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22 MARCH 2015
60 CENTS
MCI (P) 044/12/2014

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Companies are fast making workers' wishes come true with various work-life balance initiatives.



MANAGING HOME AND OFFICE



More working parents are hoping for a family-friendly workplace to achieve better work-life balance. **By Fawwaz Baktee**



The U Family Happiness Crew at the surprise appreciation visit to the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS).

Currently, there are 165 unionised companies that provide employees with some form of family-care leave beyond what is required by legislation.

As indicated in the Ministry of Manpower's (MOM) Conditions of Employment 2014, there are now more companies offering Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) and non-statutory family-friendly paid leaves.

NTUC U Family mentioned that it will continue to work with unions and relevant partners to raise awareness on the importance of having such family-friendly practices at the workplaces.

THE HAPPINESS CREW

As part of an initiative for companies to adopt family-friendly workplaces, NTUC U Family introduced the U Family Happiness Crew who is putting together surprise visits to show appreciation to employers and co-workers.

An online nomination for the U Family Happiness Crew was launched early January this year and about 70 nominations were received within the nomination period of two weeks.

The Happiness Crew made its first round of surprise visits on 13 March 2015 to the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) and SMRT's Customer Relations Department with their respective nominators to show appreciation to employers and co-workers who have shown a high level of understanding and have gone the extra mile to help and encourage workers with challenges.

Following responses to the Happiness Poll, the Labour Movement is calling for more support for expectant women at the workplace.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

NTUC U Family has once again called on employers to provide more workplace support for working parents and greater workplace flexibility for expectant women workers.

This comes after results of the Happiness Poll conducted by U Family in December 2014 revealed that among 987 respondents who were expectant women and women who were pregnant in the last two years, only three in 10 were able to change their work hours with their employers. Only four in 10 were allowed to go for prenatal checks without utilising their annual leave, sick leave or no pay leave.

The Right Balance

In its third year, the Happiness Poll 2014 saw the participation of over 4,700 U Family members of different gender, age, employment and marital status.

TIME OFF

Noticing that not all employers exercised the same level of flexibility at work for expectant workers, NTUC U Family Director Toh Hwee Tin said: "Generally, an expectant woman would make 10 to 15 antenatal visits of one to two hours each during her entire pregnancy. There are often instances when she may have to go for check-up during work hours, thus, NTUC U Family hopes that employers can consider supporting the expectant employees by offering time-off so that they can go for prenatal checks."



Among the 189 respondents who were pregnant at the time of the survey, nine in 10 intended to return to work after their maternity leave.

"Employers should look at family-friendly measures as long-term benefits to the company. The extent which companies support and accommodate the needs of expectant women workers is also a test of our willingness and readiness to help them manage work and family responsibilities.

"Such supportive arrangements will not only help encourage mothers to return to work after their delivery, but more importantly, attract and retain these valuable talents in their jobs," added Ms Toh.

The poll also revealed that 1,113 parents are still planning for more children and about 42% of the remaining 3,431 parents regretted not having more.

Work-Life Choices

Company's support helps expectant mother choose between quitting and staying.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**



Norashidah Ali is now the proud mother of a healthy baby girl.

"I had a fall when I was away for my honeymoon in Krabi. I don't know, maybe that is what caused it. It was really unexpected," said Norashidah Ali.

In March 2014, the 26-year-old had a miscarriage during her first pregnancy. In the aftermath of the ordeal, Norashidah's family was there for her to lend their support.

IN A DILEMMA

Norashidah then conceived again in May 2014. However, due to a difficult first trimester, she had to go on leave very often but her sick leave and annual leave were not enough to cover her miscarriage and second pregnancy.

"I wanted to resign because I did not want to trouble anyone. When I was not around, my colleagues had to cover my work, and I felt really bad," she said.

CARING EMPLOYERS

Norashidah spoke to her manager at SMRT Corporation where she works as a Senior Customer Relations Officer. That was when her manager allowed her to take time off from work after

encouraging her to stay. The company also allowed her to report to work at a later time as long as she could finish her work.

On some days, Norashidah was allowed to work from home replying to customers' emails when she felt unwell to travel. Her manager also took the time to understand Norashidah's situation and her commitments to her family. Together with her, they worked out a plan to ensure that she would be able to fulfill her work and family responsibilities.

"I think employers should be more flexible towards expectant mothers, because those nine months are not easy to go through. And it's good for colleagues to help with the workload as well," she said.

As advice for expectant mothers, Norashidah said: "If you have problems, you should speak with your supervisor. I'm sure they will understand and are willing to be flexible."

Norashidah is currently enjoying her new role as a mother. She gave birth to a healthy baby girl on the second day of the Lunar New Year this year and is currently on maternity leave.

Working Dad

A flexible work arrangement is working wonders for one dad out there in the corporate world. Meet Richard Sim.

By **Ryan Chan**

Richard Sim is a 47-year-old father of two working at Carlsberg Singapore and has seen the Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) result in more time for his family.

Carlsberg Singapore, which is unionised under Singapore Industrial & Services Employees' Union (SISEU), recently won in the Most Enabling Companies for Dads category in the Best Companies for Mums Award 2014.

Apart from flexible working hours, the company also has other family-friendly initiatives such as providing employees with three days of paid family leave to attend to family-related matters and having the option to work from home, up to two times a week.

QUALITY TIME FOR FAMILY

For Richard, the benefits have certainly made a difference. The support and trust given by his company has allowed him to play a bigger role as a working parent, and share in other family responsibilities with his wife.

"My younger child is going through an important schooling year due to the PSLE examinations," he shared.

"Being able to work from home has allowed me to spend more time with her for exam preparations. This has not only saved me money from hiring private tutors but has also given me the opportunity to participate in my child's development and education."

INCREASED MORALE

Family leave has also allowed him to bring his mother-in-law for routine medical check-ups, allowing him to utilise his annual leave for other purposes, like spending more quality time with his loved ones.

Such trust between employee and employer is a win-win situation for both parties. Being granted the time for personal and family obligations allows employees to focus better at work, increasing productivity and employee morale for the company.

Richard takes a selfie with his family.



The trust between Richard Sim and his employer Carlsberg Singapore enables him to have more quality time with the family.

QUICK LOOK

The NTUC Women's Development Secretariat (WDS) is a strong advocate of work-life balance, and has funding programmes like the **WorkPro Work-Life Grant** and **U Flex Family-Friendly Grant** in place to encourage employers to adopt them.

U Flex Family-Friendly Grant

While the Work-Life Grant allows for FWA, the Family-Friendly Grant is an incentive for companies to implement Family Care Leave (FCL) and Family Support Scheme (FSS). Employees can receive leave over the stipulated annual leave for family commitments. **Companies which qualify for the funding will be eligible for a seed funding of \$10,000.**

Best Companies For Mums

WDS holds a Best Companies for Mums Contest with five categories to recognise companies that implement this. Workers who feel that their companies have enabled them to have more time for family commitments can nominate their companies. **Each shortlisted nomination will receive \$50 shopping vouchers, with winning nominations receiving \$200 shopping vouchers. Contest closes 15 May 2015.**

Solid Support

Despite the heavy responsibility she has to shoulder, this 30-year-old has an iron will and believes that dreams do come true, with a little help.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

Nurulasyiqah M Taha is the sole breadwinner of her family. Her father is a retiree, her mother is a homemaker who suffered from a partial stroke five years ago, her brother is an undergraduate. Nurulasyiqah on the other hand has spinal muscular atrophy and uses a motorised wheelchair for mobility.

“I feel responsible for my loved ones. I have to find means and ways to support them,” she said.

Although Nurulasyiqah works full-time as an Accredited Tax Specialist at the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS), she also has a dream of competing in the Paralympics as a national boccia athlete.



Nurulasyiqah flies the national flag at a recent boccia competition overseas.

SUPPORT FROM WORK

Her employer has been an ardent supporter in helping Nurulasyiqah achieve her dreams. They are more than willing to allow her to take sabbatical leave to train for the Paralympics.

“The challenge for me has always been trying to finish my work before I leave for competition. I’m very thankful that I have very supportive and understanding colleagues and supervisors,” she said.

Her colleagues willingly cover her duties and take on the additional workload whenever she has to attend training locally or travel overseas for competition.

“They are always happy to share my excitement whenever I compete. Other than supporting my dreams, my colleagues are always there for me.

“They also are very understanding. Whenever I need to lift heavy things, they willingly help me out. I’m very thankful to have great colleagues like them,” said Nurulasyiqah.

SUPPORT FROM HOME

Her family has also been supportive of her sporting dreams.



With support from both colleagues and family, Nurulasyiqah M Taha hopes to qualify for the Paralympics.

“Initially when I started competing competitively, my family was concerned whether I was able to balance work and training.

“But I think I have proven to them that I can manage both well. Now whenever I have a competition, they will remind me to have fun and enjoy myself,” she said.

NTUC THIS WEEK

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ANDROID



Romancing U

A happy family begins with a happy marriage... Back for the seventh year, the Romancing U event saw some 500 couples nestling into a romantic evening on 14 March 2015 at Fort Canning Park. Organised by U Family and hosted by Nikki Muller, the evening served up smooth jazz tunes by *Summertime Hotshots*, laughter by stand-up comedian Hossan Leong and entertainment with the screening of the movie *Date Night* under the stars. We bring you snapshots of love in the air... By Fawwaz Baktee



Couples having fun creating their own artwork and at the same time expressing their love to each other.



Date Night: Couples having a relaxing night under the stars with a movie screening.



Romancing U 2015 sees the participation of both young and mature couples.

Snapshots

A quick round up of what went on in and around the Labour Movement recently.

By **NTUC This Week Team**

Making Work Fun



Workshop participants doing some painting to relieve stress.

ESU's Jamboree 2015 conference serves up tips to help Early Childhood Educators enjoy their work.

By **Shukry Rashid**

Some 230 Early Childhood Educators attended the Education Services Union (ESU) Jamboree 2015 held on 7 March 2015 at Peninsula Excelsior Hotel. Into its fourth year, Jamboree 2015 is an annual conference under ESU's professional chapter for Early Childhood Educators.

Themed 'Becoming a Better Me', this year's conference focussed on promoting professional development that applied to both the educators' personal and professional.

EDUCATING EDUCATORS

Educators and employers alike were encouraged through a talk by Dr Low Guat Tin from Greenleaf Centre for Servant-Leadership on how to enjoy their work. Workshops by Lorna Whiston and Paintertainment Asia were also conducted on how to be an effective and better communicator and ways to relieve stress through art.



Early Childhood Educators having a little bit of fun stretching before a talk.



Priority Assistance

The NTUC GIFT Group Insurance offers members help during difficult times – whether it is permanent disability or the sudden loss of a loved one.

Case File: Mdm Sng, 57, is the wife of the late Mr Tan Khim Lee, 57, a Lecturer who had been a member of Union of ITE Training Staff (UITS) since 1980 and also served as its Internal Auditor since 2013.

Mr Tan suffered a sudden heart attack in November 2014 and left behind Mdm Sng and two children – a son currently serving National Service and a daughter, a second year Polytechnic student.

In March 2015, a cheque of \$11,000 was presented to her by UITS General Secretary Mr Elson Koh, UITS General Treasurer Mr Law Chee Kheong and Deputy Director of NTUC Care & Share Department Ms Phyllis Lim. As the late Mr Tan had served in the union, the insurance payout was double the sum assured.

"... I am thankful for this payout and will set this aside for my children's education as they are my priority," said Mdm Sng.

For more information on NTUC GIFT, please log on to ntuc.org.sg/ucare.

International News



Keeping Abreast

The Australians are committed to creating a family-friendly workplace, especially when it comes to creating a pro-breastfeeding environment. And firms have a good reason to do so as it may help with their bottomline.

The Australian Breastfeeding Association's "Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace" initiative strongly encourages companies to provide breastfeeding support for working women in the hope of preventing them from delaying their return to work, reducing their work hours or leaving their jobs altogether.

A key part of the initiative is the Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Accreditation programme that recognises and promotes best practices in workplaces including providing assistance in establishing facilities and developing policies that support working women.





Union of Security Employees (USE) exco members pose for a photo with Hong Kong delegates.

PWM Goes International

Delegates from Hong Kong's security sector are looking to learn from Singapore's PWM.

By **Ryan Chan**

An eight-member delegate team from Hong Kong's Security Services Training Board recently came to Singapore, visiting the Union of Security Employees (USE) and other security sector government agencies and training institutions.

The delegates were here to learn more about the Progressive Wage Model (PWM) and to discuss the latest manpower and training developments in the security industry.

The PWM is a four-ladder approach that enables workers to earn better wages through upgrading themselves to enhance skills and productivity. It will be mandated from 1 September 2016 onwards as part of licensing conditions for security agency licences, with potentially up to 29,000 beneficiaries.

ROLE MODEL

Delegates were left impressed with the potential of what PWM can achieve, and

will look at how they can implement the model into the current infrastructure in Hong Kong's security sector.

Among them were Jane Curzon Lo, Chairperson of Security & Guarding Services Industry Authority. She said: "I'm excited to see how the model pans out after the mandatory implementation. The model would be useful for any sector, not only for the security industry, but also for workers to have an advancement opportunity."

Effective Middlemen

USE urges Security Branch Officials to play a bigger role in management-union relations.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

At a recent quarterly branch communication session, Union of Security Employees (USE) said that with greater involvement, Branch Officials can positively impact the lives of fellow workers, act as a bridge between management and the

union and be the voice of workers.

Addressing over 20 Branch Officials, representatives of USE touched on issues such as the Progressive Wage Model (PWM), Industrial Relations, membership and leadership.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

On Industrial Relations, the union said that it will be looking to achieve better management-union relations and enhance workers employment terms and conditions.

Branch Officials were encouraged to have greater involvement in Collective Agreement (CA) negotiations to resolve disputes.

"You would have to act as a communication person between the union and management. Of course, the union will help you to move along this path," said USE Head IRO Roy Tan in his presentation.

PROGRESSIVE WAGE MODEL

Branch Officials were also called on to be "the eyes and ears" of the union with the roll-out of the Progressive Wage Model on 1 September 2016.

"When the PWM implementation takes place and if you see any employer paying below the required amount, you would need to let us know. All security officers will be receiving an increase next year," said USE Executive Secretary Steve Tan in his address to the Branch Officials.

A New Culture Of Learning

How will the SkillsFuture Credit scheme help you? A recent dialogue with union leaders and members provides some answers.

By **Ryan Chan, Shukry Rashid** and **Fawwaz Baktee**

During the Post-Budget Dialogue for union leaders on 17 March 2015, the SkillsFuture Credit was highlighted as the key to the future.

Starting from 2016, all Singaporeans aged 25 and above will be given an initial SkillsFuture Credit of \$500 which can be used for a broad range of courses for education and training which are supported by government agencies.

Some 270 union leaders had the opportunity to engage the panel headed by NTUC President Diana Chia, Secretary-General (SG) Lim Swee Say, Deputy Secretaries-General Heng Chee How and Chan Chun Sing, and Senior Minister of State (SMS) for Transport and Finance Josephine Teo.

“Whatever we learned before we joined the working world is not enough. We are in an era where we have to take greater ownership of our learning and promote a new culture of self-learning,” said SMS Teo.

SKILLSFUTURE CREDIT

SG Lim also emphasised that the purpose of the SkillsFuture Credit is for the workers to take ownership of their own upskilling and future employability. He said training courses that are related to their current jobs should be borne by the employer and not taken from the SkillsFuture Credit.

“When we introduced the SkillsFuture Credit, we were very clear in our minds that we should not allow the employers to take advantage of the SkillsFuture Credit and cut back on their training,” he said.

Referring to the Budget 2015 where there is Enhanced Training Support for SMEs which provides 90% course fee subsidy and absentee payroll of \$7.50 per hour till June 2018, SG Lim said that the training costs of the workers will be heavily subsidised and there will be no reason for the employers to take advantage of the workers’ SkillsFuture Credit.

ONLINE COURSES

Another issue that surfaced during the dialogue was if the SkillsFuture Credit could be used by stay-at-home mothers through platforms such as online courses.

In reply, SMS Teo said that the SkillsFuture Credit is for all Singaporeans, including women who are not in the workforce. However making courses available online, although sensible, is not something Singapore is ready for.

She explained: “The US has Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), where you can do a large number of modules to qualify you for a degree. The intention is to make them equally available in Singapore. This will take time to build up.

“Things that we do not have, we must aim to achieve. We haven’t been idle in the last five to 10 years. The education and training infrastructure has been built-up... there is the intention of one day making online-courses available to individuals like stay-at-home mums, helping them to stay current and take charge of their upgrading,” she said.

“Whatever we learned before we joined the working world is not enough. We are in an era where we have to take greater ownership of our learning and promote a new culture of self-learning.”

Senior Minister of State (SMS) for Transport and Finance Josephine Teo



Education For All Ages

In the second of a four-part series to highlight the social good done by the NTUC Social Enterprises, we focus on the Education Cluster.

By **Geraldine Peters**

NTUC First Campus

NTUC First Campus (NFC) was originally known as NTUC Childcare, which was established in 1977 after it took over a crèche situated in Kallang Bahru. To help mothers return back to the workforce, the then NTUC Childcare acquired over nine additional crèches from 1977 to 1979 to offer more day care services.

First Campus then become one of the nine co-operatives of NTUC in the year 1992 and has since never lost sight of its motto to provide both quality yet affordable childcare for the masses through its various centres. NFC childcare centres include My First Skool, The Little Skool-House International and The Caterpillar's Cove – totaling 125 centres island-wide, educating and nurturing over 13,000 children.



KEY INITIATIVES

- In 2007, **the Bright Horizons Fund (BHF) was started to reach out to the underprivileged children from low income families**, so that no child should be deprived of an education because of his or her background. **Since the start of BHF, a total of 5,235 children have benefitted.**
- In 2012, the Development Support Programme was set up to cater to not just the educational and intellectual development of children, but to nurture them emotionally as well. Separated into two parts, Learning Support and Therapy Intervention, it ensures the child's full cognitive development and also provides parents with a good gauge on their child's development through assessments.



NTUC LearningHub

Corporatised in 2004, LearningHub (LHub) has since upheld its vision to transform and enhance the lifelong employability of Singapore's workforce. Having helped a total of 1.7 million workers to upskill to date, it has also benefitted some 13,700 organisations through over 380 training courses held by 1,300 trainers.

LHub has also successfully evolved with the changing times and has been amping up its relevancy by linking up with learning communities and incorporating new methods of imparting knowledge via mobile and e-learning avenues.

KEY INITIATIVES

- **LHub is an approved Singapore Employability Skills (ES) training provider.** ES is a training initiative by the Workforce Development Agency (WDA) to help the Singapore workforce be prepared and effective in their skillsets for various industries. It has since been recognised by 300 companies within the island as an alternative qualification to an 'N' or 'O' level certification.
- Introduced in 2006, **LHub's Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) programmes have helped organisations** learn how to protect their employees and their businesses.



The Bright Horizons Fund has been helping children from low-income families take the necessary steps to live life like others their age. Here is John's* story.

(*Names in this article have been changed to protect their identity and privacy.)

Jennifer Kuan, Senior Manager at NFC's Child Enabling Unit is one of the many people helping John.

A SPECIAL KIND OF HELP

By Geraldine Peters

John was only six when he was first referred to NTUC First Campus by the AMK Family Service Centre. His grandmother Mdm Jane*, who is also his sole care-giver, explained that

John had been disruptive in class by throwing tantrums in his previous childcare centre.

"He was just filled with so much rage, he would get

into fights with his friends and even his cousins and he would do things just to get attention, just to be funny, unaware of whether it was wrong or right," she said.

THE BACKGROUND

Both his parents were in prison for drug offences since he was little, causing John to not have much contact with them during his formative years. While his grandfather was busy at work at a fruit stall, his grandmother struggled to care for him, as she also had to tend to John's younger brother who had mild autism. Having been rejected by other childcare centres near his home, John was instantly accepted by My First Skool (MFS) in Compassvale after an assessment was done by the Development Support Programme (DSP) team.

Considering his family's situation, First Campus' Child Enabling Unit (CEU) stepped in to help John ease into MFS.

John has since graduated successfully and MFS helped secure a place for him in a primary school staffed with a therapist, a counsellor and student-care.

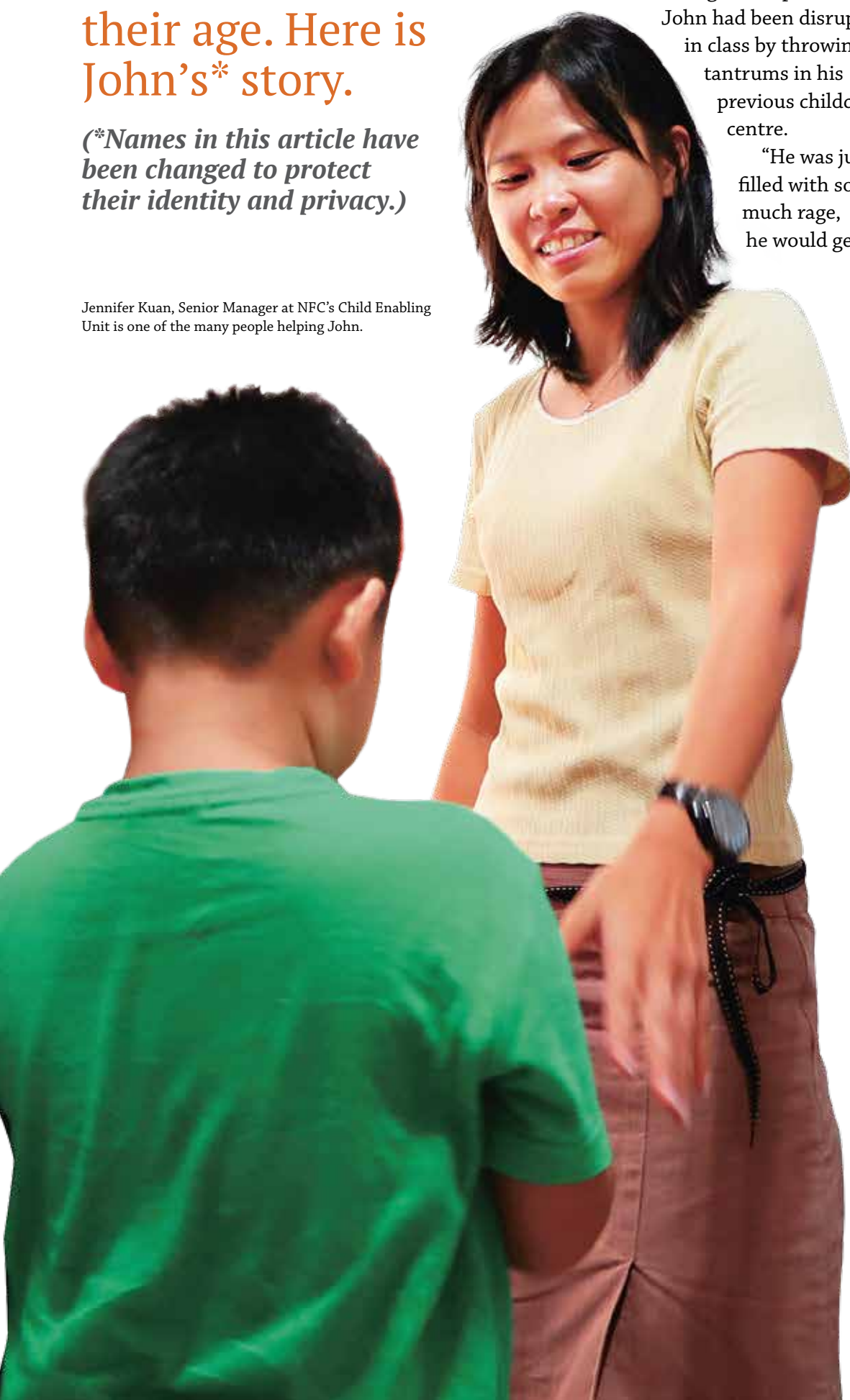
His learning capabilities have improved, and he has a better grasp of socially-acceptable behaviour.

About Bright Horizons Fund

The Bright Horizons Fund was started by NTUC First Campus Co-operative Limited in 2007 with the primary objective of helping children from low-income families get access to quality pre-school education provided by My First Skool, despite family circumstances.

Since its launch, the Fund has helped 5,235 children in a variety of ways. With its focus on developmental support for children and engagement of family rather than just financial support, **the Bright Horizons Fund has seen a steady increase in beneficiary numbers with 568 children in 2011 to 1,274 children in 2014.**

To donate to or for more information on Bright Horizons Fund, log on to: <http://www.ntucfirstcampus.com/corporate/bright-horizons-fund>.



“I Enjoyed Every Minute...”

After more than 40 years since 1974, AUPE stalwart makes way for the new. He shares with us his time in the Labour Movement.

By **Marcus Lin**

Time and tide wait for no man. But this did not dampen the spirit of Amalgamated Union of Public Employees (AUPE) General Secretary Ma Wei Cheng as he stepped down at the union's second Quadrennial Delegates Conference on 7 March 2015. He is now AUPE Adviser.

He counts himself fortunate to have been AUPE General Secretary from 2011 to 2015 and identifying current General Secretary Yeo Chun Fing (see story on right).

SERVING THOUSANDS

Mr Ma, whose forte is Industrial Relations, said: “I had the privilege and honour to serve and help thousands of public employees. I was always mindful of the union's role in service excellence and public service integrity.

“On the one hand, the union wants public employees to enjoy going to work and feel proud doing so. On the other hand, we are residents of Singapore and collectively want a first class public service.”

On his last three years in the National Wages Council (NWC), he said: “I am happy that AUPE has achieved a lot for public employees, particularly the lower-wage ones.”

THE UNION CAUSE

On his last four years in the NTUC Central Committee (CC), Mr Ma shared: “I found the CC union leaders very passionate about the union cause. Discussions were very absorbing and intense. We had so much to discuss and time was always short.

“I learnt a lot from them, particularly Secretary-General Lim Swee Say. He cares very much for Singapore and working people, particularly low-wage workers. He is a visionary with many ideas.

“His ways of executing them were always different but exciting. A great communicator, he would moderate his content, context, stories, jokes, words and phrases to suit his audience, particularly the workers. The few who teased that his English is no good missed the point.”

Ma Wei Cheng



Yeo Chun Fing

Staying Relevant

New AUPE General Secretary is all set to tackle new challenges.

By **Marcus Lin**

Newly-elected AUPE General Secretary Yeo Chun Fing is the union's fifth since its founding in 1959.

He has been a union official since 1986 and served full time from 1995, rising to Deputy General Secretary, and now to his new appointment.

He said: “I had the privilege of working with and learning from the late G Kandasamy and Paul Tan and in recent years from Teo Yock Ngee and Ma Wei Cheng, all different in style but good men who shaped and defined the character of AUPE.”

GROWING MEMBERSHIP

While Mr Yeo's focus is to continue with the effective advocacy and representation of members and improving labour-management relations, he also sees the need to grow the membership, especially among the growing number of PME (Professionals, Managers and Executives).

“The employees in the public sector are increasingly more PME in character – better educated and more professional and with different expectations. The challenge now and in the future is how AUPE can continue to remain relevant in a public service that is PME-driven,” he added.

Educating PME's

SUBE's PME's sit in for a session that spells out their employment rights.

By **Shukry Rashid**



Assistant Secretary-General Patrick Tay updating SUBE's PME's on the Industrial Relations Act amendment.

Some 30 Professionals, Managers and Executives (PMEs) from the Singapore Union of Broadcasting Employees (SUBE) got a chance to find out more about the Industrial Relations (IR) Act amendment in a 'Know Your Employment Rights' session held at Mediacorp on 2 March 2015.

The talk was conducted by Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) Patrick Tay, who is also the Director of NTUC Legal Services Department and Director of PME Alignment Unit.

The session spelt out the impact of the IR Act amendment, which comes into effect on 1 April 2015, will have on PME's while educating them on their employment rights in the event of any workplace issue or dispute.

ASSURANCE AMIDST RESTRUCTURING

With organisational restructuring, many PME's voiced their concerns such as retrenchment and redeployment issues during the session.

SUBE Deputy Executive Secretary Steven Goh said: "Workers feel apprehensive, helpless and clueless at times; some demoralised over how matters were handled.

"What the Union is advocating for are fairness and transparency to the workers amidst such restructuring. The Union as the sole collective bargaining body has to be treated as an equal partner and be consulted on all IR matters."

"Unions have all the while given people the impression that they represent only the rank-and-file workers... I came here to clarify my doubts and also to understand a little bit more on the developments in the IR Act," said 55-year-old participant, Mr Siau Hai Jin.

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What's Happening, Where

Slumber Party With The Family!

Miss those slumbers parties you had as a kid? Relive those memories with the whole family with Slumber Pillow Fight Partay. Get into the thick of things with a pillow fight, have fun in a bouncy castle, go all out in style for the best dressed slumber combatant and group up for some family movie time with the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* movie screening.

11 April 2015, 6.30pm onwards, Downtown East D'Marquee. Event fees: \$10(NTUC/nEbO Plus!, eXplorerkid members), \$15 (Public), \$30 (Group of four). For registrations and more enquiries, please visit http://www.downtowneast.com.sg/events/slumber_pillow_fight_partay.



Ultimate Family Challenge

Fancy some friendly competition while kicking up some friendly fun with the whole family? Then the Ultimate Play Family Championship 2015 is just the event! Get ready for some obstacles and stations which will test your speed, strength, agility and mental ability as a family.

Programme highlights include a High Energy Body Jam Workout, six Ultimate Obstacle Courses, six Ultimate Telematch Stations and a NERF War Game. To sweeten the day out, winning teams will receive trophies and attractive prizes worth over \$1,700!

13 June 2015, 2.30pm – 6.30pm, Grand Lawn @ West Coast Park; Challenge fees- \$20 (NTUC members), \$40 (Public). Event registration starts at 1.30pm. For more enquiries, please email ufamilyevent@ntuc.org.sg.

Festive May

Orchid Country Club's (OCC) May Fest is back this year with a round of exciting activities and delicious bites for NTUC members!

You can hit the greens with the May Fest Golf Challenge where the Hole-In-One prize is a pair of return tickets to Japan, or join the 12th Super Sprint Series OCC/ACC Run Challenge with a race route that goes through the Club's exhilarating golf course.

Finish off the evening with a gastronomical spread after a fulfilling day livened up with band performances, stage games and a lucky draw!

OCC May Fest: For more more information, please call Vanda Terrace at 6750 2200 or visit <http://goo.gl/wg4RZ1>.



Golf Challenge: For more information and registration, please call Golf Department at 6750 2111 or email golfregistration@orchidclub.com.



12th Super Sprint Series, OCC/ ACC Run Challenge: Please visit <http://goo.gl/cc1ZRn> for more information and email sports@orchidclub.com to register by 1 May 2015.



This Week In History



NTUC This Week turned 50 last year. It was first published in November 1964 as a monthly titled *Perjuangan NTUC* until May 1980 when it became a fortnightly renamed *The Singaporean*.

In this regular series, *NTUC This Week* brings you on a journey into the Labour Movement's history with excerpts of main stories from past issues. This week, we look at mid-March and 1 April 1982.

By **Marcus Lin**

Re-structuring unions and co-ops

Mid-March 1982: Former NTUC President Devan Nair outlined the case for restructuring the Singapore Industrial Labour Organisation (SILO) and Pioneer Industries Employees Union (PIEU) when he announced the formation of the NTUC Task Force on 15 March 1980. He explained to more than 1,000 branch leaders of SILO and PIEU who together represented 110,000 workers.

Omnibus unions, covering workers in a wide range of quite dissimilar and unrelated industries and trades, were categorically out for the following reasons:

Singapore's experience with omnibus unions showed they were liable for capture or abuse. He said: "In the 1950s and 1960s, omnibus unions like the Factory and Shopworkers' Union and the General Workers' Union were captured by communist united front operators. In the early 1960s, the operations of the Manual and Mercantile Workers' Union, which was allowed to cover both white-collar and blue-collar workers, came under the scrutiny of a Judicial Commission of Inquiry."

Omnibus unions concentrated too much power in the hands of too few individuals over too many workers. Such workers felt lost in a huge impersonal conglomerate of branches in a wide variety of trades and industries.



The whole hall echoing with cries of "Merdeka" as branch officials with clenched fists affirm their loyalty to the NTUC.

"Omnibus unions are also inefficient," he said. "Each IRO handled anything between 15 to 20 branches belonging to a variety of trades and industries. As a result, the IRO is unable to specialise in the special problems of any particular industry or trade. Our IROs are therefore 'Jacks of all trades and masters of none'."

Mr Nair added that with restructuring, branches will obtain greater autonomy ensuring that branch unions will have sufficient funds to run their own branch or plant level social and recreational programmes. Unlike when some branch union leaders had to beg for money from HQ even to buy stamps.

9th industrial union registered

Silo, PIEU restructuring over

1 April 1982: The restructuring of SILO and PIEU is over. The ninth and last in a series of new industrial unions has been registered, thus ending the restructuring. The latest union, Building Construction and Timber Industries Employees' Union (BATU), is 4,500 strong and formed by merging two of the remaining divisions of SILO and PIEU.

Following the appointment of a seven-man Task Force on 15 March 1980 by then NTUC President Devan Nair to restructure the two omnibus unions into smaller and more effective industry-wide unions, the 110,000 members of the two unions were first placed under 10 industry-wide divisions.

The plan then was to form 10 unions from the 10 divisions. However, the

remaining two divisions were merged for effective organisation and to provide a larger pool from which to select young grassroots leaders.

Two years after the formation of the Task Force led by then NTUC Secretary-General Lim Chee Onn, the major task of forming industry-wide unions is completed. The Task Force, now expanded to 15 members including executive secretaries of the new unions, systematically and efficiently formed the new unions.

Constitutions were drafted, young grassroots leaders picked to form pro-tem executive committees, the proposed unions registered with the Registry of Trade Unions and inaugural delegates conferences held to hand over the unions to their elected leaders.

The earlier eight registered unions

	UNION	Registered	Membership (as at 31 Jan 82)
1.	National Transport Workers' Union (NTWU)	16 June 81	11,801
2.	Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Employees Union (SMEEU)	16 June 81	7,600
3.	United Workers of Electronic and Electrical Industries (UWEEI)	14 June 81	26,510
4.	Metal Industries Workers' Union (MIWU)	4 Aug 81	7,452
5.	Chemical Industries Employees Union (CIEU)	9 Oct 81	3,787
6.	Food and Beverage Industrial Workers' Union (FBIWU)	15 Oct 81	3,434
7.	Singapore Industrial and Services Employees' Union (SISEU)	18 Nov 81	3,638
8.	Textile Industries Workers' Union (TIWU)	20 Jan 82	4,700



Going to the grassroots. Mr Lim Chee Onn meets officials at the SBS branch.

力求工作 与家庭平衡

工运展开幸福调查之后呼吁雇主
给予待产孕妇更多的支持。

全国职工总会的U家族署再次呼吁雇主给予工作家长更多的职场支持，并让待产孕妇享有较大的工作灵活性。

这是U家族署于2014年12月展开幸福调查的结果出炉之后向雇主表达的愿望。该调查显示，在987名待产孕妇，以及过去两年怀过孕的妇女当中，10名只有3名获准更换工作时间，4名获准无须请年假、病假或无薪假便可以去作产前检查。

步入第三届的2014年幸福调查，参与者都是分属于各种性别、年龄、职业和婚况的U家族成员，人数共有4700多名。

放假作检查

留意到雇主准许待产女性工友从事灵活工作的接受度不一，职总U家族署署长杜惠珍说：“一般上，待

产孕妇在整个怀孕期须进行10至15次的产前检查，而每一次的检查耗时一两个钟头。鉴于检查时间常常和上班时间相撞，因此职总U家族署希望雇主能准许待产员工放几个钟头的假去作产前检查。”

189名接受调查时正在怀孕待产的工作妇女当中，10名有9名表示想在产假过后继续工作。

“雇主应当考虑实施亲家庭措施，因为这有利于公司的长远利益。公司支持和照顾待产孕妇需求的程度，也是检验我们协助工友兼顾工作与家庭责任的意愿和准备状况。”

“这种支持和安排，不仅鼓励妇女产后回返职场，更重要的是能够吸引和留住宝贵的人才。”

调查结果也显示，1113名家长仍计划多生育，而在其余的3431名家长之中，约42%表示后悔没多生养孩子。