

MEDIA RELEASE

10 CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS PLEDGE THEIR SUPPORT TO PROMOTE INCLUSION

- *Over 200 touchpoints to empower the participation of persons with disabilities in society*
- *Launch of music video to celebrate abilities, directed by Royston Tan*

SINGAPORE 22 FEBRUARY 2019 – The National Council of Social Service (NCSS) is working with corporate and community partners to provide more opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in society through socio-recreational activities, and initiatives that promote interaction and celebrate abilities. This is part of the third year of NCSS' *'See the True Me'* campaign, in partnership with the Tote Board – Enabling Lives Initiative, to promote inclusion of persons with disabilities in Singapore. Speaker of Parliament and Advisor to NCSS, Tan Chuan-Jin; and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs & Social and Family Development, Sam Tan, unveiled the Year III campaign visuals at the media launch this afternoon.

2 In the last two years, *'See the True Me'* has sought to change the attitudes and perception of members of the public towards persons with disabilities. Pre and post-campaign surveys conducted from the previous two years of *'See the True Me'* found that there was indeed a positive shift in public attitudes, in particular, towards persons with intellectual disabilities and autism.

3 In the third year, *'See the True Me'* seeks to move beyond encouraging the public to see beyond a person's disabilities and promoting interaction between the public and persons with disabilities, to encouraging the community to provide more opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in society – a key finding from the Quality of Life (QOL) study conducted by NCSS, showed that 6 in 10 persons with disabilities do not feel that they are socially included, accepted or are given opportunities to contribute and to achieve personal potential.

Community efforts key to sustaining inclusivity

4 “This year, we have successfully reached out to more partners across the public, private and people sectors to join us in our efforts to involve persons with disabilities in the community. It takes an eco-system approach to sustain inclusivity and it is our hope that persons with disabilities today are more empowered and given opportunities to participate meaningfully in the community”, said Ms Tina Hung, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, NCSS.

5 Ten partners have come on board in support of ‘*See the True Me*’. They are corporate partners Adrenalin Group Pte Ltd, KFC Singapore, LiHO TEA, McDonald’s Singapore, OUE Social Kitchen, Shangri-La’s Rasa Sentosa Resort & Spa; public agencies including the National Library Board, North East Community Development Council (CDC), South West CDC, and People’s Association Water-Venture. These partners have provided over 200 platforms and touchpoints to promote inclusion in their respective areas, such as adopting inclusive hiring practices and organising inclusive activities, to create more opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in the community. (See Appendix A for partnership details).

Music video to celebrate abilities in collaboration with Royston Tan

6 As part of the campaign launch, NCSS will also unveil a brand-new music video for the song “Fire in The Rain”, directed by award-winning local filmmaker Royston Tan. An original song composition by singer-songwriter Don Richmond, with rap lyrics by local rapper ShiGGa Shay, the music video is the first inclusive music video featuring performers with and without disabilities. The music video featured a 100-person strong inclusive choir comprising differently abled individuals, their caregivers, teachers and friends, trained by Irene Jansen, a vocal coach for children with special needs. Main performers include ShiGGa Shay, Adelyn Koh (visual impairment), Danial Bawthan a.k.a. Wheelsmith (muscular dystrophy), Joshua Allen German (autism), Sarah Jane (autism), Charlene Wong (deaf), Isabelle Lim (deaf) and her mother Jacqui Lim, and dancers from local deaf hip-hop dance group Redeafination. (See Appendix B for performer profiles).

7 Royston Tan said, “Over the course of the production of this music video, I have had the opportunity to work with many talented individuals, including persons with disabilities. I saw how determined and passionate all of them were. Despite the intensive filming schedules, every single performer worked hard and gave it all they have got. Beyond showcasing the abilities of differently abled individuals, it is also about showing that when we come together,

we can achieve something special. And that when we are working hard with the same goal, we are not that different after all.”

8 The music video and song will be available on Spotify, Youtube, and in cinemas.

About See *The True Me* 2019 Campaign

9 See The True Me’ 2019 will showcase how persons with disabilities are able to develop their potential when they are empowered to participate in the society, with support from the community/caregivers. The campaign features four ambassadors with disabilities, together with the person who believed in and empowered them – student Amelia Tan with her teacher Ranae Lee-Nasir; blood donor Conrad Puah Neo with his father Clement Puah Neo; photo-booth manager Michael Quek with his employer Richardo Chua; and cook Paul Simon with his mentor, chef Alvin Teng. Their stories – of contribution at work, to society and in school, will feature on print, digital, broadcast, social and outdoor channels. (See Appendix C for ambassador profiles.)

About National Council of Social Service (NCSS)

NCSS is the umbrella body for over 450-member social service organisations in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in enhancing the capabilities and capacity of our members, advocating for social service needs and strengthening strategic partnerships, for an effective social service ecosystem. Community Chest and Social Service Institute (SSI) are part of NCSS. For more information, please visit: www.ncss.gov.sg.

SEE THE TRUE ME PARTNERSHIPS IN 2019

Celebrating abilities of persons with special needs

- Home-grown bubble tea brand **LiHO TEA**, will be launching a specially concocted tea drink in support of the campaign in March 2019, that will be available in over 90 stores island-wide. They are also working with Amelia Tan, a student with autism from Very Special Arts Singapore Ltd, to design their concept store at Cathay Cineleisure, as well as cup sleeves for the brand. LiHO TEA has plans for this concept store to be inclusive, and they intend for the store to be entirely managed by persons with special needs.

Increasing opportunities for interaction

- From March to April 2019, **KFC Singapore** will show their support through specially designed tray-mats distributed in 83 stores island-wide, that provide patrons with tips on how they can better interact with persons with disabilities. KFC currently hires over 90 employees with disabilities.
- **OUE Social Kitchen** will be working with a home-cook from Disabled People's Association (DPA) to conduct an inclusive cooking and dining session for members of the public, in April 2019.
- NCSS has partnered the Disabled People's Association (DPA) to roll out a series of *Let's Chat* sessions, to offer members of the public the opportunity to meet DPA's inclusion ambassadors, who will share their stories and experiences of living with disabilities. Participants will be able to ask questions and engage in inclusive experiential activities which are designed to provide a richer understanding of persons with disabilities in work, social and community settings. Partners that have or will be hosting Let's Chat in their respective venues include **KFC Singapore, McDonald's Singapore, the National Library Board, the National Museum of Singapore, and OUE Social Kitchen**.

Encourage participation through socio-recreational activities

- Reading – NCSS is exploring opportunities with the **National Library Board (NLB)** to leverage their existing programmes like Read Fest!, Meet the Authors Session and National Reading Movement to engage everyone through the common love of books. NCSS partnered NLB last year to introduce a series of inclusive reading activities in public libraries. The activities included a Meet-the-Authors session, where authors who were persons with special needs or caregivers to persons with special needs, shared their personal journeys; an immersive storytelling session for children; a display of inclusive-themed books in some of the libraries, as well as a Let's Chat session, where members of the public were able to meet and interact with persons with special needs.

- Sports – NCSS is working with **People’s Association Water Venture** to organise a series of inclusive sports carnivals across Singapore, from January to October 2019. Six carnivals comprising inclusive waterfront lifestyle programmes will be held at various Water-Venture outlets, offering a variety of curated thematic experience for communities of all abilities.

- Volunteering – **Love-in-a-bento @ South West** is a joint collaboration between South West Community Development Council, Singapore Hotel and Tourism Education Centre (SHATEC), TOUCH Home Care, Dorcas Home Care, Thye Hua Kwan Home Care, MINDS and Autism Association of Singapore (AAS) and NCSS, as an initiative under the Meals Service @ South West. Through the four festive bento distribution per year, the programme aims to:
 - i. Engage persons with special needs in South West District to distribute customised bento sets to provide a special dinner meal to seniors in South West District who are not able to cook or buy their own meals due to mobility issues;
 - ii. Allow the community to remember the more vulnerable seniors in our midst during festive celebrations; and
 - iii. Allow various organisations to come together to volunteer in their respective areas of expertise or interest, in line with “Many Helping Hands” approach

SEE THE TRUE ME 2019 CAMPAIGN AMBASSADOR PROFILES

Amelia Tan, 16 years old, Autism, with teacher Ranae Lee-Nasir

Amelia has been receiving arts education from Very Special Arts (VSA), Singapore Ltd since she was 6 years old. Although reserved, Amelia is a gifted artist, who has recently started to accept commissions, and her works are purchased by an interested audience. In the past, her works had a recurring theme that was darker in nature but brilliant in artistic technique and with a strong background story. Under the patient guidance of her teacher Ranae at VSA, Amelia's painting has taken a more light-hearted direction that still portrays a deep and insightful concept. Amelia is due to enrol in an arts academy in two years to further her study in the arts.

Conrad Puah Neo, 42 years old, Intellectual Disability, with father, Clement Puah Neo

Diagnosed with intellectual disability since young, Conrad might be unable to express his thoughts clearly, but his father recognised his kind heart and empowered him to give back to society, by becoming a blood donor. He has since donated blood 67 times, at the Bloodbank@HSA. Conrad is meaningfully engaged at MINDS Employment and Development Centre where he receives continual vocational training and work engagement opportunities. As Conrad's sole caregiver, Clement's wish is for society to be more inclusive towards persons with special needs.

Michael Quek, 54 years old, Wheelchair User, with employer, Richardo Chua

Michael lost the use of this right arm and strength in both legs after suffering from a stroke thirteen years ago. His employer, Richardo saw his potential and has provided him with opportunities to develop his skills. He started out as a graphics designer at Adrenalin Group, a social enterprise events agency which creates conducive working environments for persons with disabilities. Michael has since helped the company build a whole new photo booth department and he now runs his own photo booth team.

Paul Simon, 26 years old, Mild Intellectual Disability, with mentor, Chef Alvin Teng

Paul Simon is a cook at Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort & Spa, Singapore. He fulfilled his dream of cooking for President Halimah Yacob when he was invited to the Istana to whip up a meal for her last year. Paul graduated from APSN Delta Senior School and did an internship at the resort in 2011 before he was officially hired in 2013. The resort has had a vocational internship partnership with APSN since 2003, and currently hires 15 persons with special needs across various roles, such as kitchen porter, room attendant and cook. Paul works closely with his mentor Chef Alvin, who has praised him for his quick thinking and independence.

“FIRE IN THE RAIN” PERFORMER PROFILES

Adelyn Koh, 18 years old, Visual Impairment

Adelyn loves to sing and play the piano. Although she was born with a rare eye disease, Peter Anomaly, and can only see shadows and lights around her, Adelyn is able to pursue her passion for music with a supportive family, and a conducive learning environment at the Institute of Technical Education (ITE), which agreed to modify a course and tailor it to her needs. Adelyn was the lead singer for “Fire in the Rain”.

Danial Bawthan a.k.a Wheelsmith, 24 years old, Muscular Dystrophy

Danial was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy at the age of four. A talented rapper, beatboxer, hip hop artiste, songwriter and producer, he launched a debut EP of original music last year. Danial is well-known in the local music scene, having won Best Producer at a local hip hop and rap event in 2015, and having taken part in several performances, such as the President’s Star Charity, and the True Colours Festival. Danial performed the rap alongside ShiGGa Shay in “Fire in the Rain”.

Joshua Allen German, 23 years old, Autism

Joshua was diagnosed with autism at the age of three. A budding young artist at Very Special Arts (VSA) Singapore Ltd (VSA), Joshua is an avid pianist, having started to learn piano at the age of 15. Since he joined VSA in 2016, where he received Jazz Piano training, improvisation in music, as well as theatre training at Very Special Theatrics, he has matured through training and performing opportunities provided by VSA. It is through music and the arts that Joshua is able to express himself and showcase his talents. Joshua plays the piano in the “Fire in the Rain” music video.

Dancers from Redeafination

Local hip hop dance crew, Redeafination is well-known in the local dance scene for their powerful and synchronised choreography, having participated in performances such as the Night Festival 2018 and True Colours Festival, amongst others. The crew comprises members who have varying degrees of hearing loss, and they rely on strong beats and rhythms to synchronise their movements. Four of the crew members participated in and choreographed the dance for the “Fire in the Rain” music video. They are Muhd Ammar Nasrulhaq, Nur Priyanti Jupri, Loo Shi Yi Roseanne and Shariffah Faaiah.

Charlene Wong, 37 years old, Deaf

Charlene was an ambassador for the ‘See The True Me’ campaign in 2017. Born deaf, she is a passionate volunteer and teacher in the deaf community. As a community outreach executive with TOUCH Community Services, Charlene’s main job is to reach out to the deaf community. She plans programmes for deaf clients of various ages, manages volunteers, and conducts deaf awareness workshops.



In partnership with



Isabelle Lim, 25 years old, Nager Syndrome and her mother Jacqui Lim

Isabelle was born deaf with Nager Syndrome. She pursued her passion in photography at LASALLE College of the Arts, where she was an inaugural recipient of the Dare to Dream scholarship. She has held photography exhibitions of her works, as well as taken on many photography assignments, including a behind-the-scenes photography for the “Fire in the Rain” music video production. Together with Charlene, Isabelle and Jacqui signed the lyrics to “Fire in the Rain” in the music video.