing this pool of volunteers is a challenge. The three Senior Volunteer Weeks (SVW) from 2012 to 2014 and the first National Senior Volunteer Month (NSVM) in 2015 were parts of its ongoing efforts to encourage more seniors to volunteer. RSVP plans to continue organising NSVM in the foreseeable future, and intends to work with like-minded bodies like the People's Association, companies with corporate social responsibility programmes, government agencies and members of the public. It will use social media platforms to publicise its activities among as many people as possible. Many events are being organised in conjunction with other VWOs. In this way, a new volunteer will get a taste of what is involved and may decide to sign on for the long haul.

As expected, big events like SVW and NSVM were manpower-intensive. Fortunately for RSVP, it has dedicated board members, volunteers and staff who worked together to organise them. By using its network of supporters in the private and corporate sectors, RSVP was able to draw on expertise that it lacked, such as marketing and media publicity. Finance is always a challenge but it is not as major as human resource/expertise.

Another way that Tong Yuen has found to be effective in increasing the number of volunteers is by expanding an existing programme with a partner or starting a new one with a new partner, such as a mentoring programme at a new school. RSVP has a New Programme Committee that reviews potential programmes for

their feasibility. While any RSVP member can suggest a new programme, the onus is on him/her to gather a group of fellow enthusiasts and make their case to the committee.

Although establishing RSVP branches across Singapore is also manpower-intensive, it is an effective way to reach and engage more senior volunteers.

Working with Other Stakeholders as Partners

RSVP's strategy is to work with partners to serve their beneficiaries. By expanding an existing programme at a partner's location or starting a programme with a new partner, it hopes to increase the number of volunteers who join as members. Potential partners may approach RSVP after learning of its work or RSVP could seek out those that may need its services. For example, it could explore possible collaboration with another Senior Citizen Activity Centre to expand its befriending work.

Tong Yuen is seeking the support of government agencies, socially-responsible companies and the wider community, in areas such as moral support, marketing communication and long-term funding, to help RSVP fulfill its objectives and serve its purpose in the long term.

Nearly all RSVP programmes are offered jointly with its partners and other collaborators, with most of the activities carried out at their premises. For example, its volunteers work at the 11 schools under the Mentoring Programme and help recovering patients at the Institute of Mental Health and its day-care centres. Its senior guides work at the Science Centre, URA City Gallery, KK Women's and Children's Hospital, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Changi Airport, Malay Heritage Centre and National Heart Centre as RSVP's partners. Only a small number of the more than 100 active senior guides serve at more than one place. They may ask to be excluded from the duty roster temporarily due to personal circumstances (like attending to a new grandchild or caring for a sick relative) when the need arises. RSVP partners the Infocomm Development Authority for its CyberGuide Programme, which trains seniors in IT skills at RSVP's two computer labs.

Learning and Benefiting from the Giving Experience

In the course of his volunteering work, Tong Yuen has noticed the public's general perception of volunteering as a temporary ad hoc activity that's provided free-of-charge by those with time to spare. He wants to change this perception and to promote the idea that volunteering requires some commitment through the RSVP Volunteer Training Centre.

He also noted that VWOs have tended to over-emphasise fund-raising. He felt that they ought to be paying more attention to their core objectives, such as attending to the well-being of their beneficiaries. He thought that they should be raising the effectiveness of their volunteers and harnessing their skills.

According to Tong Yuen, it is obvious to any observer that Singapore today has gaps in its social safety net. Since it is not possible or even desirable for the government to provide for everything, it means that Singaporeans should be more self-reliant and help each other. Volunteerism or more specifically senior volunteerism is one resource that we can tap, he added. With its fast-ageing population and the fact that Singaporeans are better educated and live longer than their parents, our senior citizens form a huge manpower pool. The issue then is, how do we inspire more seniors to volunteer their time and skills? There is a need to market and promote this idea of giving. Hence the need for something like NSVM, he explained.

He has also realised the need to provide all volunteers with an allowance for their out-of-pocket expenses. Such reimbursement allows some seniors, who may not be able to afford the public transport fare, to move around frequently and volunteer while socialising and bonding with other volunteers over some light refreshments.

Tong Yuen also noted the importance of VWO leaders constantly showing appreciation to the volunteers beyond the annual appreciation event. He sees room for imagination and innovation in doing this better. He realised there is much to learn from successful service organisations that actually don't pay that well but nevertheless have motivated and cheerful employees. Their bosses walk

their talk, praise more, pat staff on the backs more frequently and have many celebrations together. They allow employees (volunteers) to take ownership of their celebratory events and let them come up with their own ideas.



*At RSVP's Volunteer Appreciation Night that Ngiam Tong Yuen (standing in front) and his committee organised in 2015.
(Photo: RSVP Singapore)*

He observed that volunteers were actually frugal by nature. VWOs could therefore use more creativity and less money to engage them. There is one more lesson he has learned – we need to cultivate as many friends/contacts as possible and win them over to our cause.

“After a while, the new volunteer will realise that the benefit of volunteerism for himself/herself is actually more than that for his/her beneficiaries. The satisfaction is priceless,” Tong Yuen shared.

Innovating for Greater Impact

According to Tong Yuen, RSVP pioneered skilled volunteerism in Singapore when it started. All its programmes require skills, such as IT, counselling, selling and communications (written and oral).

Through its customised training courses and workshops, senior volunteers learn to contribute effectively and meaningfully in their respective areas of expertise. The RSVP Training Centre teaches potential volunteers through classroom discussion and role play, with less use of written material. It takes them on an introductory course on how to be an effective volunteer, before they embark on specific courses such as conflict resolution, presentation skills and selling.

In 2004, Tong Yuen helped to found RSVP ProGuide as a social enterprise that draws on RSVP members' wide range of expertise and experience to provide consultancy and training services to government agencies and small and medium-sized enterprises. They include managers, accountants, engineers, HR practitioners, school teachers and principals. ProGuide's professional services cover general management, organisational development, strategic planning, financial, HR, languages, IT, new media, corporate/legal, interim/project and supply chain management, and feasibility study. Its costs of overheads are low as the consultants and trainers are paid a nominal fee only for their assignments. By generating revenue to help sustain RSVP in its mission to mobilise senior volunteers to help VWOs achieve their social objectives, ProGuide is serving the VWOs' beneficiaries indirectly.

When it comes to volunteer management, Tong Yuen believes that RSVP members will continue to volunteer if they can see the results of their volunteering work or feel appreciated by the organisation. He sees a personal thank you note or a letter of appreciation going a long way in keeping them engaged and committed.

Outstanding Achievements

RSVP's Senior Guiding Programme led by Tong Yuen currently serves seven public places. It has raised the organisation's visibility, which in turn helps in its fund-raising efforts to sustain its volunteering work.

The Senior Volunteer Week and the National Senior Volunteer Month that Tong Yuen spearheaded were two projects among his other outstanding achievements. For his contributions to RSVP, Tong Yuen was recognised with the RSVP President's Award in 2012.

Sustaining Efforts over Time

Tong Yuen realised that organising senior volunteers to serve the community in a committed and sustainable way is a huge task that requires substantial funding. He has therefore been active in RSVP's Fund Development Committee as well as chairing its social enterprise arm RSVP ProGuide to help fund it. Although ProGuide's contribution to RSVP's annual income is only about 10%, it can be expected to increase in future.

To sustain senior volunteerism, Tong Yuen thinks that the VWO community must move away from the idea that volunteerism is driven purely by altruism. While a sense of altruism must be present, many of the senior volunteers are not financially well-off. As a practice for many years, RSVP gives all its volunteers an out-of-pocket allowance to defray their expenses. The volunteers appreciate the allowance, and some of them choose to donate it back to RSVP.

In the longer term, Tong Yuen hopes to see senior volunteerism growing in the VWO sector and views it as a movement requiring long-term commitment. At present, VWOs attract mostly ad hoc volunteers and they rely on paid staff to serve the community. He sees a need for RSVP to open more branches to reach out to more seniors. He intends to find out from VWOs why seniors do not volunteer regularly and to explore ways to motivate them to become regular volunteers.



Ngiem Tong Yuen conducting RSVP ProGuide's two-week English Language course for senior officials from Laos that was arranged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Photo: RSVP Singapore)

Anticipating and Meeting Future Needs

Tong Yuen foresees ageing issues becoming more visible in future. He sees a need for the Ageing in Place scheme to be expanded more aggressively by the public sector (Ministry of Health, hospitals and residential homes for seniors) and VWOs with some long-term funding, training and organisational development.

He also expects to see more long-term unemployment of relatively young adults – this is already a problem in Europe and America. Voluntary organisations like RSVP or social enterprises like RSVP ProGuide could help in counselling and retraining them, according to Tong Yuen. “This would require a mindset change in the government agency that is overseeing this reskilling issue. It may not have recognised the ‘gold mine’ (skilled seniors) that we have,” he added.

Advice for Givers

For potential senior volunteers who are thinking of starting on their giving journey, here’s Tong Yuen’s advice for them:

“ *Overcome the hesitation. Visit the websites of National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre and Giving.sg, and VWOs like RSVP Singapore. Find a cause/subject you like. Try it and see.* ”

For those who are already volunteering, he advises them to keep learning about volunteerism by speaking to experienced volunteers or signing up for RSVP’s Effective Volunteerism course. “Don’t give up too early,” he encouraged.

Impact Numbers that Matter



RSVP membership (as of June 2015):

- No. of members : 907



RSVP Mentoring Programme (as of June 2015):

- No. of participating schools : 11
- No. of student beneficiaries : 308
- No. of active mentors : 76
- No. of volunteer sessions : 187



RSVP Senior Guiding Programme (as of June 2015):

- No. of active senior guides : 135
- No. of guiding venues : 6
- No. of volunteer sessions : 4,154
- No. of beneficiaries served : 111,817



RSVP CyberGuide Programme (as of June 2015):

- No. of seniors trained in IT skills : 1,967
- No. of IT training sessions conducted : 216



RSVP Learning Journey Programme:

- No. of learning journeys (2013-14) : 8
- No. of beneficiaries (2013-14) : 346

WELL-BEING OF ELDERLY MATTERS MOST TO THIS LONG-SERVING VOLUNTEER

“ *It is helpful, as part of graceful ageing, to ensure that the elderly feel that they have a place in Singapore.* ”

- Chan Wing Cheong

Chan Wing Cheong was the recipient of the President's Special Recognition Award (Individual and Informal Group) in 2014. The 50-year-old law professor at the National University of Singapore has been volunteering in the social service sector for more than 20 years. He sees volunteering as a way of life and intends to continue devoting his time to helping others.

Committed to a Good Cause

Although Singapore has progressed much in the last five decades, Wing Cheong strongly believes that more can be done to ensure that the vulnerable members of our society receive adequate protection and are given opportunities to have a better life. To help realise this, he has worked with and advocated for help to be given to victims of family violence, children in need of care and protection, juvenile delinquents and the elderly.

When he was a volunteer probation officer (VPO), Wing Cheong was spending four to five hours a week supervising probationers while volunteering at the Bukit Batok Boys' Hostel (now the Singapore Boys' Hostel) and chairing the Volunteer Probation Officers Committee. Today, he still gives about four hours a week to various social causes and is focusing on helping the disadvantaged elderly.

Giving through Voluntary Work

With his legal background, Wing Cheong is often asked to join case review boards or law reform committees. From his experience, he finds that although some laws may look very good on paper, there are still gaps in practice that need to be addressed. For example in elder abuse, which he is closely involved in, there are still issues that the legislature and various other stakeholders are trying to resolve. How can we talk to an elderly person who is suspected of being abused by his/her caregiver when the caregiver refuses to allow contact with the elderly person? How can we protect those who are vulnerable but are not medically diagnosed to be incapable of taking care of themselves? For those who are mentally incompetent and do not have any family members, who are the best persons to help them to make important decisions concerning their long-term care or financial plans? By working with the social workers on the ground and the policy makers, Wing Cheong is able to help formulate the most effective policies.

While serving the VPO Committee as Secretary and Chairman from 1997 to 1999, Wing Cheong helped to develop a more client-centred approach in planning and mobilising volunteer resources. He led many rehabilitative programmes and fun activities like camps, family day celebrations, hiking and cycling for probationers.

He started to volunteer at the Bukit Batok Boys' Hostel in the mid-1990s in various programmes, including tuition, group work and annual camp, and continued until the early 2000s, when he volunteered for many other social service activities.



Wing Cheong became a volunteer probation officer at the Bukit Batok Boys' Hostel (now Singapore Boys' Hostel) soon after returning from his overseas education in 1993. He is pictured in front of the former Bukit Batok Boys' Hostel building that still stands today. (Photo: Chan Wing Cheong)

A project that he conceptualised and implemented at the Bukit Batok Boys' Hostel was a "talkshop" where he facilitated sharing by a group of residents about their past and what they hoped for the future. It was a way for them to take stock of what had happened, and to let them know that they had to take ownership of their lives after being discharged from the hostel.

Soon after he was appointed a gazetted VPO, a role with the same legal responsibilities as those of a full-time probation officer, Wing Cheong became one of the few VPOs who helped to prepare pre-sentence reports for the Juvenile Court to assess the suitability of offenders for probation. Following his VPO experience at the then Ministry of Community, Youth and Sports (MCYS), he took up supervisory, case management and policy-making work in various committees.

At TRANS Family Services, he gave talks on elder abuse for its courses, served on its management committee (2004-2006 and 2014 to present), and volunteered in its activities and at TRANS Focus Centre (where the elderly can drop in). Since 2015, he has been helping out once a week in its FOCUS Programme for seniors, and is seen as “a beacon of light” for them. Its Executive Director Yee-Chow Choy Yin has worked with Wing Cheong in the Adult Protection Team and noticed his total commitment as a volunteer. “Wing Cheong is a very sincere person and he helps with a genuine heart,” she shared. She was most impressed by his sense of responsibility and whole-hearted commitment to each task. “He is humble and serves with true sincerity and dedication,” Choy Yin added.



Wing Cheong (in front) devotes his Monday morning to leading the La La Exercise session for seniors at the TRANS Focus Centre. (Photo: TRANS Family Services)

Wing Cheong also shared his legal expertise at the Family Court, Singapore Academy of Law and Ministry of Law. Besides chairing the VPO Committee (West Zone) of MCYS (1999–2002), he’s a mediator in divorce cases at the Family Court (1999–2003).

In addition, he’s a member of:

- Law Society’s Criminal Legal Aid Scheme Committee (1995–2000);
- Inter-Ministry Committee on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1999);
- MCYS’ Board of Visitors for Children’s and Young Persons’ Homes (2003–2006);
- Adult Protection Team of MCYS and Ministry of Social and Family Development (MFS) that was convened by TRANS Family Services (2004 to present) – it deals with suspected cases of elder abuse;
- Tribunal for the Maintenance of Parents (2008–2014); and
- Ministry of Social and Family Development’s (MSF) Review Board (Children and Young Persons’ Homes) (since 2015).

Wing Cheong’s outreach work extended to probationers on community-based rehabilitation programmes and those staying at Singapore Boys’ Hostel. There Wing Cheong was giving tuition and leading small discussion groups of five to six probationers. In 1998, he was supervising an 18-year-old probationer named Adam for nine months when he was on probation for his gang involvement. During that time, he gave Adam tuition twice a week and took him out for meals and cycling. Even after Adam’s probation ended, Wing Cheong kept in touch and went on outings with him.

Adam, now 34, realised that Wing Cheong was helping him as a volunteer without expecting anything in return and that he should be taking care of himself. He went on from dropping out of school after his ‘O’ Level to becoming a university graduate with three master degrees (from University of Adelaide, City University of New York and National University of Singapore) and is completing a fourth at

Singapore Management University. He enjoys the learning process and thinks of it as a continuous journey for keeping his mind young.

Adam works as a professional service consultant and feels contented with what he has, although he believes everyone has the potential to achieve more in life if there is someone to enlighten him. He hopes to make a positive difference to someone's life just like what Wing Cheong had done for him, possibly as a coach or probation officer in future.

As a volunteer coordinator for the West Zone, Wing Cheong worked diligently at increasing the participation rate of VPOs there in casework, community service, educational projects, group work and other activities from 40% to 65%. He achieved this marked improvement in participation rate by keeping in touch with the VPOs through a newsletter and telephone calls, and matching their interest and availability with the activities. In early 1999, he organised a one-day planning workshop for VPOs that came up with 84 activities for probationers, like sports during their free time and tuition to help them in their school work.

Wing Cheong also presented papers and gave talks on protection from family violence, mental incapacity, gender equality and other social issues. His talks also covered volunteer management, recruitment of VPOs and training on prevention of elder abuse. These events were organised by MSF, TRANS Family Services, Special Needs Trust Company and hospitals, among others.

He shared his ideas on caring for the disadvantaged through books, journals and the mass media that were used in public discussions. For example, his commentaries in the Straits Times and TODAY newspapers were on protection of elderly from financial abuse and complete lifting of marital rape exemption, respectively.

Organised for Giving

Wing Cheong schedules his time between his full-time job as a law academic and voluntary work. He would block off the days when he needs to commit his time to teaching classes at the university, and set aside time for volunteering his services.

Making Impact at Multiple Levels

As a VPO and small group leader at Singapore Boys' Hostel, Wing Cheong helped its residents to complete their probation without problems. He would show them empathy and let them know that ultimately it's their choice on what kind of future they would want for themselves.

Years of counselling youth individually and VPO training had helped Wing Cheong to understand youth better, and this eventually led him to develop group work at the Singapore Boys' Hostel, where its residents were encouraged to express their thoughts about their past and their hopes for the future through drawings. According to Wing Cheong, both methods of counselling have different strengths. Group work requires the facilitator to be good in handling each group's dynamics, as the participants learn directly from each other as well, and this would have a bigger impact than just being told what others have done or gone through.

Case discussions on the elderly and reading of maintenance applications helped Wing Cheong to understand care-giving issues and the needs of the elderly. As a result, he was able to craft case management and maintenance orders sensitively to cater to each elderly person's different circumstances. While serving as a member of the Tribunal for Maintenance of Parents, he came across a case of a child who was able but unwilling to contribute even a small sum of money to help maintain his parent. It turned out that owing to discord in the family, he did not trust his sibling to use that money for the parent's needs only. The child was asked to contribute in kind (essentials like rice and cooking oil) each month instead to the parent.

Wing Cheong would assess the impact of his voluntary work from anecdotal evidence, such as finding out that a former probationer had done well in his career or education, or that he was happy to see him.

He trained other volunteers to continue with the group work at Singapore Boys' Hostel that he started when he stopped volunteering there. From one-to-one direct counselling of probationers, he moved on to supervisory, management and policy-making roles in committees that impacted more people.

Reaching and Helping Beneficiaries

After helping the disadvantaged and underprivileged juveniles and elderly over the years, Wing Cheong now spends more time on the elderly and vulnerable adults. Elder abuse was a natural choice since he was already involved in work against spousal and child abuse. At his age, he thinks he can also relate better to older people.

Why and When It Started

After his return to Singapore from overseas studies in 1993 with a master degree in law from Cornell University in the US, he started work as a lecturer in criminal law at the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore. Soon after, he signed up and was trained as a VPO with the then MCYS. He started by counselling youth on probation before doing group counselling with those staying at the Singapore Boys' Hostel and leading a team of VPOs in the West Zone.

He wanted to help the disadvantaged and the underprivileged as he strongly believes that those who are more fortunate and capable should share their blessings with the community.

Wing Cheong credits his interest in volunteerism to his father. The late Mr Chan U Seek chaired the Singapore Ex-Political Detainees Aftercare Society for 30 years from 1970 to 2000. The society served to reintegrate former political detainees into mainstream society. It was dissolved in 2000 after having served its purpose. Mr Chan was conferred a National Day Award for his contributions in 1984.

As a law academic, Wing Cheong understands the challenges young people face in regaining society's acceptance after being convicted for a criminal offence. He thinks juvenile offenders who have a whole life ahead of them deserve a second chance, and strongly believes in rehabilitation and education to help them.

He is well aware of the limitations in providing adequate care for the disadvantaged elderly, and has noted the societal trends and the potential enhancements that could be made to the existing system. Some societal trends give him cause for concern, notably the increasing number of elderly in society, their frail health and

the mounting pressure (from work, raising children or rising costs of living) on young families that are struggling to spend time with or support their old parents.

Aligning with Giver's Values and Purpose

Wing Cheong appreciates the value of education and wants to see all students continuing their studies in schools and attaining the highest possible qualifications. To him, such tangible results would motivate them to succeed further and they would no longer see themselves as failures.

His academic research interest covers family law (child and elderly) and criminal law (victim). His research projects included violence against women in Singapore, maintenance of parents and juvenile justice.

Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

For Wing Cheong, the biggest challenge during his 21 years of service as a volunteer was and still is in balancing his time spent on volunteering work with time for his family, work and other important matters. He is able to overcome it by managing his time and scheduling his activities well, although there are still sacrifices he has to make.

Another challenge is in maintaining the same personal commitment over the years. He has stayed the course by finding the right “niche” area to volunteer in, and a supportive organisation and good volunteers to work with.

Working with Other Stakeholders as Partners

Over the years, Wing Cheong have recruited VPOs and trained social workers on elder abuse using different platforms. These included talks organised by the Ministry of Social and Family Development, Social Service Institute and SIM University, among others.

He collaborates with partners from the medical, education, social services and other sectors in the Adult Protection Team. Cases are discussed with all the different partners, who may include psychiatrists, geriatric doctors, medical social workers and police officers.

Learning and Benefiting from the Giving Experience

For Wing Cheong, being a VPO is more than just mentoring and policing the probationers. According to him, it is also about supporting and encouraging them, and being there when they need someone to talk to and discuss their problems with.

He relishes the friendship forged with his young beneficiaries in the course of his past volunteering work. He had enjoyed their sense of humour, different perspectives on things and energy that sometimes got them into trouble.

Innovating for Greater Impact

An innovative part of Wing Cheong's "talkshop" group work project at the Bukit Batok Boys' Hostel was getting the boys to draw pictures instead of expressing themselves verbally, to help them explore their thoughts, feelings and ideas about their past and their future after leaving the hostel. They were asked to draw about topics like "my family", "myself in five years' time" and "what could have happened differently". Through the pictures, the boys learned what were important to them and how to deal with peers, for example. By listening to each other, they also learned from the experiences of other residents and even offered them advice.

When he started to lead VPOs in the early 1990s, before the Internet became popular, Wing Cheong would mail them a newsletter and call them personally to forge closer contact with them.

Outstanding Achievements

Wing Cheong received the Outstanding Volunteer Award from the then Ministry of Community Development for his "varied and extensive contributions" in public service as a gazetted VPO. He was also recognised with long service awards for his many years of voluntary service by:

- Ministry of Community Development – five years, 1999;

- Ministry of Community Development and Sports – 10 years, 2003; and
- Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports – five years, 2011.

Sustaining Efforts over Time

Wing Cheong continues to advocate for changes in the law or policies to take care of the needs of all vulnerable adults, specifically on expanding the scope of the law to protect them and not just those who have lost their mental capacity, and to give social workers more power to intervene in urgent cases of abuse.

Beyond the next five years, he foresees himself working with the elderly to ensure that they are not neglected and are cared for in society.

Anticipating and Meeting Future Needs

Over the next five years, Wing Cheong anticipates that the elderly will need protection from abuse and being taken advantage of. Beyond that, he foresees that they will need to feel valued in society.

He envisions a genial society and hopes to see the elderly being valued and appreciated in society, and not viewed as a dependent group. For him, it is about changing how society sees and values people. For example, he likes to see performances being evaluated by how well things are done and not just by how quickly they are completed. To help realise his vision, he suggests that more role models could be identified from among the elderly.

Giver's Philosophy and Priorities

In Wing Cheong's view, the social issue that matters most in Singapore today is its elderly people, considering that its population is ageing rapidly. He's not thinking of only the elderly who are sick or destitute. He notes the "too many changes" in the country that are disorientating to all its senior citizens, such as urban development, children moving away to live or work, new government policies, and rising costs of living and healthcare. "It is helpful, as part of graceful ageing, to ensure that the elderly feel that they have a place in Singapore," he suggested.

He finds a quote that is attributed to Winston Churchill, who said something to the effect that the civilisation of a society is measured by how it treats its weakest members, to be especially meaningful.

Advice for Givers

To help potential volunteers get started on their giving journeys and current volunteers stay the course, Wing Cheong would like to advise them to find the right organisations and areas to work with. With so many different organisations offering so many different opportunities in which they can contribute, including elderly, youth, families and animals, it is important to find the right ‘fit’ so that spending time volunteering is something for them to look forward to.

Wing Cheong thinks that volunteers can contribute in more effective ways by constantly improving themselves through “lifelong learning”. He himself had benefited from the Graduate Diploma in Social Work course at National University of Singapore back in 2003.

“ *It is more than just mentoring and policing the probationers. It is also about supporting and encouraging them, and being there when they need someone to talk to and discuss their problems with.* ”

- Chan Wing Cheong

GIVING BY GROUPS/ORGANISATIONS



INFORMAL GROUP PROVIDES IMMEDIATE HELP TO NEEDY PEOPLE EVERY SUNDAY

“ *Respect those in need, and don't
have any expectation of what they
should do in return.* ”

- **Fion Phua**
Founder
Keeping Hope Alive

Keeping Hope Alive was the recipient of the 2015 President's Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Informal Group). Every Sunday, it mobilises and assembles a group of volunteers to knock on the doors of about 150 one- and two-room rental flats in HDB blocks in Singapore to offer the residents immediate assistance for their basic needs. The charity was founded and is being led by Fion Phua. While Fion's philosophy in life is about living well, she strongly believes in giving and sharing what she has with others who are less fortunate. She is doing this through Keeping Hope Alive (KHA) since 2007. She hopes her KHA story will touch and inspire many others to 'relive' her giving and learning experience and to help more people in need.

Committed to a Good Cause

They say when there is life, there is hope. Fion believes that everyone has hope for a better life, even the most needy, and that we can help to keep their hope alive by reaching out to them and touching their lives emotionally and physically. Through KHA, she aims to restore the hope of the less fortunate people by providing them with immediate help for their basic needs.

Members of KHA are all united by a common goal of reaching out to help the needy residents of one- and two-room rental flats across Singapore, instead of waiting for them to ask for help.

Giving through Voluntary Work and Philanthropy

Every Sunday morning, KHA volunteers led by Fion knock on the doors of the rental flats to find out what their residents need before offering help to them. However, they do not persist if the residents do not wish to open their doors, out of respect for their privacy. However, needy residents may call KHA's 24-hour hotline to ask Fion directly for help.

Among KHA's many ongoing programmes to help the needy are:

- Porridge and fruit distribution in a HDB estate every Sunday, with porridge donated by the Goodwood Park Hotel and fruits contributed by Kian Seng Yong Imports & Exports Pte Ltd;

- Nail trimming for elderly and handicapped, as and when needed;
- Cleaning of bedbug-infested households, two to three times a month;
- Repair and replacement of faulty household items, sponsored by various donors, including KHA volunteers and home appliance suppliers, as and when needed;
- Distribution of new or used gas/electric stoves and other household appliances, furniture, mattresses and pillows, given by KHA volunteers and various suppliers (on top of what KHA purchased from them), as and when needed;
- Pill kit arrangement, by regular KHA volunteers who buy the pill kits and help the elderly to arrange their intake of medicine according to a daily schedule and the quantity required, as and when needed;
- Letter-reading assistance, as and when needed;
- Free home tuition for children, depending on what they need;
- Aiding night vision and safety for elderly, with regular KHA volunteers buying and placing luminous tapes on their wheelchairs, key chains, spectacles and light switches, as well as providing motion sensors in their homes, when there is a need;
- Assistance with CHAS (Community Health Assist Scheme) card application for the needy who require it, since May 2015;
- Eye screening for elderly staying in HDB estates in Chin Swee and North Bridge Road;
- Distribution of diapers for adults and children, donated by regular KHA volunteers, as and when needed;
- Providing healing art for blind or mute residents who cannot express their feelings, with artists volunteering to help them paint the exterior walls of their HDB flats to tell their stories;
- Arrangement for lasting power of attorney, by referring the needy residents to pro bono lawyers when there is a need; and
- Payment of SP Services utilities and HDB service and conservancy arrears for needy residents, by regular and ad hoc donors every week.

If insufficient funds are collected from volunteers, sponsors and other well-wishers for purchasing the necessary items on a Sunday, Fion would usually pay the difference out of her own pocket.

Past projects to help needy residents included:

- Donation of 20 re-conditioned desktop and laptop computers downloaded with software by KHA volunteers, for school children to use for their homework;
- Weekly eye screening for children from June to December 2015, with about 100 of them receiving glasses donated by KHA volunteers;
- Distribution of 1,000 free colon cancer test kits and several hundred pap smear test kits to low-income families during the government's common cancer awareness campaigns, and teaching them how to do the test and send back the test kits;
- Topping up of bus fare cards, paid by regular KHA volunteers, for each household on a case-by-case basis;
- Lunar New Year lunch and one-day tour of Singapore attractions for about 40 needy elderly persons in 2015;
- One-day tour of attractions in Sentosa, sponsored by Capella Hotel, for some 25 children from low-income families;
- Hong Kong lion dance at the doorsteps of elderly staying in more than 500 one-room rental flats in Chin Swee HDB estate during Lunar New Year in 2016, with performances by four lions and four drummers and the giving of 'ang pows', oranges and Lunar New Year delicacies to their residents; and
- New Year's Eve trishaw ride around Marina Bay for about 25 elderly persons on 31 December 2015.

KHA's new projects being planned include a mobile dental service that uses a bus to visit the HDB housing estates with one/two-room rental flats.

The group does not usually help the same households more than once as it wants them to stand on their own feet and be independent, unless it visits the same estate again and their situation requires further assistance. It also does not usually follow up on beneficiaries for the same reason. When there is a need, KHA refers some cases to the relevant government agencies or organisations for possible



Needy elderly on a one-day tour of Singapore attractions arranged by KHA (Photos: Keeping Hope Alive)



Fion (second from left, back row) with children from low-income families at the Capella Hotel, which sponsored the one-day tour of Sentosa that KHA organised for them.



Hong Kong lion dance arranged by KHA for elderly residents of one-room rental flats in Chin Swee HDB estate during Lunar New Year in 2016.

assistance. Some of its volunteers continue to help or follow up on the residents who are unable to help themselves.

Through her hands-on example, Fion has been inspiring people to give in cash and in kind to help the needy people that KHA visits every Sunday. She and KHA volunteers also contributed financially to purchase some of the essential items when there were insufficient funds collected from donors and other supporters. She cited the case of a donor who wanted to give a dining set to the resident of a one-room rental flat in 2015. To make the donation more meaningful, Fion asked him to give it personally to the beneficiary.

KHA has grown from a one-woman charity to about 150 regular volunteers, with everyone taking on a basic role. To date, more than 4,600 people have participated in one or more of its programmes or projects. There are no formal policies for them to follow, and they simply want to help people with their time and heart. KHA matches volunteers' expertise or skills with what are needed by the residents. Up to 100 volunteers would usually turn up each Sunday morning. The number may increase to 200 for major events, such as school shoe distribution and rice/grocery distribution.

Case by case

The diversity of needs and the extent that KHA has extended help to the needy could be gleaned from some of the cases shared by Fion.

One was an immobile man who asked for a mural to be painted on the wall outside his rental flat in Pipit Road. The mural painting was completed by KHA volunteers in 2015. This was an example of KHA providing a form of healing art for needy residents who are unable to express their feelings.

In 2015, a chicken rice hawker, who lost his sight unexpectedly overnight, wanted to end his life by jumping from the ledge of a flat in Ghim Moh estate. Fion talked to him and asked for his strength that gave him the courage to jump. She managed to persuade him not to jump and gave him a radio to listen to. He has since learned to cook in spite of his disability.

That year, Fion came across a former bodybuilder who was too proud to wear adult diaper when he lost control of his bowel movement. She patiently persuaded him and he finally put it on.

There was also the case of a man with an Indonesian wife and four children, the youngest among them was disabled. Since suffering a stroke, he was struggling to provide for his family. At one point, the family had only half a cup of rice left for their next meal. He felt hopeless and wanted to kill himself and his family by sealing off his flat and turning on the gas. However, it was aborted as there

was not enough gas in the cylinder! On that day, KHA volunteers happened to knock on their door and immediately helped them with groceries, furniture and home appliances. The family is doing alright now and the man is working at a food stall in Batam, Indonesia. He is grateful for the help given by KHA and has participated in its activities to help others in need.



Fion and another volunteer painting the wall outside a KHA beneficiary's HDB flat. (Photo: Keeping Hope Alive)

Organised for Giving

KHA is an informal group of volunteers that is organised but not structured, with its own support system covering the social, medical and environmental needs of less fortunate residents. Its volunteers take on roles and responsibilities according to their capabilities and capacities. Those with specialised expertise are given roles that suit their skills. For example, nurses sort out medication for pill kits, doctors do medical examination, teachers give tuition, painters repaint the walls and manicurists trim nails.

The group is led by founder/advisor Fion Phua, who is assisted by May Soo as advisor, with other key regular volunteers looking after logistics, publicity and media, secretarial and tuition services, porridge and fruit distribution, nail trimming, house-cleaning, painting, medical treatment, eye screening, adult diaper sponsorship and lasting power of attorney.

Each project team leader guides his or her members by briefing them before each activity, and conducting a debriefing session after its completion to discuss the difficulties faced by them. During visits to the flats, Fion will guide volunteers on how to approach and interact with the residents by showing them door-knocking and communication techniques on-the-spot.

The group does not formally recruit volunteers but welcomes anyone, who has the heart for helping others and shares KHA's hands-on approach, to volunteer for different activities that are publicised through the press and other traditional media, social media and word of mouth. Many of its first-time volunteers learn to help by actually doing and following the more experienced volunteers.

Making Impact at Multiple Levels

KHA helps needy people to have a better and happier life, in terms of their quality of life, healthcare, financial situation and education.

Residents' quality of life improves when they have:

- A cleaner, healthier and more spacious living environment after the cleaning and re-organisation of their bedbug-infested and cluttered homes – they were taught how to prevent bedbug re-infestation;
- A safer home after they were taught safety precautions and good housekeeping, and after luminous tapes have been placed and motion sensors installed for those who are visually-impaired; and
- Employment in jobs after referral by KHA's network of volunteers.

Their healthcare also improves after:

- They started to receive immediate assistance and medical treatment by KHA's medical volunteers whenever they require urgent attention;
- More residents are aware of the common types of cancer and eye ailments;
- Their households are stocked with non-medicated supplies for common ailments after the medical kits were distributed to them;

- They are able to enjoy more affordable healthcare after receiving the CHAS card;
- Elderly residents know how to take their medicine regularly after learning about the pill kit method;
- Mobility-challenged residents can go for mammogram screening provided by the buses visiting their neighbourhoods;
- The elderly and residents with disabilities started to receive foot care with regular nail trimming by KHA volunteers; and
- They are able to see better and take part in active-ageing activities following their operations for cataract and glaucoma.

The needy residents become financially better off after KHA helped them to settle their payment arrears for utilities, housing and town council charges, and to find a job to earn their own income.

In education, the needy children's interest to learn is rekindled after benefiting from KHA's free tuition, which is given until they don't need it. The residents become more computer-literate after they were given free laptop and desktop computers. Some members of families helped by KHA learned how to become volunteers to help other needy people.

Fion wants the act of giving to 'nourish' the hearts of KHA volunteers and to help create a more gracious and generous society in the process. To date, KHA has mobilised about 1,500 students, 3,000 adults and 100 elderly persons as its volunteers (both present and past).

KHA's indirect impact on the community/society is evident in many ways. Bonding among families, races and nationalities is strengthened through their participation in its activities. For example, Siva, who's from Chennai in India, wanted to show his gratitude for the acceptance and love he had received in Singapore by giving back through his participation in KHA's activities, such as bicycle distribution and house cleaning.

Many schools, including Teck Whye Secondary School, Hwa Chong Institution, Raffles Institution, Beatty Secondary School and Jurongville Secondary School, and Singapore Polytechnic used the volunteering experience to broaden their students' learning. The school children became more confident and courageous in overcoming their fear of communicating with the elderly due to language and other barriers.

Both adults and students became more aware of real-life problems and more positive after volunteering through KHA. For example, Nancy Ko, an elderly volunteer, learned that she could help the community even after suffering a stroke, by assisting in its porridge distribution and donating what she could.

Some hotels, including Novotel Hotel and Gallery Hotel, recycled their appliances and mattresses, and businesses like Shiseido recycled their desktop and laptop computers, by donating them directly to KHA's beneficiaries.

The numbers of beneficiaries vary among KHA's various programmes:

- Porridge and fruit distribution – about 21,600 households have benefited since 2013 (estimated at 36,000 over past five years);
- Nail trimming for elderly and handicapped – more than 100 beneficiaries to date;
- Cleaning of bedbug-infested households – about 180 households have benefited since 2010;
- Repair and replacement of faulty household items – at least 1,000 households have benefited so far;
- Distribution of new or used gas/electric stoves and other household appliances, furniture, mattresses and pillows – several thousand households have benefited;
- Pill kit arrangement – 15 households have benefited to date;
- Letter-reading assistance – several dozen households benefited;
- Free home tuition – three classes for five students from three households on English, mathematics and science are ongoing;

- Aiding night vision and safety for elderly – at least 1,000 households have benefited so far;
- Eye screening for elderly – 15 of them went for cataract operation and 60 elderly beneficiaries received glasses for long-sightedness, paid for by KHA volunteers;
- Distribution of diapers for adults and children – several hundred households have received them;
- Providing healing art – one household has benefited so far, with one more planned in 2016;
- Arrangement for lasting power of attorney – two cases referred to pro bono lawyers to date; and
- Payment of SP Services utilities and HDB service and conservancy arrears – around 3,000 households have benefited.

Although Fion keeps records of the people KHA has helped, she has not counted them. She considers two figures to be a fair measure of KHA's impact on its beneficiaries:

- Number of people whom KHA had brought back from the brink of despair and kept their hope alive – estimated at more than 100; and
- Number of people whom KHA had helped and who in turn are contributing back in their own ways to the community – about several hundred.

According to Fion, her group's hands-on approach, positive energy and compassion for others are creating a ripple effect on members of the public who are inspired to join it in helping the less fortunate in the community. For example, complete strangers who had heard about the unpaid utilities bills that KHA collected from needy households would turn up at Fion's office to offer to pay for them.



*Fion and KHA volunteers, young and old, all united by a common cause of providing immediate help to the needy.
(Photo: Keeping Hope Alive)*

Reaching and Helping the Beneficiaries

KHA seeks out different groups of residents in need of help, identifies their needs and helps to solve their urgent problems immediately.

Every Sunday morning, the group of KHA volunteers knocks on the doors of young and old people living in one- and two-room rental HDB flats who may need help – the weak, the sick, the elderly, the poor and the disabled.

Fion had noted that many elderly people and needy families were struggling silently with their lives. They included a lonely man who lived alone and stared at the ceiling all day, a struggling single mother who could not afford the bus fare for her child to go to school, and poor families that were unable to pay overdue utilities bills or to see the doctor. KHA granted the lonely man's wish for a mural painting on the wall outside his flat – it brightened up his view, uplifted his spirit and made him happy. The single mother had found a job with the help of KHA volunteers, who also helped to pay for her children's pre-school fees.

Why and When It Started

Fion started giving 30 years ago (at age 16) when she wanted to give away her stuffed toy after visiting an orphanage for the disabled. At that tender age, she wanted to find out the causes of their problems. Their stories moved her so much that she decided to volunteer her time and effort to help people in need with her small acts of compassion and care. Since then, she has wanted to experience the happiness in giving again, to help those who struggle to live through each day.

She founded KHA as a one-woman charity in 2007. It has since grown to an informal and diverse group of volunteers – from students to retirees, from blue-collar workers to professionals, and from local residents to foreigners.

Aligning with Givers' Values and Purpose

Fion and KHA volunteers believe in sharing what they have with those who have a lot less. She also believes the group's contributions can help to make Singapore a more gracious society.

Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

When Fion and her volunteers first knocked on the doors of the one- and two-room rental flats, some of their residents were suspicious and even hostile. With their sheer determination to help them, they persisted in visiting them to gain their confidence and trust. Eventually they were won over with patience and accepted the volunteers' help.

For residents who speak only Malay or Tamil, Fion and the volunteers would speak to them in their languages to overcome any communication barriers. Among the volunteers are those who are multi- or bilingual and some who are from different countries.

Although Fion can see with only one eye, this disadvantage does not affect her in any way from putting her whole heart into her KHA work.

Working with Donors and Other Stakeholders as Partners

Many KHA student volunteers started by doing house cleaning as part of their schools' community involvement programmes. Some of them later became regular youth volunteers, like Yu Shan from Hwa Chong Junior College and Rayyan from Teck Whye Secondary School. Yeng Ching volunteered for Jurongville Secondary School's school shoes distribution project in December 2014 when she was a secondary four student there. On her own initiative, she encouraged her friends to join her. She was recognised with the school's Active Contributor Award for her contribution to the community that year and the Ministry of Education's Edusave Character Award in 2015.

May Hwee, a trained nurse, volunteered to help distribute porridge one Sunday in 2015 soon after joining KHA. After seeing an elderly Mr Lee's gangrene toe in Geylang Bahru, she wanted to improve the basic medical care of needy residents there and persuaded other healthcare professionals to join her sub-group in helping them by dressing their wounds, conducting basic health screening and providing other basic services. Mr Lee has since recovered from his wound but KHA referred him to a public hospital for further evaluation of his vascular condition, in line with the group's final goal of tapping government resources and schemes to help the elderly.

One of KHA's regular volunteers is Ho Hsiu Mei, a Taiwanese who has been volunteering for several years. She has found Fion to be a very persuasive person who speaks to people with compassion and passion.

Dr Natasha Lim Eye Centre initially provided only basic eye screening for the elderly, who did not have to wait in a long queue, in 2012. It later provided glaucoma and cataract surgery and lenses at no cost to needy residents, as Dr Lim was encouraged by Fion's example, and is still doing so today.

ATC Painting & Trading and Seng Soon Huat Construction were similarly inspired by KHA and volunteered to repaint some of the one- and two-room rental flats at no cost, led by their bosses who did it with their families and employees. They

were small businesses when they started their voluntary work in 2008 but have since grown over the years, and are among KHA's regular volunteers.

When KHA bought school shoes for needy students from Ray Max, the supplier gave a discount off the usual price. Mistra donated 250 standing fans when KHA bought 500 of them from it. For every bag of rice that people donated to KHA's beneficiaries, Far East Rice matched it with one bag.

KHA works with the Community Development Councils, Members of Parliament and grassroots leaders to help the needy on an ad hoc basis. For residents who need further assistance, it refers them to the relevant government agencies or organisations. It also helps to inform the elderly and low-income families of any government initiatives that benefit them, such as the colon cancer test kit and CHAS card.

Although KHA does not collect cash from donors, it provides a channel for them to help needy households settle their payment arrears. For example, they could issue cheques directly to SP Services to settle their bills that were collected by KHA volunteers.

KHA organises regular family outdoor activities, such as picnic, birthday celebration and dragon boating, to show appreciation to its volunteers, promote bonding and deeper relationships among them and foster a sense of belonging to the group. They share their volunteering experiences and give feedback through WhatsApp and Facebook. Its two Facebook groups are updated each week with information on members' Sunday volunteering activities, the beneficiaries and the help they have received and some of their stories. The Facebook pages also include KHA's current and future programmes, appeal for volunteers and donation of items needed, and information to inspire more people to join its cause.

Learning and Benefiting from the Giving Experience

Fion and the KHA volunteers have learned that most of the people staying in HDB flats were willing to open their doors to them when they greeted the

residents with a smile and courtesy. It is easier when the volunteers offer them porridge to start their day.

From her experience, Fion has realised that KHA should be giving what beneficiaries need, and not what it has to give. For example, she cited the case of a donor who gave a safe deposit box and dumbbells that the beneficiaries had no use for.

Fion is grateful and happy that the beneficiaries have given her the chance to help them and to learn from them.

For KHA volunteers, they have the opportunity to learn new skills, like teaching the elderly how to use the colon cancer home test kit, assisting volunteer ophthalmologists in identifying eye-related diseases through basic eye screening, and helping to screen for depression and dementia among the elderly. A volunteer, Agnes, learned that charity was also about non-monetary contribution and that one could give with just one's 'heart' labour. Not only did she gain more confidence to become a real estate agent, she found the courage to tell her daughter about her tragic past. After hearing her mother's story, the school girl reconciled with her and went on to do well in school and receive an Edusave award.

KHA's volunteers are always being exposed to new experiences that let them pick up new skills or take a different perspective of real-life problems. Being on the ground all the time means they learn to foresee emerging social problems and to pre-empt them by helping those in need there and then, if possible.

Outstanding Achievements to Date

It is remarkable how Fion is able to sustain her giving efforts in mobilising and leading a diverse group of 100 or more volunteers every Sunday morning throughout the year. The youngest volunteer was only five-year-old while the oldest was 67.

For helping the less fortunate in Singapore, Fion was recognised with the Samaritan Award by the Rotary Club of Singapore in 2006. In 2015, she

was given the Singapore Woman Award by MediaCorp for her extraordinary achievements in voluntary work in the community.

Besides receiving the 2015 President's Award for Voluntarism and/or Philanthropy (Informal Group), KHA was recognised by the Media Literacy Council for its efforts in promoting a gracious and courteous online community during its "Safer Internet Day" campaign in 2015. The council had noted KHA's positive postings about helping the needy that supported the campaign's theme "Making Internet A Better Place".

Sustaining Efforts over Time

KHA's culture of helping the less fortunate is founded on a strong sense of altruism that is being exemplified by its founder Fion.

According to Fion, many organisations and individuals are willing to sponsor KHA's programmes. It selects food and beverage sponsors very carefully. For example, Goodwood Park Hotel has been its main food sponsor since 2013 and provides 150 bowls of freshly-cooked vegetarian porridge every Sunday morning. KHA has also been working with sponsors on ad hoc projects during the festive seasons, when Lunar New Year delicacies, rice dumplings, Malay cookies and gingerbread cookies were distributed to needy households. Other sponsors include Red Star Restaurant, Kwan Inn Restaurant and the Tung Lok Group.

KHA constantly brainstorms new programmes or projects that benefit the needy and/or engage more volunteers from different backgrounds. It believes there is always an activity that is suitable for anyone who wishes to contribute to the community.

Media and word-of-mouth publicity and the support of corporate and government organisations have helped KHA to reach more individuals and groups, including schools and companies, with its giving messages, and to sustain its efforts in future.

Anticipating and Meeting Future Needs

With Singapore's ageing population, KHA foresees more elderly people living alone and needing care. The rising costs of living mean the pressure on low-income families will increase further. It expects the number of people suffering from mental illnesses to go up, as they also face constant pressure from work, family and society.

During their Sunday visits to one/two-room HDB rental flats, KHA volunteers have come across mentally-ill residents who need medical attention. The group will continue to do what it is currently doing – reaching out to people who need immediate help.

Leader's Philosophy

Fion believes in helping others by giving one's time and efforts and not just through monetary donation. "Respect those in need, and don't have any expectation of what they should do in return," she shared. "Do well in business to do good" has been her motto. She currently operates a one-stop centre for club membership services for her regular source of income.

"When everyone is strong, our nation becomes stronger." She hopes she is contributing towards making this vision of hers a reality through KHA.

Advice for Givers

For those who are thinking of volunteering their time to help the less fortunate, Fion likes to invite them to join KHA on its Sunday morning visits to needy HDB residents, to see if they could contribute to its cause.

What advice would she give to those who are already volunteering? "There is no limit to how much one can help others. As long as one has a good heart, one can help at any time and in any way possible. It could be as simple as buying tissue packets from the auntie or uncle at a food centre, or helping an elderly person to cross the road," she shared.

Impact Numbers that Matter



- Total no. of one- and two-room HDB rental flats KHA has visited to date : All*
- Total no. of needy households KHA has helped to date : >3,000
- Total no. of needy residents KHA has helped to date : >6,000
- Total no. of regular KHA volunteers today : 150
- Total no. of KHA volunteers to date (past and present) : >4,600

**There are more than 250 HDB rental blocks with one room and two rooms in Singapore, with each block having between 100 and 320 of such units.*

MIGRANT WORKERS' WELFARE IS HEALTHSERVE'S TOP PRIORITY

“ *We seek to inspire kind exchanges and interactions between recipients and givers, while meeting basic human needs with caring attention and allowing for personal growth and fulfilment, reciprocity between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’, and respecting the best in everyone.* ”

- Dr Goh Wei Leong
Co-founder and Chairman
HealthServe

HealthServe was the recipient of the President's Award for Voluntarism and/or Philanthropy (Non-profit) in 2015. Since 2007, the voluntary welfare organisation has been mobilising hundreds of skilled volunteers in providing medical treatment, casework support, social assistance and counselling services to migrant workers in collaboration with institutional partners. It seeks to inspire exchanges and interactions between recipients and givers. HealthServe sees its success not only in the services provided but also in the relationships and empathy forged and the reciprocity fostered between benefactors and beneficiaries.

Committed to a Good Cause

HealthServe is dedicated to providing healing and hope to migrant workers in Singapore.

Among the more than 800 voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) in Singapore, HealthServe is one of a small handful that are helping low-wage migrant workers who are building the country's infrastructure. It is the only VWO that provides heavily subsidised medical care for these workers, many of whom simply cannot afford to pay for consultation and treatment at the polyclinics and public hospitals. It also helps them through casework support, counselling, social assistance, outings and events, and research and advocacy.

Giving through Voluntary Work and Philanthropy

HealthServe is open to working with all institutional and individual partners who have a heart to serve migrant workers. It believes that everyone can contribute regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, religion, socio-economic status, education or vocation.

Other areas of support it provides the workers include dental treatment, English and computer classes, and dormitory outreach activities.

The key programmes of HealthServe are:

- Community clinic for foreign workers that is staffed almost entirely by volunteer doctors (offering medical, orthopaedic, dermatologic and occupational/physical therapy services), dentists, pharmacists, nurses and clinic assistants;

- Mobile health screenings and health education talks given regularly at foreign workers' dormitories and HealthServe's drop-in centres in Geylang and Tai Seng;
- NUS Selective – each year, 150 third-year medical students (about half of the cohort) from NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine are challenged to think beyond the standard biomedical model, and to consider how medical training, an awareness of social/cultural factors and the role of community development may interplay and contribute to the preventive/rehabilitative health of the local migrant worker population;
- Casework support for work injury claims and legal, criminal or employment-related issues;
- Social assistance, including free meals, transport assistance, emergency funds and an emergency shelter for injured migrant workers and those with salary-related and other employment issues;
- Outreach programmes in partnership with schools, institutions, churches and corporations at dormitories to create awareness of and provide information on HealthServe's work among foreign workers;
- Events, outings and educational courses for migrant workers;
- Monthly orientation providing participants from all walks of life with the opportunity to learn about HealthServe's services and sign up as volunteers; and



Volunteer dentist and two dental assistants serving a migrant worker. (Photo: HealthServe)

- Talks and orientation sessions organised regularly for students from schools and institutions of higher learning to engage meaningfully with foreign workers.

All the programmes help to create awareness of HealthServe's cause and facilitate interaction among its stakeholders – volunteers' participation, partners' involvement and sponsors' funding.

HealthServe launched the Geylang Food Project for injured workers and those on Special Pass in 2011. Many of them are unable to work while waiting for the outcome of their claims for work injury compensation. During that time, they are given meals at nearby coffee shops daily.

Its research and advocacy work has resulted in a number of published papers on the welfare of migrant workers, including one on their work safety. A white paper on food safety and health of Bangladeshi construction workers in Singapore was released following HealthServe's joint research with the Centre for Culture-centred Approach to Research and Evaluation of the National University of Singapore.



*Long-serving volunteer doctor (who started helping as a medical student) giving consultation to a migrant worker.
(Photo: HealthServe)*

Organised for Giving

HealthServe is being led by its Board of Directors chaired by its co-founder Dr Goh Wei Leong. Its team of nine full-time and three part-time staff is headed by its Executive Director Colin Chia. A dedicated volunteer helps to oversee its volunteer management.

The other staff are:

- A full-time nurse overseeing the clinics in Geylang, Mandai and Jurong;
- Three full-time staff (two of them social workers) providing casework support, social assistance and counselling for Special Pass workers;
- A full-time and two part-time staff looking after dormitory outreach and community engagement programmes and migrant events;
- A full-time staff overseeing the Tai Seng Activity Centre, which offers daily English and computer classes for the workers; and
- Two full-time and a part-time staff handling administrative functions, such as fund-raising, finance, HR, communications and volunteer management.

The VWO currently has nearly 300 active volunteers, including 83 doctors, 172 clinic assistants (with nurses and pharmacists among them), four counsellors and 15 administrative assistants. All of them serve on a weekly or monthly basis. Its pro bono lawyers attend to the migrant workers as and when needed.

Making Impact at Multiple Levels

HealthServe's clinics have served over 5,000 patients and assisted in 1,706 injury and non-injury cases since it started in 2007. In 2015, they handled 426 cases, provided 4,618 consultations, served 1,655 new patients, organised six health talks reaching over 500 workers, conducted six health screening for 860 workers, gave out 497 MRT top-ups, provided 13,527 meals, used its emergency fund to help 52 workers, accommodated 35 workers in its emergency shelter and counselled 21 workers.

Since it began in 2011, the Geylang Food Project has given out over 75,000 free meals in total.

Over the years, HealthServe has organised hundreds of events and outings with its partners to bring migrant workers and Singaporeans together.

It also serves other beneficiaries indirectly. For example, some of its direct beneficiaries volunteered for community service at Green Avenue, an elderly home located next to HealthServe, and at Willing Hearts, a charity providing daily meals to the underprivileged. They also volunteered at its clinics, helping to register patients and checking their blood pressure.

Most of HealthServe's effort is focused on meeting the immediate needs of migrant workers, such as healthcare, shelter, food and casework support.

It recognises that its long-term impact depends on a shift in public opinion about migrant workers, change in the laws to better protect workers or more enforcement of existing laws. It is therefore working on raising public awareness of migrant workers' situations, and fostering people's understanding of their struggles and aspirations as fellow human beings. It is partnering educational institutions to publish research findings to inform and hopefully influence government policy-making, and to inspire companies to innovate and care for migrant workers.

HealthServe measures its impact holistically. It views an increase in the number of beneficiaries helped as not necessarily a positive sign, as it eventually wants to see fewer migrant workers being exploited and needing help, not more. However, it realises that it is helping only a small fraction of the number of workers who experience injustice daily, and thus wants to inform as many of them as possible of their rights and the resources available to them.

It also assesses its impact by the number of volunteers it engages, the number of student groups/schools exposed to the migrant worker community, and the number of community groups that sponsor events or activities for them.

Some of the past beneficiaries became volunteers at HealthServe. One of them was Wang Si Liang from China. He shared that he had received much assistance from HealthServe when he needed help and wanted to help other workers get the same support as a volunteer. Si Liang revealed that he was also influenced by his grandfather's values and generosity, and had volunteered to help others when he was in school back home.

HealthServe hopes to multiply its impact by educating and encouraging student and community groups to go out and engage with migrant workers, to better understand their situations and raise awareness of their needs among the general public.



Migrant worker-volunteer Akbar (right) with other workers at a health screening in a dormitory. (Photo: HealthServe)

Reaching and Helping the Beneficiaries

HealthServe's target beneficiaries are low-wage foreign workers who were injured at work or are seeking help with salary and other employment-related problems. It is also reaching migrant workers through its partnership with other non-profit organisations that are helping them, such as Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics (HOME), Transient Workers Count Too and Migrant Workers' Centre.

Why and When It Started

HealthServe was co-founded by Dr Goh Wei Leong and Tang Shin Yong in 2006 to achieve the following objectives:

- Serve disadvantaged migrant workers in Singapore through healthcare, counselling, casework support and social assistance;
- Advocate for and raise awareness of the needs of migrant workers; and
- Bridge communities through meaningful partnerships and provide a platform for effective volunteerism.

This was soon after Dr Goh had thought of the idea of starting a clinic for migrant workers, after noticing the increasing number of migrant workers in Singapore while lamenting about the issues that needed to be tackled in the world. The two co-founders started HealthServe without a formal plan. They chose its present location in the compound of Highpoint Community Services in Geylang as the area had a high concentration of migrant workers.

The first medical clinic for migrant workers opened in Geylang in 2007. However, as the area had diverse demographics, the clinic also served other people in need. Over time and given HealthServe's limited resources, both co-founders realised that they had to focus on the most vulnerable with least access to medical care and who needed help most. Today, the clinic refers those who are not migrant workers to the polyclinics where patients receive government subsidies.

The second clinic opened in Jurong in 2010 and the third in Mandai in 2015, when it started its weekly dental clinic in Geylang. In 2012, it launched its specialist clinics to provide orthopaedic and dermatology consultation.



Volunteer doctor tending to a patient at HealthServe's Jurong clinic. (Photo: HealthServe)

Aligning with Giver's Values and Purpose

HealthServe's charity model is based on its core values of compassion, courage and community, which it shares with its pool of volunteers as part of their orientation. It seeks to boldly advocate the bridging of socio-economic gaps and the access to legal and medical services for better interaction and outcomes.

The VWO believes in an inclusive community that is built on partnership, where everyone can give and receive regardless of race, language, religion, gender or social class.

Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

Back in 2006, most members of the public were very apathetic towards and oblivious to the plight of migrant workers, and were completely removed from their struggles. When HealthServe started, telling people of migrant workers' needs and getting them to support its cause was a big struggle for the co-founders. However, Dr Goh and Mr Tang persevered in overcoming this challenge by building relationships with potential partners over dinners and drinks.

Another major problem in the beginning was funding. Initially, HealthServe was co-funded by Dr Goh's friends. After establishing relationships with foundations, growing its Board of Directors and gaining charity status, HealthServe was able to secure regular funding for its ongoing operations.

Today, while more people and more migrant workers are aware of HealthServe's work, there are still not enough people coming forward to support its cause. According to Dr Goh, its resources and services are always stretched. With an estimated 300,000 migrant workers in Singapore, even if only a small percentage of them face injustice, their number is still large. To cope with the demand, HealthServe has been trying to expand its services each year.

Prioritising between what are urgent and what are important is one of HealthServe's biggest challenges due to the diversity of its stakeholders. To arrive at a "collective wisdom", there is open sharing so that everyone has a chance to let the others know what his or her priority is and they can work things out as a team.

Working with Volunteers, Charities and Other Stakeholders as Partners

HealthServe engages potential volunteers, schools and institutions, and provides an open learning platform for those who are compassionate to "help the last, the lost and the least".

Its staff are in regular contact with its volunteers to support them, integrate them into the various programmes and receive their feedback. Appreciation events are organised for volunteers annually, such as the film screening at *SCAPE in 2015.

HealthServe partners with the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine to engage and educate future doctors on the circumstances of migrant workers, and to let them understand and experience its work through a week-long programme conducted five times a year. In addition, student leaders from NUS College of Alice and Peter Tan partner with HealthServe annually at the college's Community Engagement Festival to enable new students to know and interact with migrant workers. In 2015, it gathered junior college students, foreign domestic workers, injured foreign workers and senior citizens from various homes and activity centres at its fun-filled workshops, where they interacted with each other while making Chinese dumplings together and participating in other group activities.

Through HealthServe's participation in the Healthcare Leadership College's Singapore Chief Residency Programme, outstanding young doctors gain a deeper understanding of the healthcare challenges among migrant workers and the local community. Such appreciation would help them to shape future healthcare developments and policies that will benefit these groups of people.

HealthServe also offers educational institutions and corporate organisations internships and opportunities for their staff to attend its volunteer orientation, as part of its efforts to enlarge its pool of volunteers to serve in different roles.

One of the pro bono lawyers is Ronald Wong, who started volunteering at HealthServe when he was in his third year at law school. A friend had introduced him to HealthServe and its cause resonated with him. At the time, he was searching for the meaning and practical expression of "justice", which was what the study of law was about. As a Christian, he realised that justice was about enabling the marginalised in the community. This would involve helping the disadvantaged, speaking up for them, serving them and empowering them. He felt privileged to be able to appear before the Singapore courts as an advocate and that it was natural for him to represent disadvantaged people in seeking justice through the legal process.

As a HealthServe volunteer, Ronald has the opportunity to meet with and learn from people from all walks of life. From them, he learned empathy and humility,

and to see every person as a fellow human being and to appreciate his or her life journey. From the migrant workers he had helped, he learned perseverance and diligence; from HealthServe staff he worked with, he learned passion; and from other volunteers he interacted with, he learned about quiet service. Ronald also has the opportunity to engage with the authorities on legal and policy issues. He felt that he had received “undeserved” gratitude from some of his beneficiaries.

HealthServe has partnered regulatory authorities, government agencies, schools and corporate organisations to initiate public health awareness campaigns and research projects. Its strategic partners include the Migrant Workers Centre, which refers those requiring medical assistance to HealthServe clinics. Injured workers having financial difficulty are given free meals.

Learning from the Giving Experience

Through HealthServe staff and volunteers’ interactions with migrant workers from South Asia and China, the relationships and trust forged between them have enabled them to explore and exchange their different cultures. The events organised each year for them to get together and celebrate community allow them to share their ideas and life experiences. In the process, Singaporeans have become more appreciative of the labour and sacrifice of migrant workers who are helping to build and maintain their country’s infrastructure.

In promoting volunteerism among givers, HealthServe learned that such giving could ultimately lead to philanthropy. It believes that those who give also receive. For example, its volunteers helping the migrant workers have gained valuable life skills, insights and education from the experience.

Innovating for Greater Impact

A number of its innovations have helped HealthServe to engender greater impact in its charity work.

In medical education, HealthServe provides hands-on experiential learning for third-year students from the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine through

the NUS Selective programme. It is the only non-governmental organisation (NGO) to offer holistic services – from clinic to research. Most other migrant NGOs offer just one or two services.

In terms of service delivery, HealthServe engages some of its beneficiaries to serve as volunteers to help other migrant workers. They therefore not only receive but also give.

When it came to fund-raising, HealthServe came up with creative programmes like “Just a Handful of Coins” (JAHOC) and SamaSama. JAHOC was conceived to celebrate kindness, people of diverse backgrounds and a community of equals whose members would give out of what they had. In 2013, HealthServe got them to set aside their loose change daily, whatever the amount, and to come together at a carnival to share food and life stories. The money collected was more than enough to cover the costs of holding the event while meeting the statutory requirement of 70% of it going to its charitable cause. JAHOC exemplified the idea that small change could help to build a sense of community.

HealthServe has been working with a group on a project called SamaSama, which aims to create a new type of belief that enhances support systems to enable migrant workers to pursue their aspirations.

Gifting in kind takes various forms. For example, each Friday, the United World College of South East Asia sends fresh fruits that it collects from its students for HealthServe to distribute to the migrant workers whom it is helping, as well as to other NPOs in the neighbourhood.

Awards for Giving

While HealthServe was recognised for its work by the President’s Award for Voluntarism and/or Philanthropy (Non-profit) in 2015, its Chairman Dr Goh and long-serving volunteer Dr Tan Lai Yong were both given honourable mention by the annual Healthcare Humanity Awards committee that year for their dedicated services to the migrant community.

Sustaining Efforts over Time

HealthServe recognises and taps on the strengths and potential of its staff, volunteers, professionals and migrant workers, while learning from them and fostering an atmosphere of care and concern for one another. Its staff work with passion and desire to help migrant workers, and they are encouraged to show hospitality towards each other.

The VWO depends primarily on donations from individuals and organisations to fund its operations. Its board members, staff and key volunteers form a fund-raising sub-committee to organise fund-raising events throughout the year. They also help to get donations from their personal contacts and contribute financially to support its work. Its board members also engage foundations, corporations and individuals for their support.

In 2015, HealthServe benefited from the government's SG50 Care & Share matching grant that was set up to celebrate Singapore's 50th anniversary of nation-building. Excluding the grant, HealthServe's annual income averages between \$1.3 and \$1.5 million.

The VWO held its first fund-raising dinner in 2011, with entertainment provided by its staff, volunteers and migrant workers. The amount raised that night exceeded the target of \$300,000. The charity dinner in 2014 included an auction of items contributed by donors. That year, it spent \$63,000 in various fund-raising activities to raise a total of \$1.38 million. Smaller dinners were also organised over the years.

In addition, HealthServe raises funds through direct mail and email, e-newsletter, its website, regular update sessions for regular donors, engagement of institutions for special grants, educational talks and other activities.

It has been receiving financial support from the Lee Foundation (since 2010), Binjai Tree (since 2011), SymAsia Foundation (since 2011), Far East Organisation (since 2013), The Silent Foundation (since 2013) and Community Foundation of Singapore (since 2014).

Funds sometimes come from the beneficiaries. For example, a worker from China who was cared for by HealthServe donated half of the insurance claim he received for it to help other injured migrant workers.

Volunteers represent HealthServe's main human resource. Each month, it receives enquiries from more than 20 potential volunteers who wish to serve. Those with commitment are selected after participating in its orientation programme. New volunteers are trained by its staff or senior volunteers as part of its volunteer development.

HealthServe aims to serve more migrant workers by increasing the numbers of clinics, donors and institutional supporters, medical services (e.g., dental treatment), outreach activities (such as health screening), and educational events and projects (including research).

For 2016 and beyond, the VWO aims to:

- Expand and extend its medical networks and centres in some dormitories to better serve the low-wage, vulnerable, marginalised and injured workers;
- Increase outreach to provide social assistance and counselling to those who were exploited and abandoned by their employers or agents; and
- Develop strategic funding projects or instruments that will achieve long-term sustainability and widen its pool of individual and institutional donors.

In the next two to three years, HealthServe plans to:

- Widen and expand its health-related services;
- Improve organisational efficiency through an upgraded management system, strategic programmes and specialised job assignments;
- Expand its pool of volunteers who are Singaporeans, expatriates and migrant workers; and
- Engage in research and advocacy on migrant-related issues to help improve policies, systems and laws where needed.

Beyond the next three years, the VWO hopes to:

- Set-up educational activity centres to train and equip migrant workers with the appropriate emotional, mental and intellectual capacities to do their jobs effectively;
- Set up a few more medical and dental clinics in key locations across Singapore;
- Expand its team of legal volunteers to provide more extensive legal aid and pro bono representation; and
- Form a team of mental health volunteers comprising a psychiatrist, a psychologist and counsellors.

Anticipating and Meeting Future Needs

With Singapore's ageing population, HealthServe foresees a shrinking local workforce and a need for more migrant workers to fill the gaps. It expects the global economic slowdown and the tight labour market to result in an increase in the number of low-wage and unskilled jobs. Globalisation and wars will cause more people to migrate to countries like Singapore in search of a new home and jobs.

Given enough resources and capable manpower, HealthServe sees itself as being well-positioned to meet the needs of this growing group of workers.

Dr Goh envisions HealthServe contributing to a better society at three levels in future. At the base level, it will continue to serve migrant workers and improve their welfare as best as it possibly can. As its pool of skilled volunteers comprising doctors, lawyers and other professionals grow, some of them will help to shape the fabric of Singapore society in the years to come. As an established and recognised VWO, HealthServe will be able to influence government policies related to national identity, values and other important issues of the day.

Leader's Philosophy and Priorities

According to Dr Goh, HealthServe's service philosophy is to "inspire kind exchanges and interactions between recipients and givers, while meeting basic

human needs with caring attention and allowing for personal growth and fulfilment, reciprocity between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’, and respecting the best in everyone”. In his view, giving is about humility. “True generosity includes receiving,” he shared.

Migrant workers’ welfare will continue to matter most for HealthServe, as it views them as the “silent heroes” who build Singapore’s homes, malls, roads and other public infrastructure. It noted that one in five people in Singapore are foreigners, and one out of three foreign workers is in the construction industry.

The VWO believes in constantly re-evaluating its services, strategy and priorities to best serve the needs of migrant workers that could change over time. It is doing more research into why some workers are facing challenges at work.

Advice for Givers

For volunteers who are about to embark on their giving journey, HealthServe’s Executive Director Colin Chia suggests that they start by taking small steps with a ‘listening’ heart and willing hands. “It’s not about how much one can do for the beneficiaries but about how much one can learn from them,” he explained. “Volunteering is a journey of a thousand miles that begins with one step forward.”

For those already volunteering, he advises them to stay the course by taking full responsibility and exercising the power of love in every task assigned. “No task is too small for anyone. Everyone can do something for someone. Hence, be committed to finish the task given, no matter how small or difficult,” he encouraged. He believes that if one does the little that is entrusted wholeheartedly, much could be entrusted later.

For Colin, the process of service is more important than its outcome. He explained: “We are not simply transferring money from the ‘haves’ to the ‘have-nots’, but rather we are transforming the lives of both.”

“ *It’s not about how much one can do for the beneficiaries but about how much one can learn from them. Volunteering is a journey of a thousand miles that begins with one step forward.* ”

- **Colin Chia**

Executive Director
HealthServe

Impact Numbers that Matter



- Total no. of migrant workers HealthServe helped since 2007 : >5,000
- Total no. of cases HealthServe handled since 2007 : 1,706

A quick snapshot of the 2015 numbers :

- No. of cases HealthServe attended to : 426
- No. of medical consultations : 4,618
- No. of new patients served : 1,655
- No. of health talks held : 6
 - No. of migrant workers who attended : 500
- No. of health screenings conducted : 6
 - No. of migrant workers who attended : 860
- No. of MRT top-ups given out to migrant workers : 497
- No. of free meals given to migrant workers : 13,527
- No. of migrant workers helped by HealthServe’s emergency fund : 52
- No. of migrant workers who stayed at HealthServe’s emergency shelter : 35
- No. of migrant workers counselled : 21
- No. of HealthServe volunteers : 270

GIVING TWO FISH AND FIVE LOAVES TO HELP NEEDY ELDERLY

“ *We want to offer hope and make
a positive difference to the lives of
elderly persons who need help.* ”

- Woon Wee Yim

Chairman

St John's Home for Elderly Persons

The St John's Home for Elderly Persons received the President's Award for Philanthropy (Non-profit) in 2014. The award recognised the sheltered home for helping needy elderly persons and for its best practices in managing donors (including fund-raising) among non-profit organisations. The Home believes in providing the needy elderly with a place where ageing is celebrated with love and care.

Committed to a Good Cause

St John's Home for Elderly Persons (the Home) is driven by its mission to offer shelter and care for the physical and spiritual needs of ambulant elderly persons aged 60 or older who are homeless or have no children or relatives with adequate resources to look after them. The Home is open to all needy and/or homeless elderly persons regardless of race or religion.

Giving through Philanthropy

The long-term residential home provides accommodation, meals, laundry service, basic medical care, physiotherapy programme, counselling and social/recreational activities for elderly persons who are able to carry on with the activities of daily living (ADL) on their own.

Home for the residents is a cluster of 15 single-storey dormitories sited on a sprawling compound with many tall shady trees, fruit trees and hanging plants. It can accommodate a total of 102 persons and currently has 92 residents, 60% of whom are male. The oldest is 103 years old. It has been operating at near-full capacity for some years, although the actual number of residents varies according to the number of admissions and discharges at any time. The admission figures ranged from 20 in 2015 to 23 in 2013, and there were 28 discharges in 2015 and 19 in 2013.

Residents on public assistance scheme make up about 35% of the total number. They are accompanied by the Home's staff when they go for their medical appointments. Their taking of medicine and medical appointments are monitored by the staff. Relatives and other benefactors pay a subsidised monthly fee for the other residents.

The physiotherapy programme developed for the well-being of residents is being reviewed regularly. It includes individual and mass exercises, and recreational/cognitive therapy and bed exercises six days a week. Each resident's Individual Care Plan (ICP) is reviewed every six months. Every week, a professional physiotherapist assesses the residents, plans suitable exercises, monitors their progress and guides the Home's two full-time physiotherapy aides in implementing the ICPs.

Part-time professional counsellors from Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing are engaged to conduct weekly individual and group counselling sessions for residents on communal living. Group counselling involves the Life Review Group and the Emotional Management Group. Since 2013, an assistant counsellor is on half-day duty to provide counselling and conflict-resolution five times a week.

The Home's staff and volunteers organise weekly activities to engage the residents socially, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Karaoke, sing-along and games sessions are held every Tuesday afternoon, with Qigong exercise class on each Monday morning. Two hair salons provide residents with free haircut each month.

Worship services are held in the chapel on Sunday morning (in English) and afternoon (in Mandarin/dialect). In addition, they attend morning fellowship services on Wednesday (English) and Thursday (Chinese). A hymn-and-song session is organised for them on Tuesday morning.



Group of seated residents doing exercises. (Photo: St John's Home for Elderly Persons)



School children playing card game with residents. (Photo: St John's Home for Elderly Persons)

Students visit the Home regularly to play board games such as bingo, chess and Chinese chess, as well as iPad games, with the residents. Many organisations and volunteers organise various ad hoc events to cheer them up. They made 182 ad hoc visits and took residents out on 30 occasions in 2015, compared with 121 visits and 27 outings in 2014.

Some residents give back to the Home by assisting with simple chores like placing utensils on the tables in the dining hall, clearing leaves in the garden and painting car-park lots or walls. One of them, a former jazz guitarist, teaches other residents how to play the guitar and helps to write songs.

Organised for Giving

The Home has been blessed with caregiving staff who are dedicated, caring and cheerful, and whose positive attitude creates a relaxed and conducive place where its elderly residents feel cared for and comfortable. The charity is led by a Management Committee comprising volunteers and is managed by its General Manager. There are 23 full-time staff, most of whom are direct caregivers, including healthcare attendants, nursing aides and physiotherapy aides. A part-time assistant counsellor works five half-days a week while a part-time driver is on duty on six half-days.

All its Management Committee members, administrative and operational staff are involved in the fund-raising activities held at the Home. The Resource

Development Sub-Committee, supported by the Community Partnership/Fund-raising Manager, oversees the Home's fund-raising activities.

The Charity Management System (CHARMS), which was implemented in 2013, has a database of all the Home's donors who are profiled and listed in different groups. They are being updated regularly on the Home's activities and progress through its newsletter, website, Facebook page and other online channels.

An integrated marketing solution, HubSpot, was launched in 2013 for inbound marketing, search engine optimisation, website content development and updating, email marketing, e-newsletter, blog post, social media integration and event marketing. The HubSpot system is used to update the Home's website quickly and conveniently, anytime and anywhere.

Making Impact at Multiple Levels

The Home plays an important role as a partner in the government's 'many helping hands' approach in addressing social issues. It meets the needs of elderly persons who are not able to continue to live independently in the community. Its residents' families benefit as they are relieved of the burden of caring for them.

Since 1958, the Home has served the needs of about 1,200 elderly residents. Their average length of stay is four years. Seven residents have been staying at the Home for 10 or more years, with one of them spending 17 years there.

The Home measures the improvement in the quality of its residents' lives by their attendance at social activities, the realisation of physiotherapy goals, and the change in their outlook after counselling. The counselling sessions have also helped them to cope better with communal living and manage their anxiety. In addition, spiritual worship and fellowship give them hope and a better outlook in life.

When the Home moves to its new building in several years' time, it will also provide care services to the elderly living in the surrounding areas. The Home sees itself becoming an integrated service centre that caters to the needs of the elderly in the community in future, possibly in partnership with complementary service providers.

Reaching and Helping the Beneficiaries

There are many applications by elderly persons aged 60 or older to stay at the Home, which gives preference to applicants who are Public Assistance recipients for admission, as it considers them to be the most needy. Most of the applicants were referred by hospitals, the Ministry of Social and Family Development and the Agency for Integrated Care. About 46% of those admitted were too old to care for themselves or had caregivers who became too old (or passed away) to care for them. One fifth of them had experienced family conflict, while 32% had family members who were unable to give them the necessary attention and care (due to full-time work or other family commitments).

There were those who faced financial problems and commercially-run homes were out of their reach. For residents who have family members but are unable to pay the monthly upkeep fee, the Home's Management Committee will look at the family's income, circumstances and financial ability when it considers an applicant's eligibility for a fee reduction on a case-by-case basis.

Why and When It Started

In 1956, a group of Christians led by Rev Canon Yip Chor Seng decided to build a sheltered home for poor and homeless elderly persons. It initially comprised five single-storey cottages, as the architect felt that old people would be happier staying in such accommodation. The following year, the Shaw Brothers and two other philanthropists Mr Aw Boon Haw and Mr Lee Kong Chian each donated \$14,700 to the Home.

In 1958, the home was named St John's Home for the Aged and was officially opened by then Singapore's Chief Minister Lim Yew Hock. The Church Women's Association of St Andrew's Cathedral adopted three of its residents and took care of their monthly upkeep. In 1961, the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in Singapore assisted in running the Home. A new dormitory, which was donated by philanthropist Mr Tan Chin Tuan of OCBC, was officially opened in 1969. More dormitories were added in 1988, when the present chapel was built.

The Home was renamed to its present name St John's Home for Elderly Persons in the year 2000.



An assuring hand and a warm smile to comfort a resident. (Photo: St John's Home for Elderly Persons)

Aligning with Giver's Values and Purpose

The Home believes that its work of caring for needy elderly persons, bringing them relief and making a difference in their lives is a worthy one. It seeks to enable its elderly residents to live their golden years in comfort and with dignity.

Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

With the current land lease expiring in the near future, the Home needs to move all its residents and facilities to a new five-storey building with capacity for 150 residents. This will be built on a much smaller plot of land at its present site and will need \$12 million for its construction. In the next few years, the Home has to raise \$2 million to \$3 million a year in additional funds for its building redevelopment project before construction can start.

To minimise part of the building costs, the Home worked with the Singapore Institute of Architects to organise a design competition to pick the best design for its new building.

As a small charity, the Home has only one fund-raising staff who also handles community partnership, social media marketing, corporate communications (including the publication of newsletters) and volunteer management. Thus, it is depending on the generosity of individuals and organisations to help raise funds for its operations.

Working with Volunteers and Other Stakeholders as Partners

Over the years, many of the residents staying in nearby Potong Pasir have come to accept the Home as part of their community. The Sennett Estate Neighbourhood Committee has given it very strong support and organised various activities for its residents. These included a mural-painting project in 2013, when adult volunteers from Sennett Estate, students from Cedar Girls' Secondary School and some of the Home's elderly residents came together to paint the walls of its buildings. Besides refreshing the Home, the project also gave the residents a sense of achievement when the painting was completed.

Other interest groups (IGs) in Sennett Estate conduct various activities for the Home's residents each week. For example, there is a Qigong session on Monday morning, while the Gardening IG cultivates, waters and fertilises the fruit trees in the 'mini plantation'. From time to time, the Eco Art IG would teach the residents to make handicraft items using recycled materials such as plastic egg cartons.

The Home invites corporate volunteers to organise a two-hour programme for its residents, as it believes that such direct interaction with the elderly will foster an affinity for the Home among the volunteers. It will also help them understand what the Home does while benefiting the residents. First-time volunteers are given a short group tour of the Home and briefed on its activities and challenges.



Group of residents in handicraft-making session. (Photo: St John's Home for Elderly Persons)

From time to time, the Home meets with medical social workers from the various hospitals to update them on its situation, especially on the admission of needy elderly persons.

The Home participated in a pilot Volunteer Management Consultancy (VMC) project organised by the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre in 2014. The project provided valuable insights into the Home's volunteering situation and helped it to gather feedback from existing volunteers on areas for improvement. With its limited resources, the Home has implemented some of the recommendations. For example, existing volunteers gave feedback that they would like to be kept up-to-date about the Home, especially its Building Redevelopment Project. The Home therefore initiated a Volunteers' Lunch for its existing volunteer leaders and its management to discuss its current developments and future plans.

When potential volunteers approach the Home to offer their service, they are asked which areas they wish to help in and what their expertise or hobbies are. The Home will try to match them to what are needed. For example, a young man wanted to volunteer on Saturday mornings and asked what help the Home needed. He suggested gardening but did not have any experience in this area. When he visited the Home, its staff found out that he played Chinese chess and introduced him to a resident who loved playing the game. The elderly man now looks forward to each Saturday morning, when he can 'duel' with his Chinese chess 'kaki'.



Elderly resident playing Chinese chess with a volunteer. (Photo: St John's Home for Elderly Persons)

It was estimated that there were more than 3,000 casual volunteers in 2015. They made 182 ad hoc visits to the Home, with about 20 of them turning up on average during each visit. They organised 30 outings for its residents that year.

The Home participated in Singapore Discovery Centre's Hope Heart Home exhibition from October 2013 to January 2014. About 25,000 visitors, who were mainly students and members of the public, were estimated to have attended the event, where a video featuring the Home and volunteers from Sennett Estate was shown.

E-platforms such as Giving.sg and Simply Giving enable individuals and organisations to donate online to the Home.

Innovating for Greater Impact

Before hiring a fund-raising manager in 2013, the Home was writing to its existing donors while exploring other fund-raising activities. That year, it appointed former national footballer Lim Tong Hai as its campaign ambassador for its GivingTuesdaySG programme. He readily agreed when the Home approached him, as he believed that everyone should do his part to help the less fortunate. Tong Hai visited the Home to get to know its charitable work and to have a photo taken for use on its online donation page, which was publicised both online and in the Home. The campaign helped to raise nearly \$8,000.

In 2015, the Home worked with four schools to encourage their students to give part of their 'ang pow' money to the needy through the Share Your CNY Ang Pow campaign. This managed to collect over \$13,000.

To minimise wastage of items given by donors, the Home maintains an up-to-date list of items that it needs to replenish on its website, after noting the current inventory levels of all existing items. It also advises donors to give food items with an expiry date that's at least six months from the date of purchase. Its regular donors in kind have been referring to the website list and buying items accordingly. This arrangement helps the Home to manage its inventory better and also ensures that donors' money is being spent on items that are needed by the Home.

Outstanding Achievements

Besides receiving the President's Award for Philanthropy (Non-profit) in 2014, the Home was also recognised with the Community in Bloom Award (Silver) for its two gardens that year. This award was meaningful as the gardens were cared for by community volunteers from the Sennett Estate Neighbourhood Committee.

Sustaining Efforts over Time

The Home is more than just a sheltered home for needy elderly persons. It celebrates ageing and believes that the elderly deserve to live their golden years in comfort and with dignity, regardless of their social or economic situation. It wants to change the thinking among the elderly that they are 'over-the-hill' and there is not much to look forward to. It welcomes visitors and volunteers to visit its residents and to bring them out, and encourages the residents to participate in community activities.

The Home depends on regular donors (who give in cash and in kind) and volunteers (who contribute their time and energy) to continue providing a conducive, clean and safe place for its residents. Cash donors are individuals and business organisations. For example, Mt Elizabeth Hospital organised its own fund-raising activities in 2013 and donated the proceeds to the Home. Their donations help it to keep its monthly fee for residents at a low \$900 or lower for severe cases.

The Home was adopted by two companies – one making regular quarterly donations and sending staff to visit/engage residents, and the other organising fund-raising golf events and taking residents out in 2014 and 2015. Another organisation adopted it in 2015 and donated part of its Christmas sales proceeds to the Home.

In 2014, the Home became the adopted charity of Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) School of Life Sciences and Chemical Technology, Jurong International (now Surbana Jurong) and Mt Sapola's Christmas Coffrets campaign. The following year, a group of about 800 NP's life sciences and chemical technology students helped to raise funds for the Home by asking strangers to smile for a photo. Each

photo raised \$1. The total amount raised was \$40,300, with most of it donated by the polytechnic's industry partners. NP also gave the Home part of the \$150,000 that it received from the Ministry of Education under SG50 Giving.

The General Insurance Association of Singapore, Life Insurance Association and Singapore Reinsurers' Association jointly organised a charity drive to raise \$500,000 for the Home and six other charities in 2015. The event ended with the SG50 Insurance Golf-Swing for Charity.

In 2014, 2015 and 2016, the Home was a beneficiary of the SICC May Day Charity, which started in 1972. The 45th charity event in 2016 raised over \$19 million for the underprivileged in the community.

Individuals like Mr Lim Kok Ching also helped to raise funds for the Home. In 2013, he appealed to his peers to donate to the Home for every mile that he ran in the StanChart Marathon and raised a few hundred dollars.

The Home also organises its own fund-raising activities, which involve all its Management Committee members and staff. In 2013, it raised nearly \$850,000 after spending only \$1,331 on fund-raising, with \$338,966 going to its building fund. The SG Gives portal (now integrated with Giving.sg) and the Home's revamped website, social media efforts (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube) and in-house marketing system helped to increase online donations four-fold that year to \$82,181, compared with 2012. In 2014, it held its first fund-raising gala dinner and raised close to \$200,000, which contributed to the \$11 million in donations received that year.

Donations from relatives of its residents also help to sustain the Home. Two of their relatives donate to the Home regularly. Once every few months, the niece of a resident sponsors afternoon tea for all the residents. When a resident was

discharged in 2015, her family donated the one-month deposit (paid when she was admitted) to the Home. In 2013, a resident's daughter made a personal donation to the Home on Giving Tuesday (International Day of Giving), in appreciation of the care her mother had received during her stay at the Home over the past two years.

The residents themselves also gave to the Home. Some had insisted on giving the 'ang pows' they received from visitors during the Lunar New Year to it.

Donors also contribute daily necessities, such as rice, cooking oil, bread, coffee and tea (in sachets), gloves and surgical masks. In 2013, a well-wisher donated a large number of Toscano wallets for the Home to sell and raise more than \$8,000.

In 2015, the government doubled the Care & Share dollar-for-dollar matching grant for approved charities and extended it to March 2016. As the Home had received more than \$2 million in donations in 2014 and 2015, it was eligible for the grant's maximum claim limit.

In 2014, it was expecting about 40% of its operating expenditure to be covered by donations through charity adoption by companies, online donations and individual giving over the next two years. It plans to approach large corporations and foundations to help fund its new building development when its architectural design is ready in 2016.

The Home has a comprehensive donor-engagement strategy:

- Prospecting – tapping Management Committee members' corporate contacts, boosting online presence to attract business organisations seeking CSR partners, and using in-house marketing system to reach individual donors;
- Relationship building – cultivating relationships with companies organising their CSR activities at the Home, as potential long-term donors;
- Stewardship – informing donors of the Management Committee's stewardship of funds raised; and

- Communications – keeping donors updated on the Home’s fund-raising activities through its quarterly newsletter, website and Facebook page, while its Management Committee chairman and members communicate with key donors regularly.

Staff of Sheng Siong spent three weeks in 2015 visiting the Home and a number of other voluntary welfare organisations, and interacting with their beneficiaries. That year, the Hong Leong Foundation took elderly residents of the Home and St Andrew’s Cathedral Home for the Aged on a tour of the city and Marina Bay on an amphibious craft, as part of its annual charity event.

The Home depends on volunteers to help in organising social-recreational activities for its residents, gardening, cleaning and general maintenance and other services, so that its caregivers can attend to the residents’ daily needs. For example, volunteers from the Echo of Praise group have been serving as their befrienders for the past 12 years. It is not just the weekly session of praise and worship that the residents look forward to, but also the friendly and familiar faces of volunteers who spend time to talk and listen to them.

An area of focus for the Home now is the development of its capabilities for the future, before its building redevelopment project starts in a few years’ time.

Leader’s Philosophy and Priorities

For Woon Wee Yim, Chairman of the Home’s Management Committee, his giving philosophy is guided by the Christian principle of helping needy people through charitable deeds. “This may be done by offering financial support to care for their physical needs, or offering them emotional and spiritual support,” he shared. “At St John’s Home, our belief is to provide the same care and support to needy elderly persons, regardless of their faiths.”

According to Wee Yim, the Home is guided by its mission and doing what are important. Its first and topmost priority is attending to the well-being of its

residents, by taking care of their daily needs. He explained: “Providing a comfortable and safe place for them to stay is a basic and important goal. As a voluntary welfare organisation with an Institution of Public Character status, it is important for us to comply with its requirements on the stewardship of resources.” He considers the support of the Home’s stakeholders as crucial for providing much of its capability for fulfilling its mission. He also places importance on the strategic viability of the Home by looking forward and planning for the long term. This includes fund-raising and management’s provisions for any unexpected needs in future.

Wee Yim recognises that growing old poses a real challenge, particularly for those who are homeless, have no families or whose families are unable to care for them. “The Home wants to offer hope and make a positive difference to the lives of elderly persons who need help,” he shared.

Advice for Potential Givers

For those who are thinking of donating to or volunteering at the Home, its General Manager Goh Beng Hoe would like to invite them to visit the Home and to get to know its residents. He urged:

“ *Come and see for yourself how the little things that you do can impact them.* ”

To stay the course in giving, he suggested that givers read the Home’s newsletter and support its fund-raising activities like the annual gala dinner. He also asked them to give feedback to the Home and to encourage its staff in their charitable work.

Impact Numbers that Matter



- No. of residents currently staying at the Home : 92
- Total no. of residents the Home has served to date : 1,200
- No. of casual volunteers in 2015 : 3,000

MAKING A LASTING IMPACT IN SINGAPORE AND OTHER ASIAN COMMUNITIES

“ *Donations aside, we believe volunteering makes a difference not just to the beneficiaries, but to the volunteers as well. Volunteering gives our staff a certain perspective of their role in society beyond being a professional.* ”

- Lim Ming Yan
President & Group CEO
CapitaLand

CapitaLand received the President's Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Corporate) in 2015. The Singapore-based multinational corporation believes in making a positive and lasting impact in the communities where it operates, over and above its real estate business. This goal is being realised through its philanthropic arm CapitaLand Hope Foundation, whose corporate giving reflects the scope and scale of CapitaLand's business operations across Asia.

Committed to a Good Cause

It is said that children are our future. For this reason, CapitaLand has made them its priority in its corporate giving initiatives. It focuses on the social development and growth of underprivileged children in Singapore and other countries where it operates by improving their healthcare, education and shelter, with the aim of relieving them of hardship and enabling them to break out of the poverty cycle eventually.

To advance its commitment to helping underprivileged children, CapitaLand set up CapitaLand Hope Foundation (CHF) as its philanthropic arm in 2005 and established it as a corporate foundation that's governed by the Singapore Charities Act. CHF is being chaired by Mr S.R. Nathan, Singapore's former President, with CapitaLand's top management sitting on its board, including its President & Group CEO Lim Ming Yan. Each year, the company sets aside up to 0.5% of its net profit to CHF. In 2015, CHF donated more than \$2.4 million to benefit underprivileged children.

Giving through Voluntary Work and Philanthropy

CapitaLand recognises that its long-term business success is closely intertwined with the well-being of the communities where it operates and their bonds with its properties. It strives to build a sustainable future for the next generation through community development involving corporate philanthropy and employee volunteerism. The company believes that helping underprivileged children at an earlier stage of their lives will have a multiplier effect on their families and the community, enabling social mobility in the future.

Beyond making monetary donations, CapitaLand contributes through programmes and projects that have a positive impact on the community and its businesses. It

encourages its employees to volunteer in such activities to inculcate a stronger sense of social responsibility as part of its corporate culture. It believes that such community work not only helps the beneficiaries of the causes that they are involved with, but also builds character and reinforces CapitaLand's core values of respect and community service among them.

CapitaLand was among the first companies in Singapore to formalise a three-day Volunteer Service Leave (VSL) for its employees and to expand its leave policy to include Volunteer No Pay Leave (of up to six consecutive weeks) and Volunteer Part-Time Leave (of up to six months). It recognises a staff volunteer's social contributions by donating \$500 through CHF to a registered Singapore children's charity of his/her choice when he/she has taken all three days of VSL within the year. They may also participate in other organisations' volunteering activities and include them in their performance appraisal.

The CapitaLand Volunteer Day (CVD) was launched in 2013 with its local staff, including senior managers, refurbishing the homes of 20 underprivileged families in Singapore. In 2014, 250 staff and senior management volunteers spent 2,000 man-hours to reach out to 150 underprivileged children in Singapore, refurbishing Melrose Home, Pertapis Children's Home and rental residential units of underprivileged families – cleaning, painting and improving the lighting, as well as providing desks, chairs, table lamps and fans for the children to have a more conducive study area. In October 2015, CapitaLand held its Singapore CVD in conjunction with the finale of its #100KHopeHours Challenge, a global volunteer event launched to encourage its staff, business partners and other stakeholders to pledge volunteers hours for charity work and to mark CHF's 10th anniversary. Participants had the opportunity to experience three different activities – learning sign language, walking blindfolded and deciphering messages in dyslexic font – and to better understand the difficulties faced by the hearing-impaired, visually-handicapped and dyslexic in the community.

The company organises international volunteer expeditions regularly, rallying staff from all over the world to take time off from work to help underprivileged children.

Its many philanthropic activities include supporting the President's Challenge (PC) through fund-raising events.

CapitaLand has been helping to raise funds for the PC, including:

- \$200,000 in 2014 when it matched dollar-for-dollar in donation to support the My Singapore 2014: 'Moments of Love' National Day Charity Fund Raising Concert;
- \$350,000 in 2012, when 10 corporate donors each bought a limited edition Because iCare philatelic frame featuring the giant pandas Kai Kai and Jia Jia, and CHF donated \$10 for every exclusive panda eco-bag sold at \$20 at 29 of its participating properties; and
- \$400,000 for eight children's charities in 2011, when CapitaLand launched three new properties and sold 10 sets of specially-minted blooms of two prized hybrid orchid species, matching the amount collected dollar-for-dollar.

CHF's donations to the PC included \$300,000 to mark the finale of CapitaLand's #100KHopeHours Challenge in 2015 and \$100,000 to PC beneficiaries in 2013.

The CapitaKids Programme provides long-term financial support to promising underprivileged children beyond their primary school education. It tracks their development and growth and ensures their access to education will not be compromised by their disadvantaged family backgrounds. To date, it has supported 13 CapitaKids, aged seven to 12 from single-parent families, in collaboration with Help Every Lone Parent Family Service Centre and Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centre, with CapitaLand staff volunteers mentoring them regularly to ensure that they are doing well. A hundred NorthLight School students from disadvantaged families benefited from the programme, which also provides work attachment opportunities in the company.

CHF launched the Kids' Food Fund with a series of food-related programmes in support of UN World Food Day on 16 October 2010, in partnership with Food from the Heart in Singapore, Plan International, World Vision International and Singapore Community Development Councils (CDCs). Its staff volunteers organised a cooking competition, health and hygiene classes to show the



Chairman of CapitaLand Hope Foundation S.R. Nathan (third from left) at the 2013 launch of CapitaLand's Kids' Food Fund. Looking on are (from fourth on the left): then Mayor of South West District Dr Amy Khor, CapitaLand's President & Group CEO Lim Ming Yan, People's Association's Chief Executive Director Ang Hak Seng, and Mayor of North West District Dr Teo Ho Pin. (Photo: CapitaLand)

importance of a nutritious and balanced diet to the young beneficiaries, among other activities. To date, CHF has given nearly \$2 million to the programme that has benefited over 35,000 underprivileged children.

Under the Kids' Food Fund, CHF donated:

- \$500,000 in 2015 to the five CDCs to provide one healthy meal a day to underprivileged children, with 50 CapitaLand staff taking VSL to bring some of them on a fun-filled food and nutrition trail at CapitaLand's Westgate shopping mall in Jurong;
- \$500,000 in 2013 to the five CDCs to provide 1,000 underprivileged children across Singapore with at least one healthy meal each school day;
- \$100,000 in 2012 to provide 100 underprivileged children in Singapore with a year's supply of basic food items through Food from the Heart;
- \$360,000 in 2011 to improve food security and nutrition for over 12,000 underprivileged children in Singapore and four other Asian countries; and
- \$525,000 in 2010 to provide nutritious food for over 11,000 underprivileged children in Singapore and three other Asian countries.

Under CapitaLand's My Schoolbag programme, CHF funds the purchase of schoolbags containing school and daily necessities for underprivileged children each year. Since its launch in 2009, it has given \$3 million to the programme, benefiting nearly 106,000 children in Singapore and five other Asian countries. In 2014, CapitaLand partnered the five CDCs to benefit 1,000 children from low-income families in Singapore, with each given a schoolbag and \$150 worth of CapitaVouchers to shop for school and daily necessities at a CapitaLand shopping mall in his or her CDC while being accompanied by one of the 500 staff and community volunteers. That year, CHF donated \$545,000 to benefit 18,000 children in Singapore and four other Asian countries. In 2013, 750 children from low-income families in Singapore identified by the five CDCs were accompanied by over 500 staff and community volunteers. CHF gave \$470,000 to help 21,000 children in Singapore and five other Asian countries that year.



My Schoolbag children beneficiaries receiving their schoolbags and daily necessities from CapitaLand's staff volunteers at Lot One Shoppers' Mall in November 2015. (Photo: CapitaLand)

My Schoolbag beneficiaries in the earlier years were:

- 1,000 children identified by the five CDCs in 2012, with 600 staff volunteers and students from Innova Junior College, ITE College Central, ITE College East and Millennia Institute accompanying them (\$500,000 donation benefited over 20,000 underprivileged children in Singapore and four other Asian countries);
- 1,000 children identified by the five CDCs in 2011, with 500 staff volunteers and students and CDC volunteers shopping with them (\$500,000 donated to help 19,000 children in Singapore and four other Asian countries);
- 1,000 children identified by the Chinese Development Assistance Council, Mendaki and Singapore Indian Development Association were each given CapitaVouchers worth \$110 to buy school and daily necessities, and another worth \$20 for other needs in 2010, with 300 staff volunteers accompanying them (\$320,000 donation benefited 11,000 children in Singapore and another Asian country); and
- 200 needy children were given CapitaVouchers to buy school and daily necessities with the help of staff volunteers in 2009, when CHF donated \$250,000 to start the programme.

Providing Educational Exposure for Kids (PEEK) is a fun-filled discovery trail of iconic CapitaLand properties and landmarks to give children a glimpse into the company's sustainable operations. Since its launch on Children's Day in 2007, CapitaLand staff volunteers have taken them on 19 PEEK journeys to learn about water conservation, green features, intelligent systems and sustainable operations in a building. In 2014, the children visited Melrose Home and Pertapis Children's Home, where they learned about the '3 Rs' (reduce, reuse and recycle), good personal hygiene and good dietary habits from staff volunteers.

CHF started S.E.N.D (Send E-cards and Donate) for Hope to spread the festive cheers of Christmas and Lunar New Year while conserving the environment and helping underprivileged children. It donates \$2 to a selected children's charity for every eco-friendly e-card sent by the public to a unique recipient. Over 230,000 greeting e-cards sent through S.E.N.D for Hope since 2009 have benefited the



At the #100KHopeHours finale held in conjunction with CapitaLand's Volunteer Day in October 2015, CapitaLand's President & Group CEO Lim Ming Yan (centre, front row) is pictured with the company's staff volunteers and community partners signing the word "love". (Photo: CapitaLand)

"KIDS 0-3" Programme, Canossaville Children's Home and Jamiyah Children's Home, among other charities helping children.

The #100KHopeHours global volunteer challenge launched by CHF in 2015 garnered over 200,000 pledged hours (more than double the target of 100,000 hours, for which CapitaLand pledged to donate \$10 for every hour clocked to help underprivileged children in Asia). To encourage people to participate in the challenge, CHF donated \$1.3 million, with \$300,000 going to President's Challenge charities.

As Presenting Sponsor and Conservation Donor of the 10-year joint Giant Panda Conservation and Education Programme between Singapore and China to promote giant panda conservation, CHF has been organising outreach events for underprivileged children to learn about biodiversity and wildlife conservation.

The CapitaLand Garden of Hope sponsored by CHF is a tropical fruit and vegetable garden in the Jamiyah Children's Home, which cares for and nurtures orphans and neglected children of single parents, drug detainees, abused and dysfunctional families, and children with special needs. In the garden, the children develop their

interest in nature and grow their own edible produce. CHF's donation has also helped to furnish the home's dormitories.

In Singapore, CapitaLand offers space, services and support in its 18 operational shopping malls and 12 integrated developments and commercial buildings for community and corporate social responsibility (CSR) events and activities.

Organised for Giving

CapitaLand provides pro bono administrative support to CHF through the company's various functional departments. Its CSR team spearheads the group's CSR initiatives, which include its philanthropic and volunteering activities, and oversees CHF's operations.

The company has a formal CSR framework that includes its action plans and target impact of its corporate-giving programmes and activities. This is integrated with its corporate culture and business decision-making. Its dedicated CSR team is based in its Singapore headquarters and key overseas offices, with a budget to support its CSR activities. The CSR action plan is four-pronged – alignment with business goals and stakeholders' interests, employee volunteerism, progress management and brand-building.

Its Volunteer Service Administrative System tracking employees' workday and non-workday volunteering activities is linked to the HR leave application and staff appraisal systems.

Making Impact at Multiple Levels

Since 2005, CHF has donated a total of \$25 million to support 140 charities' programmes for the education, healthcare and shelter of underprivileged children in Singapore and eight other Asian countries. It has donated more than \$1.9 million to the President's Challenge since 2008 to support 25 children's charities in Singapore.

In 2014, over 3,000 staff volunteers spent some 28,000 hours in more than 300 volunteering activities in Singapore and the region.

More than 35,000 children have benefited from CHF's Kids' Food Fund to date. Besides eating better, they also learned about food nutrition and balanced diet.

The PEEK programme has benefited 1,100 children through its 19 learning journeys.

Since 2009, the S.E.N.D (Send E-cards and Donate) for Hope programme has raised over \$460,000 for 12 children's charities.

More than 2.1 million people have visited the pandas at River Safari that were brought in from China under CapitaLand's 10-year Giant Panda Conservation Programme and learned about panda conservation.

CapitaLand aims to improve the academic results and health of its young beneficiaries. It wants its staff volunteers to feel proud and enjoy working in a company with a positive and vibrant corporate culture – 95% of them in a post-volunteering survey indicated that they felt this way.

Community projects are planned with meaningful targets and key performance indicators in mind. Besides measuring inputs such as donation amounts, CHF also looks at outputs and outcomes, including time spent by staff and the impact of donations and community activities.

Beyond Singapore, CapitaLand multiplies the impact of its giving in the communities of many other Asian countries where it operates. Its CSR goes beyond volunteerism and philanthropy, and includes other aspects such as employee welfare, ethical business practices and environmental sustainability.

When and Why It Started

CHF was set up in 2005 to advance CapitaLand's commitment to promote social development of underprivileged children in the Asian communities in which it operates.

CapitaLand's 'Building People. Building Communities' credo guides its conduct of business and interaction with its stakeholders, and contributes to the well-being

of its employees and the communities. It also guides the company's corporate philanthropy and employee volunteerism.

As a Singapore-registered charity, CHF believes that each child has the potential to contribute significantly to future societies. It places importance on first investing in the fundamental needs of underprivileged children in education, healthcare and shelter. By relieving them of their hardship, CHF hopes that they can eventually break out of the poverty cycle.

Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

Before CHF was set up, the notion of a corporate foundation in the company was a relatively new idea. When the green light was given, the company was among the first businesses in Singapore to establish a foundation for doing good and to be given grantmaker status.

A dedicated team with the right set of skills was needed to run the foundation and to draw resources from various functional departments in the large regional company to support CHF's activities.

Staying relevant and continuing to meet the changing needs of CHF's target beneficiaries are among its current challenges. These are being tackled by working closely with its strategic partners to understand the needs of underprivileged children and to evaluate the impact of its philanthropic contributions and volunteering activities.

Working with Staff and Other Stakeholders as Partners

CapitaLand encourages its employees to participate in its corporate giving programmes through sharing sessions and email communications. It provides them with an overview of each programme, their respective roles and tips on how to manage the beneficiaries and possible situations. After each programme, the company conducts sharing sessions to gather feedback and insights from staff volunteers to see if it has benefited the community and intended beneficiaries, and

to consider how the programme can be improved. Photos of each volunteering activity are emailed to staff to update them on the achievements or outcomes.

CHF's website and CapitaLand's Facebook page update employees, other stakeholders and the public on CHF's key programmes, volunteering activities, volunteers' experiences and events. The Facebook page lets them share their experiences and comments with others.

After their volunteering activities, the company emails staff volunteers to thank them for their time and efforts, and to encourage them to continue giving.

CapitaLand collaborates with established and experienced organisations to co-create community programmes that have sustainable impact on the target beneficiaries.

Learning and Benefiting from the Giving Experience

CapitaLand's CSR team constantly seeks feedback from its employees, staff volunteers, management team and beneficiaries through survey forms, sharing sessions, meetings and emails, to ensure that its programmes and projects continue to be relevant.

Among other things, it learned from its experience that employee volunteerism increased staff's motivation at work. Its corporate giving has also enhanced its image as a socially-responsible real estate developer in the community.

Recognition for Giving

Besides receiving the President's Award for Volunteerism and/or Philanthropy (Corporate) in 2015, CapitaLand was also recognised for its outstanding CSR achievements with other awards, including:

- Community Spirit Excellence Award by the People's Association in 2015, 2014, 2013 and 2012, for CHF's "generous contributions and consistent efforts towards community building and helping the less privileged";
- Caring Corporate Award 2014 by South West Community Development Council;

- Corporate Gold Award by the Community Chest in 2012;
- Best Community Developer Award by Singapore Compact for CSR in 2012;
- Corporate Citizen Award for Philanthropy at the National Volunteerism and Philanthropy Awards 2009;
- Best Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility Award by the SEA Institutional Investor Corporate Awards in 2012 and 2013; and
- Best Corporate Social Responsibility Award in Singapore by Finance Asia 2013 Annual Poll.

Sustaining Efforts over Time

CapitaLand believes in building people and communities, and helping more underprivileged children to enhance their social mobility through its corporate philanthropy and employee volunteerism. It builds a corporate culture that is based not just on professional competencies but also good values, and it promotes volunteerism and inculcates a strong sense of social responsibility among its employees.

Its top management staff are involved in formulating its CSR framework, policies and programmes. They also take part in its various corporate-giving activities and interact with the staff volunteers and beneficiaries.

To sustain its giving, the company allocates up to 0.5% of its net profit to fund CHF each year.

CapitaLand recognises that the needs of underprivileged children change over time, and regularly reviews and fine-tunes its giving programmes and projects after receiving feedback from beneficiaries, employees, volunteers and community associations.

According to CHF's Executive Director and CapitaLand's Group Chief Corporate Officer Tan Seng Chai, it will continue to set and track meaningful targets and key performance indicators when planning future community development initiatives

that will meet the education, healthcare and shelter needs of underprivileged children. It will also work closely with partners to identify gaps and support programmes that best cater to their needs.

Leader's Philosophy and Priorities

Tan Seng Chai sees children as the pillars of tomorrow. He shared: “To build a sustainable future for the next generation, CapitaLand believes that helping underprivileged children in their basic needs will help them improve their social mobility and break out of the vicious poverty cycle. This will hopefully have a multiplier effect on their families and the communities.”

In the words of CapitaLand's President & Group CEO Lim Ming Yan: “For a company to be successful, we need to have good people who are not just professionally competent but also have good character. Donations aside, we believe volunteering makes a difference not just to the beneficiaries, but to the volunteers as well. Volunteering gives our staff a certain perspective of their role in society beyond being a professional.”

Advice for Potential Givers

For companies thinking of starting on their corporate philanthropy journey, Tan Seng Chai has this advice for them: “To truly inculcate a spirit of giving and volunteerism in an organisation, the leaders must walk the talk.”

This is being shown by CapitaLand's top management sitting on the CHF Board of Directors and its senior managers volunteering for its corporate giving activities.

“To build a sustainable future for the next generation, CapitaLand believes that helping underprivileged children in their basic needs will help them improve their social mobility and break out of the vicious poverty cycle.”

- Tan Seng Chai

Executive Director

CapitaLand Hope Foundation

Impact Numbers that Matter



In addition to the impact numbers of the various programmes and projects already mentioned, the following 2015 annual figures give an overview of CapitaLand's giving through volunteerism and philanthropy:

- No. of employee volunteers : About 1,600
- No. of volunteer man-hours : Over 17,000
- Total amount donated for philanthropic activities : \$2.4 million

MEASURING IMPACT OF PHILANTHROPY BY OUTCOMES AND NOT BY OUTPUTS

“ *We stay focused on the causes we support, and search out gaps where our giving can achieve impactful outcomes.* ”

- Theodore Teo
Senior Manager & Head
Corporate Social Responsibility
NTUC Income

NTUC Income received the President's Award for Philanthropy (Corporate) in 2014. Beyond philanthropy, the company is also contributing to the welfare of disadvantaged children and youth by co-creating and investing in various social programmes that are run by its various community partners.

Committed to a Good Cause

As a co-operative with a social mission, NTUC Income understands Singaporeans' needs well and is known to them as a safe and stable insurer. It shows its commitment to changing society for the better through its corporate policies, business practices and social investments. It is making insurance accessible, affordable and sustainable for all Singaporeans, whether they are uninsured, under-insured or uninsurable, as part of its founding purpose. For example, its OrangeAid programme is developed by a dedicated corporate social responsibility team.

The company's commitment to philanthropy can also be seen in its allocation of resources and annual budget to philanthropic programmes. It sets aside 1% of its operating profit for the OrangeAid Fund. It provides clear reporting guidelines for its community partners' outcomes, matches employees' donations to and inducts new staff into its Community Chest SHARE programme, and offers care-based insurance schemes for its customers. These schemes include SilverCare coverage against medical, recovery and home expenses for the elderly, SpecialCare accident and personal liability plans for children with autism and Down syndrome, and free Family Micro-Insurance Scheme for lower-income households with primary school-going children during times of crisis.

Giving through Philanthropy and Voluntary Work

In its corporate philanthropy, NTUC Income does not give to a general pool of funds for tax exemption. It also supports community partners' programmes and projects that do not qualify for tax exemption, such as the Assumption Pathway School (APS) ART Merit Award. It creates and ensures that its programmes and those it supports are in line with its overall strategy to resolve issues at the root and have a long-term positive impact on the community. Its philanthropic goals are distinct from its product marketing and image-building. This could be seen in

its investment in tackling early childhood learning issues like dyslexia screening, remediation and psychological testing. The company considers the potential impact before it agrees to fund any projects.

The company seeks to fill gaps not covered by government policies. For example, in the case of children with dyslexia, the Ministry of Education (MOE) screens them only in primary school, mainly those from Primary 3 onwards, when it is often too late. NTUC Income's screening of kindergarten children for dyslexia has helped to highlight those who are at risk and need remediation before they enter primary school.

OrangeAid is NTUC Income's main programme, which aims to give disadvantaged children and youth equal opportunities in life. It supports schemes that equip them with vocational skills or knowledge to improve their social mobility. The programme reaches out to the entire spectrum of disadvantaged children and youth, from upstream (pre-school age) to mid-stream (primary and secondary schools) and downstream (tertiary level). The Pre-school Bursary for children from needy families, launched in partnership with the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) in 2012, enables them to receive DAS' services to overcome their learning difficulties.

NTUC Income's Family Micro-Insurance Scheme is a free "no premium" plan that provides a safety net for low-income families with children attending primary schools. The scheme is automatically extended to families on MOE's financial assistance scheme and to children from low-income families attending NTUC My First Campus pre-schools. The company aims to support the most vulnerable families in crisis situations – in the case of death or total and permanent disability in the family. If the main applicant of an approved financial assistance scheme passes on or is totally and permanently disabled, it will pay out \$5,000 to help the family cope with the difficult period.

For post-primary school, OrangeAid supports all the four specialised schools – Assumption Pathway School, Crest Secondary School, Spectra Secondary

School and NorthLight School – with a character-building programme for all their students. These schools were set up for students who did not qualify for the Normal (Technical) stream or did not pass their Primary School Leaving Examination. During the programme, the students are required to overcome a challenge that gives them a sense of achievement, builds their self-esteem and strengthens their integrity, perseverance and resilience.

At the tertiary level, NTUC Income set up the Future Development Programme (FDP) in 2015. FDP supports tertiary students from the lowest-income households. By investing in these youth, it aims to enable them to help their families get out of the poverty cycle. Beyond helping to pay for their school fees and living expenses, FDP develops other important aspects of their lives, such as equipping them with financial literacy skills and providing them with personalised career guidance, internship opportunities and part-time jobs at NTUC Income and other NTUC social enterprises. It helps them to prepare for the future and to become ‘others-centred’.

The NTUC U-Care Voucher was introduced in 2009 to assist low-income workers and their families to buy school uniforms, books, food and other necessities. NTUC U-Care organises bulk purchases for voucher recipients to enjoy higher value.

NTUC Income is a founding donor of the Community Chest SHARE programme and its staff have been contributing to it since 1987. It pioneered insurance schemes for people with autism and special needs, and other social groups that other insurers do not usually cover, including sub-groups of people with disabilities. It even has a Group Living Policy for kidney donors. To commemorate Singapore’s 50th anniversary of nation-building, it introduced the SG50 Blue CHAS Card Medical Subsidy scheme in 2015.

As part of the company’s efforts to promote staff volunteerism, it grants them three-day paid volunteering leave when they volunteer to help OrangeAid beneficiaries.

Every year since 2010, between 15 and 30 staff volunteer in schools every Thursday between 11 am and 3 pm for 10 weeks from August to October to prepare students

for the APS Challenge. They act as buddies and mentors to students working on various challenges. These may test their skills in working as a team to cook for a large banquet at an elderly home, kayaking around a cluster of islands overseas or participating in an overseas community project to help the needy.

After NTUC Income became a founding corporate member of #GivingTuesdaySG, a team was formed to brainstorm ideas and terrarium-making-and-sale was chosen as a project to raise funds for SPD (formerly Society for the Physically Disabled). Department representatives learned how to make terrariums and they in turn taught their colleagues. More than 1,000 terrariums were pledged by the various departments. Internal auctions were held to raise \$20,000 for SPD.



NTUC Income's staff volunteers at counter selling terrariums to raise funds for SPD as a #GivingTuesdaySG project.
(Photo: NTUC Income)

Other projects included three to five-day volunteer challenges, like climbing a mountain, to raise funds for APS students.

NTUC Income's head of corporate social responsibility (CSR) Theodore Teo was a member of the Safe Cycling Task Force (SCTF) that worked with the Land Transport Authority (LTA) in putting up "Cyclist Ahead" signs on Singapore roads. Before SCTF started work to help make cycling safer in Singapore in 2007, it liaised with LTA, National Parks Board and Urban Redevelopment Authority. Signs were put up by LTA after many cyclists got together to mark out dangerous areas on maps and global positioning systems and SCTF submitted the information to LTA. This is an ongoing project funded by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, which is promoting cycling as a mass-participation sport. LTA estimated that it has put up \$30,000 worth of such signs on the roads to date. In view of the growing popularity of cycling and the use of personal mobility devices (PMD), SCTF is looking at how it can help to educate the public on the safe use of common pathways by cyclists and PMD users.

Theodore also serves with the International Volunteerism Association (IVA), which conducts training courses, workshops, forums and dialogues for organisations grooming leaders for their overseas community projects. Since IVA was formed in 2007, it has trained more than 600 expedition team leaders.

Organised for Giving

NTUC Income's CSR team comprises a senior manager, who "lives volunteerism" and has been heading it for the past five years, a senior executive and an executive who both have experience in community development. The team develops, monitors, evaluates and expands programmes that OrangeAid funds. It is guided by a committee comprising representatives from its Board of Directors and senior management.

Making Impact at Multiple Levels

Most of the students of three specialised schools – Assumption Primary School, Crest Secondary School and Spectra Secondary School – are from low-income

families and the Edusave and school funds are not enough to pay for their school fees. Thanks to NTUC Income's OrangeAid funding of the programme on core values, life skills and confidence building that every cohort of students attends each year, they enjoy the same breadth of experience as the normal secondary school children. A total of 2,374 students have benefited directly from the funding since 2010.

After the students had attended the programme, their teachers and parents noted a positive change in their attitude towards going to school, learning, other people and society in general. While the improvement could not be attributed only to OrangeAid, it was a significant contributing factor. As a deeper change is multi-faceted and takes time, the funding is provided every year for each cohort until the students complete their education at the school.

The OrangeAid support for children with dyslexia when they are in kindergarten enables them to be identified and to receive remediation early. If a test confirms them as dyslexic, MOE will arrange for the children to continue receiving support when they enter primary schools. So far, 198 children have benefited from it.

NTUC Income measures the impact of its philanthropic programmes by the outcomes, and not by the outputs. Outcomes are mainly qualitative, like improvement in ability to recognise letters and form sentences for those with dyslexia, change in behaviour towards authority, change in attitude towards others, and willingness to help in the home for those who were self-centred. For example, the OrangeAid Information Kit informs its community partners of the outcomes it seeks to realise. Monitoring and evaluation reports are tailored to the outcomes mutually agreed at the start of the partnership and reviewed yearly.

From its experience in helping APS, NTUC Income used what it learned to work with Crest's principal and his team on developing its "Crest Quest" four-year values-in-action programme before the school was set up. During the first year of Crest's implementation, the company engaged Spectra's principal to study it in real time before adapting it for Spectra's "I Believe" programme.

Reaching and Helping the Beneficiaries

NTUC Income's philanthropy benefits disadvantaged children and youth, and low-income families with young children directly or indirectly through charitable organisations. It gives to provide opportunities for children to break out of the poverty cycle. It also supports the labour movement and the art community directly.

The company gives through schools and other organisations that help disadvantaged children and youth who have medical conditions, physical disabilities, intellectual challenges, learning difficulties and financial problems. They include:

- Assumption Pathway School (APS);
- Crest Secondary School;
- Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS);
- NorthLight School;
- Spectra Secondary School;
- South East Community Development Council (SECDC); and
- THK Home for Disabled @ Euros.

Charities that NTUC Income had supported in the past included Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF), Singapore Children's Society (SCS) and SPD (formerly Society for the Physically Disabled). It is funding charities that require low volunteer engagement (THK), moderate volunteer engagement (DAS and SECDC) and high volunteer engagement (APS, NorthLight, Crest and Spectra).

After studying the children attending specialised schools, NTUC Income noted that some of their problems could be alleviated upstream through programmes like the DAS Pre-School Programme and the South East CDC's Learning Family Programme. Its OrangeAid helps them indirectly by funding vocational and livelihood support schemes, such as the APS Enterprise Hub's APS Restaurant for Training Merit Award for the food and beverage industry.

Why and When It Started

NTUC Income was set up as a co-operative in 1970 to provide workers and their families with affordable insurance services. With its social purpose driving the business in a market that was becoming more sophisticated and affluent amid societal changes, the company had recognised that there would always be people struggling to earn a living who were uninsured or under-insured due to their circumstances. As it sought to improve community welfare while making a profit, NTUC Income started contributing to social schemes that helped children to get out of the poverty trap among generations of low-income families.

Aligning with Giver's Values and Purpose

NTUC Income aims to provide essential insurance services to all Singaporeans and to enable them to protect themselves and their families from financial hardship due to unforeseen circumstances. Its business goals are aligned with its philanthropic objective, which is to help low-income families, special needs community and other disadvantaged groups.

The co-operative exemplifies the true spirit of giving to the less fortunate with a big heart. There was a tragic accident at a primary school in early January when its students were back for the new year. One of them was knocked down and killed by a speeding car just outside the school. After NTUC Income received the school's death claim form under its group insurance coverage, it discovered that the accident occurred before it had received the school's group insurance application form that day. Technically, there was no insurance coverage at the time of the accident and no commercial insurance company would accept a situation where the immediate death claim was five times the annual premium.

However, NTUC Income assessed and discussed the matter with the school. It found that the school principal had decided to sign up with the insurance company three days before the accident. Based on the evidence, it honoured the intent of the school to insure with it and settled the insurance claim with the student's family accordingly. It chose to do so instead of rejecting the claim on a technical ground (and it would not have been wrong on its part).



Students participating in NTUC Income's Future Development Programme with its staff volunteers who facilitated the financial literacy workshop. (Photo: NTUC Income)

Its employees volunteer for what they believe in and are passionate about, as shown by their voluntary work with the APS Challenge as buddies and mentors to disadvantaged school children. Its client advisors have given their time and shared their expertise for the Future Development Programme's financial literacy workshop attended by students from very low-income families, although there is no business potential for them.

Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

The OrangeAid programme was developed with a focus on outcomes for all its partners. The company wanted to ensure that although there's accountability, it would not be laborious for the partners to apply for the grant and report on the outcomes. It took two years to find community partners whose goals resonated with those of OrangeAid. The new partners coming on board were ready and willing to apply its outcome management approach. However, older partners who were used to receiving NTUC Income's support (before the launch of OrangeAid) without the need to report on the outcomes found it a challenge to do so. Much time and efforts were spent on managing the differences in expectations. As a result, some partnerships were discontinued.

Working with Staff, Charities and Other Stakeholders as Partners

NTUC Income shares its giving vision with its staff by:

- Signing up new employees for SHARE programme when they join the company;
- Presenting NTUC's social purpose and philanthropic objective during the monthly orientation programme for new staff;
- Conducting training session and sales rally for sales agents;
- Announcing OrangeAid campaigns;
- Arranging staff engagement with beneficiaries;
- Making ad hoc calls to giving and community projects; and
- Highlighting insurance products with social focus.

NTUC Income has spent the past five years fine-tuning its corporate philanthropy strategy with its partners, with whom it had formed strategic alliances based on their expertise in helping disadvantaged young people. Current OrangeAid partners are a community development council, charities, specialised schools and institutes of higher learning.

It works closely with the Institute of Technical Education and all five polytechnics to select beneficiaries from among their students nominated for the Future Development Programme. A thousand OrangeAid awards are being disbursed over three years.

Community partners receiving OrangeAid grants adopt the reporting standard developed by NTUC Income. They are experts in their fields and take on joint ownership with the insurance company while acknowledging mutual support, showing humility in giving and minimising administrative work.

Through its support of arts company ACT 3 International, NTUC Income is able to promote artistic expression to people from all walks of life, particularly school children. Although it does not promote artistic expression by disadvantaged people, it funds clay art therapy sessions for intellectually-challenged youth at the THK Home for the Disabled@Eunos.

Learning and Benefiting from the Giving Experience

From its experience with the APS Challenge, the CSR team learned that specialised school students could gain confidence to overcome challenges and personal constraints. It saw value in supporting the intangibles for their long-term social impact.

The CSR team continues to gain a deeper understanding of disadvantaged children and youth through discussions with partners who work with them. They also attend training courses and conferences regularly to keep themselves updated on the latest developments and trends in philanthropy.

Innovating for Greater Impact

Besides serving policyholders and providing a benchmark for insurance premiums, NTUC Income has six Orange initiatives that embrace social impact:

- Orange Health – launched in 2015 to reward and encourage people in Singapore to maintain a healthy lifestyle through health screening at a special rate and a mobile application to track their health status, medical appointments and insurance details;
- Orange Watch – piloted and introduced in 2015, this is a routine review of medical claims to keep premiums affordable;
- Orange Eye – unveiled in 2014 as a mobile application with the use of in-car camera to record video evidence for settling insurance claims;
- Orange Safe – a defensive riding course for all its motor-cycle insurance policyholders, who enjoy a 10% discount on their annual premiums when they renew their policies;
- Orange Force – a team of riders that has been providing round-the-clock accident-scene assistance to NTUC Income customers since 2011; and
- Motor Service Centre – opened in 2015 as a first-of-its-kind one-stop depot in Singapore to offer accident-related services.

OrangeAid has a unique feature called OrangeAid RoundUp, which encourages NTUC Income policyholders to voluntarily round up their life insurance premiums to the nearest dollar or more and contribute the difference to OrangeAid Fund.

The company also gives in kind in different ways that are in line with its business philosophy. It provides free insurance protection against death or total and permanent disability to all families with children receiving MOE's financial assistance. A total of 34,000 persons (both parents) have been covered so far.

Under its SG50 Blue CHAS Card Medical Subsidy scheme, its OrangeAid co-pays for clinic visits by all children aged 12 or younger who hold the card, so that their healthcare needs are taken care of even if their families cannot afford to pay fully for their visits.

Outstanding Achievements for Giving

Besides receiving the President's Award for Philanthropy (Corporate) in 2014, NTUC Income was also recognised with the Distinguished Patron of the Arts (2011 to 2013), the Community Chest Pinnacle Award (2011) and the Share Programme Platinum Award (2011 to 2013).

Sustaining Efforts over Time

NTUC Income's social programmes usually last three or more years. Its first major funding benefited Assumption Pathway School from 2010 to 2014.

The company allocates resources for its corporate philanthropy that include:

- CSR staff costs;
- U-Care budget of \$1 million for low-income members of the labour movement;
- 1% of annual profit for OrangeAid Fund (ranging from \$800,000 to \$1,800,000);
- \$25,000 set-up and maintenance costs of system for OrangeAid RoundUp policyholders' donation scheme;

- \$30,000 for novel donation boxes and other tools at public places to promote spontaneous donation; and
- \$20,000 for professional set-up and training costs for integrating OrangeAid donation into NTUC Income's face-to-face and online business operations.

NTUC Income encourages its senior staff to be involved in community and non-profit organisations at the board level. Its CEO Ken Ng is the spokesperson for most of its charitable activities, and key projects are championed by him and senior management.



An OrangeAid fund-raising event attended by NTUC Income's senior management staff. (Photo: NTUC Income)

Although it does not compute the staff costs of those doing volunteering work during office hours, NTUC Income provides \$30,000 for employee community work expenses each year.

The company is moving into protection for those at the 'base of the pyramid', a segment that commercial insurance companies are usually not interested in

serving. In the near term, the company is working towards further integrating CSR with its insurance business. In the longer term, it plans to embed corporate giving into more of its products, with the first such new product expected to be introduced in 2016.

Giving Philosophy and Priorities

NTUC Income's priority in philanthropy is to improve the lives of disadvantaged children and youth, and low-income families with children. It seeks to realise this goal by continuing to create insurance products that meet their needs, even for those who may be uninsurable. It notes that although there are compulsory insurance schemes mandated by the government, there are still people who are uninsured or under-insured. It wants to provide them, especially those from the lowest-income group, with health, personal accident and life insurance protection so that they can live with dignity and hope of a better future.

Advice for Potential Corporate Givers

For companies that are thinking of giving to the less fortunate in society, NTUC Income's head of CSR Theodore Teo suggests that they consider a number of factors before they start:

- Reason for wanting to give – it could be altruism, tax exemption, brand building or market development;
- Focus on a cause that is important to the company for meaningful and impactful outcomes;
- Commitment of resources and timeline required for addressing specific social issues; and
- Partnership with community organisations to achieve shared goals.

For companies that are already giving, Theodore advises them to stay focused on their causes, regularly review their commitment of resources and timeline, and continue to work with community partners. In addition, he suggests having a committee that includes some board directors to give broad direction and hold the

executive staff accountable. It is also important to share the company's giving vision with its staff and to let them know that its community development work involves everyone. "Give to where a gap exists," he shares, pointing to the fact that NTUC Income is plugging some of the gaps not being addressed by government policies. He suggests that a better way to measure the impact of a company's philanthropy is to look at the outcomes (for beneficiaries) instead of the outputs (by givers).

Impact Numbers that Matter



Some of NTUC Income's beneficiaries :

- NTUC Income Pre-school Bursary – \$410,994 for 100 children from low-income families receiving dyslexia remediation
- Place for Academic Learning and Support – \$128,000 for 40 children recovering from cancer who are receiving education and social support
- NTUC U-Care Voucher – \$3,050,000 worth of vouchers for low-income families
- Income Family Micro-Insurance Scheme – \$315,000 worth of payouts to 63 needy families
- SPD – \$20,000 raised for the charity from terrarium-making-and-sale project on #GivingTuesdaySG
- Assumption, Crest and Spectra specialised schools – 2,374 students benefited from OrangeAid funding of programme on core values, life skills and confidence building since 2010
- OrangeAid support for kindergarten children with dyslexia – 198 beneficiaries to date
- Families with children receiving MOE's financial assistance – total of 34,000 persons (both parents) covered by free insurance against death or total and permanent disability

Donations to OrangeAid beneficiaries in 2015 :

Assumption Pathway School :	\$225,000
Crest Secondary School :	\$202,841
Spectra Secondary School :	\$127,302
Dyslexia Association of Singapore :	\$178,450
South East CDC – CAPLE Programme :	\$23,000
THK Moral Home for Disabled@Eunos :	\$29,276
IFMIS :	\$140,000
Future Development Programme :	\$510,000
SG50 Blue CHAS Card children medical subsidy :	\$190,000
Total :	\$1,625,869



Donations and grants given by NTUC Income :

2015 :	\$4,400,000
	+ SG50 gift of \$3,000,000
2014 :	\$4,500,000
2013 :	\$4,750,000
2012 :	\$4,505,000
2011 :	\$5,083,000



No. of charity partners :

2015 :	13
2014 :	12
2013 :	27
2012 :	24
2011 :	17

About National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre

The National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) is an independent not-for-profit organisation that advocates giving in Singapore. Its vision is for the country to become a Giving Nation. It aims to cultivate a strong culture of contribution where giving is part of every Singaporean's DNA. NVPC works closely with other charities, corporates, public sector agencies, institutions, as well as the community to build a robust ecosystem and to make giving simple, fun and meaningful.

The centre enables and amplifies giving by influencing hearts and minds through:

- Storytelling;
- Research;
- Recognising giving champions;
- Connecting and convening both givers and multipliers; and
- Activating giving at a national level.

NVPC creates the national narrative on giving and stories that influence hearts and minds. It also conducts research on giving motivations and behaviours, creates roadmaps and landscape of the giving sector, and aspires to be the 'go-to' place for giving. The centre recognises and honours giving champions because giving is part of the culture and DNA that it wants to promote. NVPC connects and convenes people to create networks and build communities that contribute to the giving space in Singapore. It activates giving and uses strategies that multiply its impact island-wide, such as national giving campaigns.

About President's Volunteerism & Philanthropy Awards

The annual President's Volunteerism & Philanthropy Awards (PVPA) was launched in 2012 to recognise those who have set benchmarks of excellence in encouraging the spirit of giving in Singapore. The awards represent the highest honour for giving to the community, be it in the arts, environment, social services, sports, education, healthcare or other worthy causes.

PVPA aims to inspire Singaporeans to give through volunteerism and philanthropy, by honouring individuals and organisations whose outstanding examples, attitudes, values and beliefs in giving embody the spirit of giving.

The awards are conferred by the President of Singapore and organised by the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre, with the support of the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and the National Council of Social Service.

About Book's Co-Sponsors

SINGAPORE POOLS

Singapore Pools was set up by the government in 1968 to provide a legal and safe outlet for betting and to channel funds to the community. During Singapore's nation-building years, it made possible many of the benefits we see today as a major source of funding.

The donation activities of Singapore Pools were consolidated with the Tote Board in 2004. Today, it contributes about \$2 billion annually to the government in betting duties and taxes and to the Tote Board.

Its not-for-profit business model means that all surpluses are channelled to the Tote Board to fund various causes in the social service, community development, sports, education, healthcare, arts and culture sectors.

Beyond giving, Singapore Pools is continuously looking for ways to engage the community and create meaningful impact.

In 2003, Singapore Pools launched its Staff Community Programme, “iShine”, with the beliefs that having an emotional connection to good causes and a caring heart for the community will strengthen one's positive values, and that staff who are committed to doing good will naturally care for the customers they serve.

Its staff volunteers have given their time to help disadvantaged children, bring cheer to frail and needy elderly persons, conserve the environment and organise meaningful fund-raising activities.

iShine stands for “I shine in Serving from the Heart and In Nurturing Everyone”, and has evolved to focus on three areas where it can create the most meaningful impact - staff volunteerism, resource sharing and community partnership.

Staff Volunteerism

Over the past 13 years, Singapore Pools' staff volunteers have given their time to help disadvantaged children, bring cheer to frail and needy elderly persons, and conserve the environment. Its adopted charities include Metta School, Society for the Aged Sick, Students Care Service, Singapore Children's Society's Sunbeam Place, Singapore Environment Council and Nature Society (Singapore).

Its branch staff and authorised retailers also serve as its volunteers. Reaching out to the elderly living in rental flats in areas where it operates, the branch staff help with basic household chores or offer friendship to them, many of whom live alone. This effort is part of Project SPHERE, a partnership with the Housing & Development Board and Ministry of Education. Singapore Pools' authorised retailers join it in caring for the community by delivering food hampers to needy families and participating in community activities, often in cooperation with grassroots organisations.

Resource Sharing

Singapore Pools aims to add value to the community by leveraging on its strengths, such as its retail network, connection with its partners and stakeholders, and staff's expertise.

Its Community Housing Scheme is an example of such an initiative. This scheme, launched in 2007, aims to provide charities and social enterprises at their start-up phase with affordable office space at Singapore Pools branches. To date, four organisations have benefited from this scheme - Caring Fleet, raISE (Singapore Centre for Social Enterprise), Clubilya and Micro Credit Business Scheme.

Further leveraging on Singapore Pools' facilities, the Venue Sponsorship Scheme was mooted in 2011. This scheme provides for the use of its facilities for community groups to host forums, workshops, charity fund-raising, donor and volunteer networking events, thus helping them to minimise operational costs. To date, more than 60 events were held at its venues. Some of the past



Singapore Pools' iShine volunteers with friends from the Handicaps Welfare Association at the Chingay Parade.

beneficiaries were the Yellow Ribbon Project, Thyre Hua Kwan and Breast Cancer Foundation.

Singapore Pools supports charitable organisations by allowing them to tap on its island-wide network of about 300 outlets to sell their donation draw tickets. Since 2009, its retail network has supported 16 draws to help raise funds for organisations such as the Handicaps Welfare Association, Singapore Children's Society and Singapore National Paralympic Council. It also shares its expertise with organisations that intend to raise funds through charity donation draws.

For winners who wish to share their good fortune with the less fortunate, it facilitates donations to the President's Challenge through the Singapore Pools' Winners Donation Programme. To date, winners have donated over \$577,000 to help many charities.

Community Partnership

Over the years, the iShine programme has grown to be more than a staff volunteerism initiative. It is now also about rallying people from all walks of life to do good together.

Singapore Pools' staff volunteers collaborate with its business partners, retailers and other stakeholders in various fund-raising projects to benefit a variety of worthy causes. Since 2007, a total of more than \$6.1 million has been raised through the "With-A-Heart" and other projects.

Football With A Heart (FWAH) is one such initiative. Into its fourth edition in 2016, FWAH demonstrates the power of bringing people together in service of meaningful causes. Organised by Singapore Pools and its iShine volunteers, the Football Association of Singapore and Sport Singapore, FWAH brings together Singapore's major companies in the biggest executive football fund-raiser. Over \$2 million in total has been raised through FWAH for charities and social enterprises to help children, the elderly sick, destitute, disabled and disadvantaged.

River With A Heart (RWAH), a novel river-cruise-cum-dinner charity event, raised a total of \$408,000 for six beneficiaries. It received the Community Chest Special Events Gold Award in 2015 for its contribution. This award recognises organisations or individuals who have raised substantial amounts for the Community Chest through fund-raising events.

Responsible Gaming

Singapore Pools is committed to be a responsible gaming operator that its customers can trust. Responsible gaming is one of its key operating principles.

It is the pioneer in the industry in advocating the need for responsible gaming measures and codes of conduct. Through its annual training programme and educational campaigns, Singapore Pools has been reaching out to its staff, authorised retailers and customers to reinforce the importance of playing responsibly.

Singapore Pools also launched a Care for Winners Programme, in partnership with the Monetary Authority of Singapore's MoneySENSE, the national financial education initiative for Singaporeans. Through this programme, its staff meet with customers who claim prizes of \$100,000 and above, to share financial planning tips and responsible gaming messages. In line with its duty of care towards its customers, Singapore Pools hopes to help prize winners realise that they can become winners in life too, through good management of their prize money.

It anchors its business philosophy on doing what is right, to protect and care for its customers. In the process, it strives to uphold Singapore Pools' brand values, which are integrity, professionalism, customer care and community benefit.

In 2012, Singapore Pools was awarded the highest level (Level 4) certification under the World Lottery Association's Responsible Gaming Framework. The award is a significant endorsement that it has met the most stringent responsible gaming standards of the international lottery industry. It is one of only four lottery organisations in the Asia-Pacific region that have attained this level of global certification.

For Singapore Pools, the community is the real winner.

CITY DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED

City Developments Limited (CDL) has been Singapore's property pioneer since 1963. It is a Singapore-listed international property and hotel conglomerate involved in real estate development and investment, hotel ownership and management, facilities management and the provision of hospitality solutions.

More than just a builder of living spaces, CDL also views its role as a developer of lives and communities. CDL's strong corporate culture of giving was seeded by the late Mr Kwek Hong Png, founder of the Hong Leong Group, CDL's parent company. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) may be a modern business lexicon but during the early days of CDL, Mr Kwek was already a practitioner of the concept. Beyond CDL's brick-and-mortar business, he was a firm believer in the old Chinese axiom “取诸社会用诸社会” – to return to society what one has gained from it. He wanted to create a positive impact on the social landscape by giving back and paying it forward. This has now become central to CDL's management philosophy.

For over 50 years, CDL's commitment to CSR efforts has gradually evolved from a traditional emphasis on philanthropy to a strategic focus on key stakeholders in the areas of charity, environmental conservation, youth development and the arts.

Charity

To nurture a spirit of volunteerism and to cultivate an engaged workforce, CDL created its employee volunteer programme, City Sunshine Club (CSC), in 1999. CSC has established a broad range of community programmes that include elderly befriending, mentoring for needy children and support for other beneficiaries. This creates a 'pro-giving' environment, inspiring employees to actively engage in community work.

Environmental Conservation

Besides creating sustainable properties, CDL has been passionate about promoting environmental conservation amongst the community-at-large through numerous outreach initiatives.

In 2016, CDL and sustainability firm Eco-Business launched Singapore's first EcoBank. For its inaugural EcoBank Bazaar, the 'reduce and reuse for good' initiative collected over 6,000 kg of pre-loved items from the public that were sold at CDL's City Square Mall. Funds raised were donated to the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations, which is helping disadvantaged women and children in Singapore.

CDL has also launched a slew of other eco-outreach initiatives. In 2002, CDL started Project: Eco-Office with the Singapore Environment Council to help businesses cultivate eco-friendly habits at the workplace. After 14 years, the project has extended its outreach to not just CDL's tenants but also across Singapore and the region. In 2014, in celebration of CDL's 50th anniversary and in support of the Singapore Botanic Gardens' (SBG) nomination bid as Singapore's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, the CDL Green Gallery @ SBG Heritage Museum was created. It is Singapore's first zero-energy green gallery and features nature-related interactive exhibits for visitors to learn more about the environment and the history of Singapore's gardens.

Youth Development

To foster a new generation of environmental champions, the CDL E-Generation Challenge, an annual Amazing Race-style green rally, was launched in 2010 to drive eco-friendly practices for a more sustainable future. To date, the event has reached out to more than 2,500 youth participants, with an expanded reach on social media.

The CDL-Compact Singapore Young CSR Leaders Award is another youth development platform that educates future leaders about corporate, social and environmental challenges of today and demonstrates ways to execute CSR principles within a real-life business scenario.

CDL has also created My Tree House - World's 1st Green Library for Kids - at the Central Public Library of the National Library Board. The popular space boasts an 'eco-centric' book collection as well as interactive green features and programmes to educate children about the environment.

Arts

CDL also believes in creating vibrant environments for the community. Since the 1990s, CDL has been promoting visual arts, particularly sculpture and photography.

To showcase the talent of both established and aspiring local sculptors, CDL introduced the Singapore Sculpture Award in 2002. The biennial award fosters greater appreciation for this art form and enriches Singapore's cultural landscape through the commissioning of winning works for public display.

In 2006, CDL launched the Singapore Young Photographer Award (SYPA). The first nation-wide photography award of its kind for youth between 13 and 25 years old, the CDL SYPA serves to discover and nurture young budding photography talent, and aims to unleash their creativity and artistic flair.

In recognition of CDL's contributions to the community, CDL was the only corporation that was conferred the President's Social Service Award in 2007. That year, CDL was also lauded with Singapore's highest environmental accolade – the prestigious President's Award for the Environment – for its outstanding contributions to environmental and water resource sustainability in Singapore.

CDL's CSR commitment and achievements have also helped to place Singapore on the global sustainability map. It is the first Singapore corporation to be listed on three of the world's leading sustainability benchmarks – FTSE4Good Index Series (since 2002), Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporations in the World (since 2010) and Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (since 2011).

Looking ahead, CDL sees unlimited possibilities to create a lasting and positive impact on its stakeholders, the community and the environment. Building upon its ethos of "Conserving as We Construct", it aims to "Create Future Value" for generations to come.

Amid the many paradoxes of today, there are many individuals and organisations that are making it a priority to give their time and treasure through volunteering work and philanthropic contributions to help the less fortunate in our community. This book features some of the recipients of the President's Volunteerism & Philanthropy Awards in 2014 and 2015, and aims to celebrate and inspire giving that is impactful and sustainable. These outstanding givers share a common sense of humanity and a spirit of care for those in need.

By documenting their achievements and propagating the idea of giving, it is hoped that this publication will encourage more Singaporeans to choose to start their giving journeys for a good cause. The book itself is a product of volunteerism and philanthropy, through the work of people who believe in giving and the generous sponsorship of philanthropic organisations that makes its development and production possible.

What some of the givers featured in the book say...

"Don't worry about starting small (when giving) – we all start small."

- Mohamed Faizal, founder of two school scholarships

"Service to humanity is the best form of work. Having care and compassion for the needy is a blessing."

- Toh Soon Huat, Chairman, Sian Chay Medical Institution

"We seek to inspire kind exchanges and interactions between recipients and givers, while meeting basic human needs with caring attention and allowing for personal growth and fulfilment."

- Dr Goh Wei Leong, Chairman, HealthServe

"Donations aside, we believe volunteering makes a difference not just to the beneficiaries, but to the volunteers as well. Volunteering gives our staff a certain perspective of their role in society beyond being a professional."

- Lim Ming Yan, President & CEO, CapitaLand

About the author

Joachim Sim is an independent writer, editor and publisher who sees his role as a propagator to help publicise and support the causes and efforts of social responsibility and sustainability practitioners, advocates and other stakeholders. This is his fourth 'Do Good' title on how socially-responsible individuals and organisations are helping the less fortunate in our community, following his SG50 book 'Giving A Helping Hand: Celebrating Singapore social enterprises' published in 2015 and the two books he wrote and produced for Singapore Compact in 2014 and the Singapore Institute of Management in 2013.

A gift to



National Volunteer
& Philanthropy Centre

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