

PROJECT CHEER 2015 LAUNCHED

TO BRING THE OLD AND YOUNG CLOSER TOGETHER

Text by Tan Chin Tuan Foundation

Following the success of the pilot run of Project Cheer, by the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation (TCTF) in partnership with Anglo-Chinese Junior College (ACJC) last June, students from ACJC returned to volunteer again. 180 students spent their March and June school holidays making a difference to both the young and old through various befriending initiatives.

Themed “With Cheer, We Bond” (因爱而结), the teens carried out a range of activities to interact with over 600 beneficiaries from eight charities. The project is seeded, facilitated and funded wholly by TCTF, to encourage students to

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– Ms Yap Su-Yin, CEO, TCTF

Intergenerational bonding, as senior citizens, youth and children take turns showing their prowess at traditional and modern games. Photo: Mervyn Sek, ACJC

carve out time – in spite of their busy co-curricular and academic schedules – to create happy experiences for others.

On 16 March 2015, children from Students Care Service (Clementi Centre) were taught simple dialect phrases by the ACJC students, which they used to initiate basic conversations with the elderly at Lions Befrienders (Clementi) Senior Activity Centre (SAC). In a subsequent session of “Project Cheer”, the elderly of Lions Befrienders (Ghim Moh) SAC connected with the youth and Care Community Services Society (New Town CareHut) children over a shared love for traditional and modern games.

The students had about two weeks to devise original project plans with minimal guidance. The idea was for them to take ownership of their plans. TCTF, ACJC and the charities’ representatives were “actively engaged in the participants’ journey of discovery, as well as their personal

transformation and character growth,” said Ms. Yap Su-Yin, CEO of Tan Chin Tuan Foundation. “There is sustainability when the values are correctly imparted from the beginning. All the charities are in the vicinity of the school, because we wish to emphasise that you need not go far to do charity work. Charity begins at home,” she added.

For a multiplier impact, Project Cheer involved two core aspects: First, the JC students ran their first Project Cheer with a children’s charity. Second, later that same day, the JC students – together with the children from the children’s charities - brought Project Cheer to the charities serving the aged. The purpose was for the teens to become mentors, and to demonstrate to the younger children – who face challenging personal circumstances that are usually outside their control – how they too can make a difference in other people’s lives, and become a joy to others.

