

ED's Message

Dear Valued Members

We have commenced our new financial year 2017/2018 and are in the thick of preparing for the most exciting event of the year—our annual fundraising gala dinner, *Mystique XI*! We are honoured to have Mr. S. Iswaran, Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry) gracing the event as the Guest-of-Honour.

The dinner this year will be held on 7 October 2017 at Shangri-la Singapore, Island Ballroom. We appeal for your kind and generous support by purchasing tables or seats at the dinner, and to share the details of this fundraising event to your friends and associates. We trust that with your generosity and unwavering support, this event will once again be a successful one as per previous years. The funds raised for this event will go towards the running of the many programmes and services here at DSA(S).

We thank you in advance for your support towards the upcoming charity gala dinner event.

Moses Lee
Executive Director
Down Syndrome Association (Singapore)

"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see."

—Mark Twain

Mystique XI

21 Stories and Counting

This year, DSA(S) celebrates its 21st Anniversary and the theme is *21 stories & counting*, a commemoration of the maturity and growth of DSA(S) over the years. The programme for the evening includes a 20-min performance by persons with Down syndrome portraying this year's theme, a live auction and a lucky draw.

We look forward to your support and hope to see you at the Gala Dinner!

To sponsor, please Email: cpcc.dsas@gmail.com or Tel: 6500 9321

For members, please contact Nalla nalla@downsyndrome-singapore.org

Charity Movie 2017

DSA(S) organised its annual Charity Movie over 3 days on 22, 24 and 25 June 2017 at Golden Village (Suntec). This year, over 700 movie-goers were hosted in 5 general halls and 3 Gold Class halls across the 3-day event.

The much anticipated *Transformers: The Last Knight* garnered much support from our sponsors and donors, helping us raise close to \$300,000 for this event! Thank you to all our generous sponsors for their continued support!

What a great end to a fun-filled June school holidays!



Supporters of Charity Movie 2017 gathering at Golden Village (Suntec) to watch "Transformers: The Last Knight".



Volunteers and staff preparing the popcorn and drink sets for the movie-goers.



Movie-goers armed with their popcorns and drinks, ready for the movie to start.



Supporters eagerly awaiting the start of the movie.

RCI Asia Pacific Singapore Fundraises Once Again

RCI Asia Pacific Singapore, an existing donor and corporate partner of Down Syndrome Association (Singapore) conducted another fundraiser among their staff in June 2017.

At this event, the staff and management of RCI organised themselves into 6 teams with the aim of conducting a flea market consisting of items donated by their staff to raise funds for DSA(S). To keep the event fun, the teams competed with each other to see which team would come up tops based on the amount of funds raised and the presentation of their booths.



The various booths setup by the staff within the RCI Asia Pacific office premises for the fundraiser.

Congratulations to team "iMighty" for being the top team as well as to "The Superheroes" and "Can Can!" for coming in for a close second and third place. In total, \$2,852.60 was raised from this flea market event and the cheque was presented to DSA(S) on 23 June 2017.

A big thank you to the staff and management at RCI Asia Pacific Singapore for the continued support and this awesome initiative!

Pazzion fundraises via totebag sale

Pazzion, a home-grown retailer of ladies' shoes and bags, collaborated with DSA(S) to produce a totebag based on the artwork of DSA(S) member, Chen WanYi. This totebag is currently on sale at their retail outlets and online store to help raise funds for DSA(S). Do lend your support to this fundraiser as the sale of these bags will end 13 Sep 2017!

A big thank you to the awesome folks at Pazzion for this wonderful fundraising initiative and for creating a touching awareness video of our members too!



The Totebag produced and sold as a fundraiser for DSA(S).



The Pazzion Melo Totebag for sale at Pazzion outlets.

DSA(S) Visits Google Singapore on 31 July 2017



DSA(S) staff Alvin Ho, Andrew Soh & Manoharan Kalaiselvan at the office of Google Singapore.

We've all heard about Google's awesome offices around the world. And inside the Silicon Valley giant's corporate front lies a work environment with a human touch. Besides the aisle of unlimited gourmet food for staff to roof gardens and hair salons, Google is consistently on the Fortune's "Best Companies to Work for" company listing.

On an invitation by Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA), our staff paid a visit to Google Singapore on 31 July 2017, to check out the company's offering called 'Google for Nonprofits'. The giant tech company offers non-profit organisations free access to these Google tools so that DSA(S) can extend their reach to donors, volunteers, work more efficiently and share our organisation's and clients' stories with others interested in our cause.

Google staff also conducted a Creative Skills for Innovation (CSI) Labs for our DSA(S) staff in encouraging us to identify and come up with innovation solutions to common service challenges such as communication, budgeting and travelling for people with Down syndrome. The goal is to group people from the same community together to solve common challenges, through learning from each other's experiences and developing their own inner strengths.

We look forward to more engaging technology to enhance the lives of our community, staff and members.

Networking with VWOs within Bishan East-Thomson

The Bishan East-Thomson CCC organised a Networking Session with Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) located within Bishan East-Thomson Division. Andrew and Alvin participated and presented our Association's milestones and programmes during the Networking session, hosted by Adviser MP Mr. Chong Kee Hiong. Many were delighted and praised the good work that DSA(S) is doing within the Bishan community.

The session brought 12 representatives from the various VWOs together in Bishan CC on the 28 August 2017 to share on the initiatives and programmes organised for better mutual understanding; thereby forming an extensive social support network for efficient referrals and leveraging on each other's resources/expertise.



(Left to right) Mr. Andrew Soh, Mr. Alvin Ho, Mr. Chong Kee Hiong (MP Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC) and Mr. William Lee (Chairman Bishan East-Thomson CC).

Representatives from various VWOs shared about the need to form a networking group and were delighted to get the endorsement from Mr. Chong Kee Hiong. We look forward to more informative sessions in the future and remain excited to be part of the Bishan East-Thomson support network.

Happenings @ DSA

AEP @ "Get Active" Singapore

On 11 August 2017, AEP Learners and Trainers were invited by staff of Tote Board to participate in "Get Active" Singapore. This is a signature National event of Sport Singapore, to encourage sport for all.

The event was held at the Padang from 10am to 12pm. Our Learners were paired with staff from Tote Board and they participated in various sport activities like Frisbee, Climbing Wall, Basketball and Floorball. Our Learners also had a guided tour of the Active Health Enclosure where they learned about the importance of keeping fit and being healthy.

For some of our Learners, it was their first time participating in Climbing Wall. With the support and encouragement from the staff from Tote Board, they managed to overcome their fear and conquered the wall.

Our AEP Learners had a great workout at the Padang too. Thank you to all at Tote Board for such an educational and wonderful day!



AEP Members raring to start the day's activities.



AEP members learning how to throw Frisbees.



AEP members together with staff from Toteboard posing for a photo to remember the day.

Happenings @ DSA

Angelynn's ITP Internship Experience (15 May 2017 to 14 July 2017)

I was attached to the ITP (Infant Toddler Programme) department twice every week, mainly assisting in setting up and thereafter clearing up the playrooms. Some of my duties included cutting up fruits for the children during "snack time", hand-making play-dough from scratch and interacting directly with the children in the programme.

Outside of the playroom, I assisted in creating resources for the ITP team, including song cards and other visual resources to aid in the children's development, which opened my eyes to the specific methods in which these professionals use to develop the children.

Through the short time I have spent here, I have gained much more than I could ever provide to the team and to the children—I had the opportunity to see how privileged I am. I was able to pick up motor-skills at a much quicker pace than these children when I was a child, and yet how many of us tend to take this for granted. Since the children tend to be slower in progressing with their development, I learnt to be especially patient in my time here.

Despite the short period of time spent with the children in this programme, I have grown to be emotionally-attached to them and even feel the desire to help them progress even further in future. Most of the time, in our society, children are socialised in a similar way, to follow a certain route, to act and think in a certain way. This is especially effective for when the children are progressing in development at a similar pace. But since the children in DSA(S) are unique and progress at varying paces, there is no one-off strategy in catering to their needs and to help them develop. Each child also has different interests and level of development from birth, and the ITP programme here acknowledges that, as well as, caters to each individual child with precise methods of development.

On top of placing the child's development and well-being as a priority, the focus here at DSA(S)'s ITP also rests with instilling consistent parent-child interactions. Every child is accompanied by at least one parent or care-giver during the sessions, and they directly involve themselves in structured-play with the child. This allows them to apply what they learn here and back home as well, so as to ensure that the ITP session does not necessarily have to end even when they leave the centre. This inclusion of the parents and caregivers led me to witness them interact with one another, share their stories, confide and advise each other. Through common ground, they bond and form a connection otherwise not commonly achievable, showing me that the ITP programme goes beyond purely focusing on developing life skills for the child, but also acts as a family and support system beyond the four walls of the playroom.

Watching these caregivers interact with their children has opened my eyes to be compassionate, patient and to better control my emotions.

The lessons I have learnt from my experience here transcends physical boundaries, despite my departure the skills that I have learnt here, I will always carry with me through whichever path I eventually settle on.



Angelynn interacting with an ITP learner.

Pre-school Awareness (PCF Tampines East & Zoo Phonics)

The month of July was filled with charity drives and awareness events spearheaded by Pre-schools.

PCF Tampines East had a novel attempt in spreading the message of inclusivity to the young ones in a form of an awareness talk and also fundraised via an open house. The students and teachers will follow up with a visit to Down Syndrome Association (Singapore) in September to meet and conduct activities at our centre.



Charity Carnival conducted by Zoo-phonics.



Andrew Soh sharing with pre-schoolers on Down syndrome.

Zoo-phonics on the hand, conducted a family carnival at their 2 centres and invited our Youth for Causes student group to the event by setting up a booth to raise awareness and funds for DSA(S). Pre-school engagement is an excellent awareness platform for DSA(S) to nurture a young society that incorporates individuals to be part of a comprehensive society regardless of their background.

Educational Outreach with Schools

Two student volunteer groups from Hwa Chong Institution (Project Take Flight & Project Reincarnation) engaged our members in a spectrum of activities in the months of June and July. Their projects were holistic in nature and included educational and fun camps that involved hands-on activities such as making slime and the sharing of Hwa Chong's campus culture of their school, as well as taking our members to the River Safari during the June holidays. These students had a memorable experience with our various members and we hope to carry on the tradition of meaningful student initiated endeavours with schools.

We also conducted an awareness talk at Serangoon Junior College, a school that carries out annual events with DSA(S). Since it was their final year before the merge with another JC, this was a rather emotional event for the students and teachers. The participating students were from various Co-Curricular Activity groups who also wrote encouraging messages to our members and Association after the talk. We look forward to future collaborations with this enthusiastic bunch.



Clockwise from top left: Day-camp with Project Reincarnation, River Safari Outing with Project Take Flight, Awareness talk with SRJC, Learning Journey with Project Take Flight.

Ministry of Health Hari Raya Performance

On 29 June 2017, the Drums Prodigy Ensemble from Down Syndrome Association (Singapore) was invited to perform for the management and staff of Ministry of Health and Minister Gan Kim Yong for the Hari Raya Celebration at the College of Medicine Building's Auditorium.

The audience which consisted of staff from MOH and beneficiaries from Lions Home for the Elders were an integral part of the performance where everyone clapped to the beat of the drums. It was truly a memorable day as our talented performers continued to receive accolades from various organisations.



The Drums Prodigy Ensemble posing for a photo outside the MOH office.



Performing up on stage during MOH's Hari Raya celebrations.

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For non-members, you may view our newsletter online at our website:

www.downsyndrome-singapore.org or email to: andrew@downsyndrome-singapore.org for a copy.

Down Syndrome Association (Singapore)—DSA(S) welcomes your feedback and suggestions, do contact us at Tel: 6500 9321.

For more information on some of DSA's events, programmes, services or event photos do visit our website: www.downsyndrome-singapore.org or Facebook: [facebook.com/downsyndromesingapore](https://www.facebook.com/downsyndromesingapore)