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09 JULY 2017
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The Young Ones

A lifestyle community that empowers youths - that's really what nEbO is all about! Join us as we celebrate the many fun and fabulous things they have done in the last 10 years in developing work-ready, world-ready and life-ready youths of today.

TOP STORIES

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Amalgamated Union of Public Employees General Secretary Yeo Chun Fing shares his union journey and how members are being helped to keep up with the times.

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From a small team to a family, a club and a training ground, nEbO has come a long way to help youths in various aspects.

By **Avelyn Ng**

nEbO started out as a special project in 2007, as part of the Labour Movement's "All C.A.N (Collars, Ages, and Nationalities)" strategy to engage three generations of the workforce – workers of yesterday, today and tomorrow. It reaches out to students aged 12 to 25.

Its rapid growth in youth participation surpassed expectations and led it to officially become NTUC's junior membership arm in October 2010.

Beyond privileges provided through the nEbO Plus! card, members gain access to valuable platforms that allow them to showcase their talents, spearhead their own community projects, and pick up new knowledge.

nEbO taps on the Labour Movement's wide network and forges partnerships to maintain a steady flow of opportunities for its members. Healthcare Services Employees' Union (HSEU) has for instance, paved ways to events such as nEbO's secondary school learning journey to MOH Holdings.

"Learning journeys are good ways for youths to prepare themselves for future jobs. It is how HSEU works closely with nEbO to provide exposure and experience to young members to help them comprehend what it is like to be working in an environment of intense care delivery demand.

"We believe that through such collaborations, HSEU and nEbO can give youths more direct career guidance and give them a headstart to their careers," said HSEU President K Thanaletchimi.

Over the years, nEbO has organised a total of 46 learning journeys with the support of various unions and companies.

In light of its 10th birthday, nEbO rolled out 10 activities across the months of June and July, including contests, giveaways, flash deals at selected merchants, as well as discounted nEbO memberships and rates to Wild Wild Wet and D'Resort.

"As an engagement engine driven by NTUC Club, nEbO can connect with its members through a series of youth-initiated events and social activities at platforms like Downtown East. Aside from play, we also have great working relations with the unions, and our nEbO members can gain access to companies and organisations for work-ready programmes through them," said NTUC Club CEO Yeo Khee Leng.

nEbO
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THE JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP ARM OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Through the Years

2017

2016

Launch of Jobs On Board platform
It is a jobs portal that provides quality internship, part-time jobs and useful articles to deepen youths' understanding about work-life and to ultimately successfully transit them to the future workforce.

2015

Celebration of 100,000 nEbO members
This milestone is achieved in a short span of three years after hitting 60,000 members on nEbO's 5th birthday in 2012. Wild Wild Wet is also introduced as the official clubhouse for nEbO.

2012

New initiative to increase reach in schools
The first Memorandum of Understanding is inked with the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) to expand development opportunities for their students. To date, nEbO is in partnership with all polytechnics and ITEs in Singapore. ITE College East even has a nEbO-ITE East Curricular Activities Club.

2011

Introduction of strategic pillars
nEbO focuses on developing youths to become work-ready, world-ready and life-ready.

2009

Start of the learning journey series
The first session is held at Port Authority of Singapore in collaboration with Singapore Port Workers Union. Today, the series has benefitted 1,688 students in total.

2007

Establishment of nEbO
nEbO is set up to nurture emotional connection with youths via six interest communities – entrepreneurship, care, gaming, lifestyle, music, and sports.

nEbO: A Life of its Own

We catch up with NTUC Alignment Director Lim Eng Lee to hear how nEbO's rapid growth is all due to youths whose ideas continue to keep it relevant.

By **Avelyn Ng**

NTUC Club Director for Community Engagement and Membership Lim Kay Min takes a photo with NTUC Alignment Director for nEbO Lim Eng Lee at nEbO's office.

nEbO, NTUC's junior membership arm, sees approximately 10,000 new members every year. This is more than triple those that leave after they turn 25. The secret to growing its membership base: ideas from the youths.

NTUC Club Chief Operating Officer and NTUC Alignment Director for nEbO Lim Eng Lee described nEbO as a club "for the youths by the youths".

He said: "Most of our programmes are youth-initiated. My number one criteria is that the project in question cannot be self-serving. As long as they use their time or talent to benefit others, we will provide them with the financial support, organisational capabilities and guidance to realise it."

Over the years, there have been 302 youth-initiated projects spearheaded by active nEbO Champions. There are currently 375 of them, managed by nEbO's advisors.

PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

"There was little engagement with the youths back in 2007. We felt that it was important to engage the pre-labour segment as they are the workers of tomorrow but we did not know what form it would take.

"The conceptualisation took a lot of teamwork and trial-and-error. There was a lot of brainstorming done before we embarked on building nuclei in institutions and youth networks, as well as developing targeted approaches to youths with different interests," reminisced Mr Lim.

According to NTUC Club Director of Community Engagement & Membership Lim Kay Min, nEbO's outreach strategy now comes in three phases – contact to offer perks and expand membership base; connect to build relationships with the youths and create a multiplier effect through their personal networks; and convert to transit them to the workforce and flow into Young NTUC.

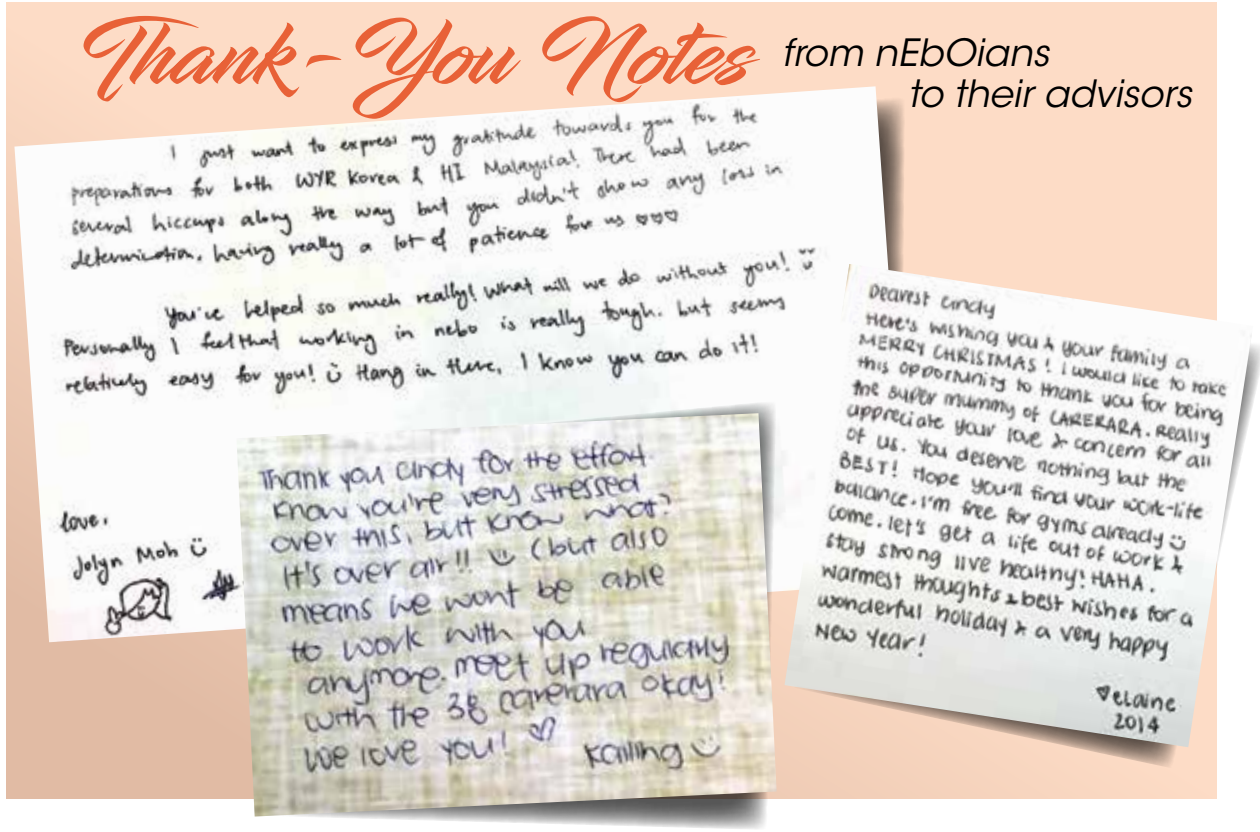
nEbO keeps in touch with its Champions after they have graduated. Several alumni have come back to support its events and even work in the NTUC Club unit.

"We let youths decide what they want to get out of nEbO. Some are in for the benefits and events, while others go on to start something of their own and be a mentor. Either way, I'm glad that the Labour Movement touched them in some way and they will one day grow up with the understanding of what it is all about. My proudest achievement is to see that nEbO has taken a life of its own and is running based on what my team has set in motion.

"Of course, I feel those who will gain most are our nEbO Champions. By leading projects and planning events, they are getting prepared to enter the workforce already, and that has been nEbO's mission since the beginning," shared Mr Lim.

Going forward, nEbO will hone in on helping its members skill up for the working life, as part of the work, world, life-ready strategic pillars introduced in 2011. When probed on what exactly is in store for nEbO, Mr Lim joked, "ask the youths!"

Thank-You Notes from nEbOians to their advisors



nEbO NUGGETS

Did you know nEbO made it to the Singapore Book of Records FOUR times?

In case you missed it:

- 413 members participated in the "**Largest Group of People Doing Reverse Bungy Jumps in One Location**" on 12 March 2011 at G-MAX Reverse Bungy, Clarke Quay
- 802 members participated in the "**Most Number of Flying Fox Rides in Five Hours**" on 9 March 2013 at Sentosa
- 198 members participated in the "**Most Number of Powerfan Jumps in Five Hours**" on 9 March 2013 at Sentosa
- 118 members participated in the "**Largest Floating Human Logo**" recently on 8 June 2017 at Wild Wild Wet in celebration of nEbO's 10th anniversary!

Growing Up with nEbO

Three members talk about their experiences as part of nEbO and the various skills they have picked up along the way.

By **Avelyn Ng**

Poh Yong Shun, now 20, was a soft-spoken youth during his secondary school days. That started to change after he became a committee member for nEbO's Care Community, where he brought his ideas to life in ground-up projects and rallied his peers to join him.

One such example was the Thank Your Intern Day (TYID) 2016, where he served as the chairperson of the organising committee. Yong Shun garnered overwhelming interest from his course mates in human resource management with psychology (DHRMP) at Republic Polytechnic. Together, they embarked on a challenge to set a new direction for the fourth instalment of TYID.

"In 2016, we wanted to go beyond go beyond raising awareness and create meaningful engagement between the employers and interns. Our aim is to debunk misconceptions, deepen understanding on workplace challenges and exchange personal experiences," said Yong Shun.

> "The resources and the showcasing platforms provided by nEbO are hard to come by. Without them, our ideas will just remain as ideas."

The committee organised sharing sessions in the lead-up to TYID 2016, culminating in an interactive forum where panellists from ITE College Central, Singapore National Employers Federation and Singapore University of Technology and Design's human resource department addressed concerns regarding internship from both the employers' and interns' perspectives.

"By mobilising the youths and empowering them to conceptualise most of the activities, nEbO builds their creativity, teamwork, leadership and problem-solving skills. Their efforts complement our curriculum by giving the students a very good understanding of what they need to do to stay relevant as future HR practitioners," said Republic Polytechnic DHRMP Programme Chair Beatrice Tan.

For the next instalment, Yong Shun hopes TYID can gather attendees from more industries and small companies to help youths from various fields gain relevant insights and seek internship opportunities during networking sessions.

Tan Yan Ning, 24, is now working as a special needs teacher at Metta School. The business administration degree-holder said her career choice may have been very different, if not for the exposure she received from nEbO.

One of her first contributions to nEbO was in 2009, where she sat as a committee member for Ways In Sharing Happiness (W.I.S.H). A project to revamp poor living conditions, Paint A New Hope, was born there.

"We recced for houses that needed our help and saw many families literally with just a roof over their heads. A lot of the homes were infested with pests, and were messy and dirty. Sometimes, it was a big family forced by circumstances to live in a small space, other times it was lonely elderly living on biscuits and neglecting their quality of life. We had to educate them in their language and in a sensitive way," said Yan Ning.

> "What we gained is far more than just privileges and access to events. There is something for different youths and you form friendships for life."

Passionate about the cause, she went through nEbO's leadership programme LEAD (Learn, Engage And Develop) and started several initiatives such as collecting food donations for the underprivileged and visiting old folks' homes to provide company.

"The needs of these people are underserved and I want to do more. I also picked up a lot of transferable event-planning and social skills in the process," said Yan Ning.

> "I think our generation is moving from bread and butter to wanting to value-add to the wider community. There are many methods now available for us to do that, and NTUC is one of them."

Sebastian Tay, 30, first got acquainted with nEbO eight years ago through its sports community. An avid bowler, he represented nEbO in several competitions and mentored others in the bowling interest group.

Upon graduation from nEbO five years ago, Sebastian joined Young NTUC Junior Circle (YNJC), a leadership transition programme for graduated nEbO leaders to flow in and serve in the Young NTUC community.

"I went through four phases in nEbO – participating, organising, leading and mentoring. Now at Young NTUC, the cycle restarts. As part of my development, I get to evaluate nEbO youth-initiated projects and administer the Young NTUC Seed Funding for them. Now that I'm a working adult, I attend talks to understand issues in the workforce and learn new skills too," said Sebastian.

He also encouraged his friends and family to join the Labour Movement. Many of his bowling mates are in U Sports and his sister is a nEbO alumni.

At A Glance: Key nEbO Programmes

Here's a quick look at how nEbO helps youths become work-ready, world-ready and life-ready...

Compiled by **Avelyn Ng**

W.I.S.H

Ways In Sharing Happiness (W.I.S.H) piloted in 2009 as a one-day event to encourage the spirit of volunteerism among youths. Since 2014, it has grown to become a month-long campaign to instill a sense of doing good among youths.

One of the youth-initiated projects under nEbO's W.I.S.H 2017, Heritage Snapshots, saw youths and active agers volunteer as stylists to give 30 seniors from SASCO Senior Citizens' Home a simple makeover, followed by a photo-taking session around National Art Gallery. The organising committee hopes that this initiative gave seniors a boost of confidence, while allowing the volunteers to share their skills and experiences to give back to the community.

SOYA

nEbO's Spirit of Youth Awards (SOYA) was launched on 2 April 2011 at Zouk to recognise, commend and encourage nEbO youths' contributions. The award ceremony was attended by more than 300 nEbOians, as well as outstanding individuals, teams and valued corporate partners who have contributed to the betterment of nEbO. The year 2017 marked the first time nEbO worked together with Young NTUC on SOYA to recognise awardees from both groups.

LEAD

Launched in 2011, nEbO's LEAD (Learn, Engage And Develop) programme aims to mould potential youth leaders to contribute at the community level to ensure continual leadership renewal within the Labour Movement.

84 nEbO leaders have gone through the two-day LEAD programme, after it was enhanced in 2014 to include elements of outdoor leadership activities. Not only do these nEbO leaders learn through play, they also develop leadership competencies in a fun and vibrant environment.

YES

In 2008, nEbO co-organised their first Youth Entrepreneurship Symposium (YES) with NUS Biz Ad Club to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit among youths through a series of workshops and talks. The 10th edition was held earlier this year.

Past speakers include the following successful entrepreneurs:

- Fred Then, CEO and Founder, Tjaara Pte Ltd
- Monty MG Hooke, Singapore City Leader, Dent Global
- Raniel Lee, Founder & CEO, Jobook Singapore, inspireARTS and OARS Academy

HEADSTART

Headstart was started in 2015 to prepare students right from their secondary school days and expose them to various industries so that they can better plan their career paths. It comprises two components – industrial talks by practitioners and experts, and learning journeys to various industries.

In 2016, nEbO hosted speakers from the Singapore Psychological Society, Buds Theatre and Land Transport Authority for the industrial talks, as well as industrial visits to Marina Bay Sands and Buds Theatre.

WORLD YOUTH RALLY

nEbO started working with Hostelling International, a federation of 70 National Youth Hostel Associations which has over 4,000 affiliated hostels globally, in 2009 for local youth leaders to have a cultural exchange with overseas delegates. The aim is to help broaden their perspectives and encourage sharing of experiences.

In July 2016, two nEbOians were selected to attend the 41st World Youth Rally organised by Hostelling International Korea at Seoul, South Korea. During their interaction with hostel mates across races and nationalities, the nEbOians learned about tolerance and respect, as well as new cultural norms.

In Parliament

We bring you recent updates on debates taking place in Parliament.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**

FINANCIAL SECTOR CHALLENGES

There is a need to look after the interests of workers in the financial industry in the event there are cases of distressed financial institutions, said NTUC Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) and MP for West Coast GRC Patrick Tay.

He made the point during the parliamentary debate on the Monetary Authority of Singapore (Amendment) Bill on 4 July 2017.

Parliament passed amendments to the legislation which primarily aim to enhance the framework to deal with cases of distressed financial institutions.

"Some organisations, in a bid to restructure, would transfer employees from organisation to organisation ,causing distress to workers.

"I have also come across accounts of workers in the financial sector who have been laid off, especially mature workers, who have had difficulty in landing their next job," explained ASG Tay, who is also co-chair of the Financial Sector Tripartite Committee.

Replying during the debate, Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills) and member of the MAS Board of Directors Ong Ye Kung assured that all affected workers will be treated fairly.

PRIVATE HIRE CAR UPDATE

According to the Ministry of Transport, as of 28 June 2017, the Land Transport Authority received about 43,000 applications for the Private Hire Car Driver's Vocational Licence (PDVL).

In a written reply, Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan told Parliament that 42,000 applications or 98 per cent had been processed and 38,000 had been approved.

Replying to a question tabled by NTUC Assistant Director-General and MP for Ang Mo Kio GRC Ang Hin Kee on the figures for PDVL applications, Minister Khaw added that 450 applications had been rejected because of failed background checks.

The rest were rejected because they were invalid, in instances where the applicant did not have the minimum two years' Class 3/3A driving experience.

Winning the Digital Disruption Game

The Labour Movement can help working people grow their existing skillsets and learn new ones.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**

Digital disruption is permeating all sectors, and regardless of which sector working people are in, it is important for them to upskill, ride the disruption and compete for jobs of the future.

NTUC Assistant Director-General (ADG) and Director of U Associate and U PME Vivek Kumar made the point in his latest blogpost titled 'What it takes to survive digital disruption?'"

ENGAGING CEOS

ADG Vivek said the Labour Movement engaged 20 CEOs, presidents and managing directors from Fortune 500 multinational corporations (MNCs) across diverse sectors for a candid discussion on the challenges of digital disruption.

"Those who will survive and thrive amidst digital disruption are focused on how they can work with and not against digital technologies to enhance their capabilities and add value to their organisation or workplace," emphasised ADG Vivek.

LABOURBEAT

'What it takes to survive digital disruption?' by ADG Vivek Kumar was first published on 6 July 2017. For the full article, visit **www.labourbeat.org**. Any extracts should be attributed back to the author.

Future Outlook:
Start Imagining Today!

A smart ring that doubles up as your wallet and keys, a glove that increases your strength and a security robot car that does the patrolling … Things will never be the same again. *Look out for more in this regular column.*

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

One Size Fits All

We all have days when we forget our house keys or even our wallets. Guess what, that may soon almost never happen again.

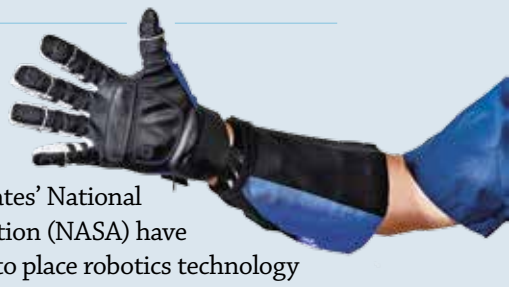
There is now a smart ring called Token which allows you to make payments, start your computer and unlock the door to your house just by a simple wave of your finger.

Made out of silver, Token uses Near Field Communication (NFC) technology and is compatible with MasterCard and Visa. It can also be linked to your EZ-Link card so your daily commute on trains or buses can be more of a breeze.

The ring contains fingerprint and optical proximity sensors to make sure that only you can use it.

Source: **www.businessinsider.com**

Iron Grip



If you're a fan of *Iron Man*, then we are sure you're going to like this – researchers at the United States' National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) have collaborated with General Motors to place robotics technology into work gloves. The result – wearers become super strong.

Objects that weigh 10kg will seem to weigh only 2kg to the wearer. The gloves weigh in at about 900g and contain sensors that detect gestures and movements to activate synthetic tendons that support and amplify the strength of the wearer.

Surely, these gloves can revolutionise how we do things in the manufacturing or construction industry if it's mass produced. We wonder how good they will be during gym workouts!

Source: **www.nasa.gov**

Robo-Security

Singapore is facing a shortage in security officers and everyone is talking about using technology to address this. But what kind of technology exactly?

Enter the O-R3 – an autonomous security robot car the size of a golf cart that can patrol the outdoors of a premise 24 hours a day, every day.

According to its maker, Singaporean startup OTSAW Digital, the O-R3 has "perception sensors" that can detect anomalies like unattended bags, and differentiate between visitors and intruders.

The more it exposes itself to its environment, the more it learns. It can also navigate to avoid obstacles in its path and self-charge when its battery gets low. What's cooler is that the robot comes with an accompanying drone that gives an aerial view of the complex it is guarding.

Source: ***www.otsawdigital.com***

Diving Into a New Career

NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) helps one working Singaporean get a second chance to secure his dream job.

By **Jonathan Tan**
Photo by **e2i**

Commercial diving is a career path that Mohamed Amzah Hassan, 35, has been aspiring to pursue since completing his National Service. However, a lack of local training opportunities and the prohibitive cost of going overseas for the relevant training saw him turn to a sales career instead.

"After spending 14 years in sales and marketing, I was retrenched from my role due to the economic situation. During the transition, I browsed through e2i's website for career opportunities in other industries. When I saw a partnership between e2i and KBA Training Centre, I felt that this was a second calling to do what I've always wanted to do and got to it straight away," said Amzah, who was drawn to sense a of accomplishment and responsibility that come from carrying out tasks underwater for ships and oil rigs.

CREATING AN OPPORTUNITY

As part of the Place-and-Train programme collaboration between e2i and commercial diving training institution KBA Training Centre, Amzah attended a briefing that enabled him to learn more about the industry, available career opportunities and job scope details.

With the subsequent training partially subsidised by e2i, Amzah undertook the Commercial Diver Training Level 1 - Commercial SCUBA and Level 2 - Surface Supplied Diver courses between April and June 2016.

"Without having this Singapore-recognised training, I could not have secured a job with my current employer, KBA Marine Services, who only hires trained and certified commercial divers and not recreational scuba divers for work," he shared.

Since joining the company in late 2016, Amzah has also attended additional training courses in areas such as risk assessment and safety management.

FUTURE PLANS

"My career aspirations are to first complete a top-up course with the Professional Divers Association (PDA) in Scotland and gain global offshore commercial diving qualifications. In the long term, I see myself becoming a diving supervisor and a client service representative in the marine or oil and gas industries," shared Amzah.

He added that this training has also had a positive effect on his outlook on life, especially when it comes to safety.

"It has benefitted me in a lot of ways beyond just diving. The overall aspect of the work that we do before a dive, such as what checks we need to do, and what kind of personal protection equipment to put on, has made me very self-aware of such aspects at home and in the workplace."

To find out more about the different career support services available at e2i, visit ***e2i.com.sg***.

Giving OPEC Workers a Boost

The Labour Movement organises OPEC Month to help working Singaporeans in the oil, petrochemical, energy and chemical (OPEC) industries pick up new and relevant skills.

By **Jonathan Tan**

Senior Parliamentary Secretary of Ministry of Trade and Industry Low Yen Ling, who is the guest-of-honour, visiting various booths at the career fair.

To prepare workers in the vibrant OPEC industries for a future shaped by digitalisation and technology, the Labour Movement, supported by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) and the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB), launched the first OPEC Month during the 'Future of Energy & Chemicals Seminar 2017' on 30 June 2017 at Singapore Polytechnic.

Some 1,000 Singaporeans are expected to benefit from the month-long engagement, which includes seminars, masterclasses, workshops and training programmes organised by NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute). A career fair offering some 100 positions from 14 participating companies will also be held on 14 July 2017 at e2i west.

ENABLING WORKERS

"NTUC's OPEC cluster has been working closely with our tripartite partners to create better jobs and good career progression for all Singaporeans.

"With rapid changes in the business environment and the demographics of people, there is a need for the industry to work together with various partners to build up business competencies and capabilities of the working people, as well as attract new talent to join the cluster.

"We are having the OPEC Month, starting today, to meet the need of developing new skillsets in the workforce," said Chairman of NTUC's OPEC Cluster and NTUC Vice-President K Karthikeyan.

The event also saw guest-of-honour Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Low Yen Ling underscore the importance of unions as crucial partners in the industry transformation efforts. She detailed the skills framework that is being developed by EDB, SSG and Workforce Singapore.

She said the framework will enable people working in the sector, or who may be planning to join the industry, make informed learning, training and career choices with up-to-date information on the respective OPEC industries and manpower landscape.

SUPPORT FOR PMETS

Miss Low also announced that more than 130 companies from the Chemical Industries Employees' Union and United Workers of Petroleum Industry have been granted in-principle approval by e2i to be part of the OPEC cluster's Energy and Chemical Manufacturing Professional Conversion Programmes (PCP). The PCPs are targeted at helping professionals, managers, executives and technicians making mid-career switches acquire the necessary skillsets and competencies to enter industries under the OPEC cluster.

"e2i has been working very closely on the ground with the OPEC partners and training providers to identify skills and knowledge gaps in the changing landscape of OPEC industries, especially with the proliferation of digital technologies where processes and systems are becoming more intelligent and seamless. As an enabler, we aim to equip industry practitioners with competencies and future skills to help them chart their career pathways, and address the needs of the cluster as it transforms," said e2i CEO Gilbert Tan.

GOOD TO KNOW

NTUC's OPEC Cluster consists of seven unions:

Chemical Industries Employees' Union
ExxonMobil Singapore Employees Union
Singapore Refining Company Employees' Union
United Workers of Petroleum Industry
Union of Power and Gas Employees
Singapore Shell Employees' Union
Amalgamated Union of Statutory Board Employees

*Visit **e2i.com.sg/OPECMonth** for information and registration for OPEC Month activities.*

NTUC THIS WEEK

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ANDROID

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Bridging Gaps, Creating Opportunities

What are the trends and opportunities in OPEC industries? And how are workers making the most of them? We highlight what our unions have been doing.

By **Jonathan Tan**

The OPEC industries are not spared from the effects of Industry 4.0.

Characterised by digitalisation, automated processes and cyber-physical systems, the jobs in the OPEC industries will evolve and require new skills in areas such as the Internet of Things as companies transform themselves to maintain their competitiveness.

UPGRADING FOR THE FUTURE

Explaining how digitalisation is not a revolution but an evolution, NTUC OPEC Cluster Chairman and United Workers of Petroleum Industry General Secretary K Karthikeyan said the cluster's priority is in equipping workers with the proper skills to tackle the changes Industry 4.0 presents.

He also highlighted the need to find the balance between having qualifications, skills and experience.

"Fresh entrants into the industry have theoretical knowledge but no practical skills. The existing workers have the experience but no theoretical skills. We want to try to find the balance.

"We have to change our mindsets and learn. We are helping our members better map their careers by identifying skills gaps, and how they may bridge them and eventually do better for themselves.

"Our companies are also supportive of this. Our strength as a cluster is when we rally our different unions, companies and members together to help change and improve things in the industry," said Mr Karthikeyan.

DOING MORE

Aside from the OPEC Month engagements *(see story on left)*, the OPEC cluster of unions have been doing more to upskill their workers by teaming up with SkillsFuture Singapore and the Institutes of Technical Education and polytechnics.

Mr Karthikeyan said the cluster is looking at how skills gaps may be bridged by counting accumulated work experience and knowledge as relevant NITEC and diploma programme modules. The workers can then take on additional training to earn new qualifications.

To make things easier for workers to access training and upskilling, the cluster is also lobbying for training institutions to be located closer to where the OPEC companies are situated. Mr Kathikeyan also added that the unions are also working with the companies to identify workers who are the most vulnerable and schedule them for training.

Specifically in the chemical industry, Chemical Industries Employees' Union President G Rajendran said that the union is working with ITE and polytechnic partners to develop bite-sized and stackable training to offer more flexibility for workers as they upgrade themselves. These training courses should be kept relevant and timely with changes in the industry and take into account the job experience of the worker.

"Workers should keep an open mind and embrace changes as well as the need to stay relevant to their industry. The unions will be there to assist them along the way," he said.

REMAINING VIGILANT

"The OPEC industries are cyclical but the cycles are now much shorter. No company only focuses on one area of business and they have the resources to diversify their portfolios.

"One of the problems is that jobs in the OPEC industries are considered dirty and dangerous. But we mitigate the perceived higher risks with higher salaries. Over time, if the workers pick up the relevant skills in the workplace and continue to upgrade themselves, they will be able to get good salaries," explained Mr Karthikeyan.

While there are good career opportunities, changes in the industry present their own set of challenges.

"While we prepare for the future, we also need to be mindful of the challenges. In good or bad times, companies do restructure, merge or undergo liquidation.

"In such instances, unions must be able to act fast and ensure the members' interest are well looked after. This could mean exploring the chance of redeployment or placement opportunities, to ensuring they receive a fair redundancy package, or other efforts," said Singapore Shell Employees' Union President Sebastian Koh.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

To harness the growth in the OPEC industries, Stolthaven Singapore, a unionised chemical and gas company has partnered the Labour Movement to create good jobs.

"Our partnership with NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) started in 2013, where we developed a Place-and-Train programme for professionals, managers, executives and technicians. We have also worked with UWPI to develop a progressive career pathway for our terminal operators. With that collaboration, we carved out an on-the-job training programme for them. We also participated in career fairs organised by e2i, and got in touch with people who wanted to join the energy and chemicals industry," said Chok Vui Shung, the company's general manager.

Snapshots

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

Compiled by **Ramesh Subbaraman**

Enhanced Wages for Cleaners

Enhancements to the Progressive Wage Model (PWM) for the cleaning sector took effect on 1 July 2017.

In December last year, the Tripartite Cluster for Cleaners released a report and recommended an increase of $60 in 2017 and 2018, and $80 in 2019 of basic wage levels across all three cleaning sub-sectors. These include cleaners employed in office and commercial buildings, food and beverage establishments and conservancy work.

IMPLEMENTATION

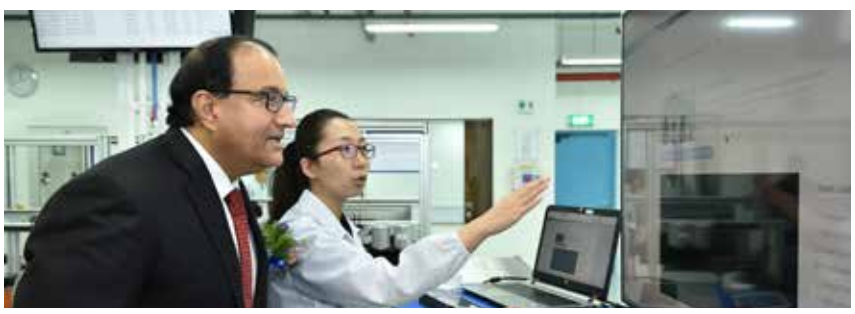
The PWM enhancements will benefit over 40,000 resident cleaners. In a statement on 30 June 2017, the Manpower Ministry said all new service contracts that take effect from 1 July 2017 will come under the enhanced PWM wage schedules.

As for existing service contracts which came into effect before 1 July 2017, the cleaning sector has till 1 July 2018 to comply with the updated wage schedules.

NTUC Assistant Secretary-General Zainal Sapari said the wage increment was another significant step to provide income security to the cleaners.

"It also addresses the challenges faced by service providers to remain competitive during contract renewals. I hope this will improve and uplift the cleaning industry.

"Moving forward, we will continue our efforts to push for skills upgrading of our cleaners, as well as higher rate of technology adoption by both service providers and service buyers," he said.



Transforming SMEs

A call has been made to local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to continue innovating to remain competitive and tap on new opportunities for growth.

Speaking at the opening of Feinmetall Singapore's Digital Manufacturing Facility on 28 June 2017, Minister for Trade and Industry S Iswaran emphasised that the Government is committed to helping SMEs which have the passion to reform.

He noted that the Precision Engineering Industry Transformation Map launched in October 2016 includes plans to help local enterprises build capabilities to leverage opportunities from digital manufacturing.

Minister Iswaran described Feinmetall Singapore as a success story and a role model for SMEs as it has been stepping up to build capabilities through digitalisation.

Earlier this year, the Committee on the Future Economy in its recommendations highlighted the importance of a globally competitive manufacturing sector for Singapore.

Thank You FW Ambassadors

About 300 foreign worker (FW) ambassadors who have been helping the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) extend its outreach to the foreign worker community were lauded at an appreciation dinner on 1 July 2017. There are approximately 1,400 foreign worker ambassadors.

The inaugural Foreign Worker Ambassadors Appreciation Dinner was attended by employers of foreign workers and dormitory operators. Also at the event was NTUC Assistant Director-General and Chairman of the Migrant Workers' Centre Yeo Guat Kwang.

At the event, Manpower Minister Lim Swee Say (pictured second from left) presented the Star Ambassador Awards to three outstanding ambassadors for their dedication and exemplary efforts in providing assistance to fellow workers.

NTUC marching contingent rehearsing for the National Day Parade 2017.

Gearing Up for National Day!

National Day is coming up and here at NTUC, we are all excited to celebrate Singapore's 52nd year of independence! This year's theme "#OneNationTogether" marks the first time a hashtag has been incorporated to share celebratory moments on social media.

As per tradition, NTUC has formed a marching contingent for the National Day Parade on 9 August 2017. Largely comprising members across 19 unions and nEbO, the contingent will go through 16 rehearsals leading up to the big day. Kudos to all 44 participants for their dedication and tireless spirit!

If you want to know more, look out for national day-related coverage in our upcoming issues!

BIZ $ TALK WITH

Reuter Chua

The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) Singapore is working with the Labour Movement to help professionals stay ahead of the numbers game.

Story and Photo by **Jonathan Tan**

A global study by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) titled 'Professional Accountants - the future' revealed how change drivers such as technology, globalisation and regulations are disrupting the jobs of finance professionals.

To keep ahead, ACCA has had to incorporate situation-based assessments and turn its focus to professional skills in its training curriculum.

"Technology is speeding up global changes and making them more widespread. For an accountant, the effect is more dramatic because for the longest time, accounting was a controlled function and everyone had their own way of doing things.

"Right now, things like blockchain, an internet-type system where data is safely distributed, are standardising systems," said Reuter Chua, country head of ACCA Singapore, an NTUC U Associate.

Accounting now is more than just checking figures and reconciling numbers. It now includes working with digital systems, interpreting the figures and using them to advise or make recommendations to clients or business partners.

"If you are going to be an accountant of the future, you will need other skills besides technical skills. An accountant's role is to understand regulation and then simplify that for clients. In Singapore particularly, the majority of our businesses are going global. Accountants will need to know how these business model changes are happening and then be ready to analyse and advise businesses," said Reuter.

PARTNERING THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

"In our collaboration with NTUC, we are looking at research in Singapore to anticipate future job and skill changes. This will benefit both ACCA and NTUC members by providing us a sense of where we are in our ability to anticipate and respond to changes in job roles," he said.

ACCA hopes to partner the Labour Movement in developing short courses in finance and accountancy that will be accessible to all Singaporeans. At the same time, ACCA also hopes to support women keen on rejoining the workforce.

"We are hoping to tap into the Returners Programme, where we can support women who are returning to the workforce to enable them to contribute to the economy. Hopefully, we can provide joint programmes to encourage women to come back into the workforce and prepare them to come back productively," said Reuter.

LEVERAGING THE NETWORK

Admittedly, coping with change is easier said than done. Reuter added that this is where a global outlook is very important.

"If we open our eyes and look around in the world, there are many examples of different ways to do things and this is where networking is going to be important. Not just networking with the same kind of people you know, but networking with others outside your comfort zone.

"When we talk about social networking and gaining business exposure for accountancy professionals, networks like U Associate are fantastic. We are also trying to collaborate with professional bodies who are involved in the IT and cyber-security sector," he said.

INSIDER'S GUIDE

Think Ahead ACCA

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) Singapore

Established in Singapore: 1936

Why: To prepare accountants to be relevant and work-ready for businesses. It seeks to open the profession to all people with qualifications that meet the diverse needs of trainee professionals and their employers.

Became an NTUC U Associate on: Mar 2017

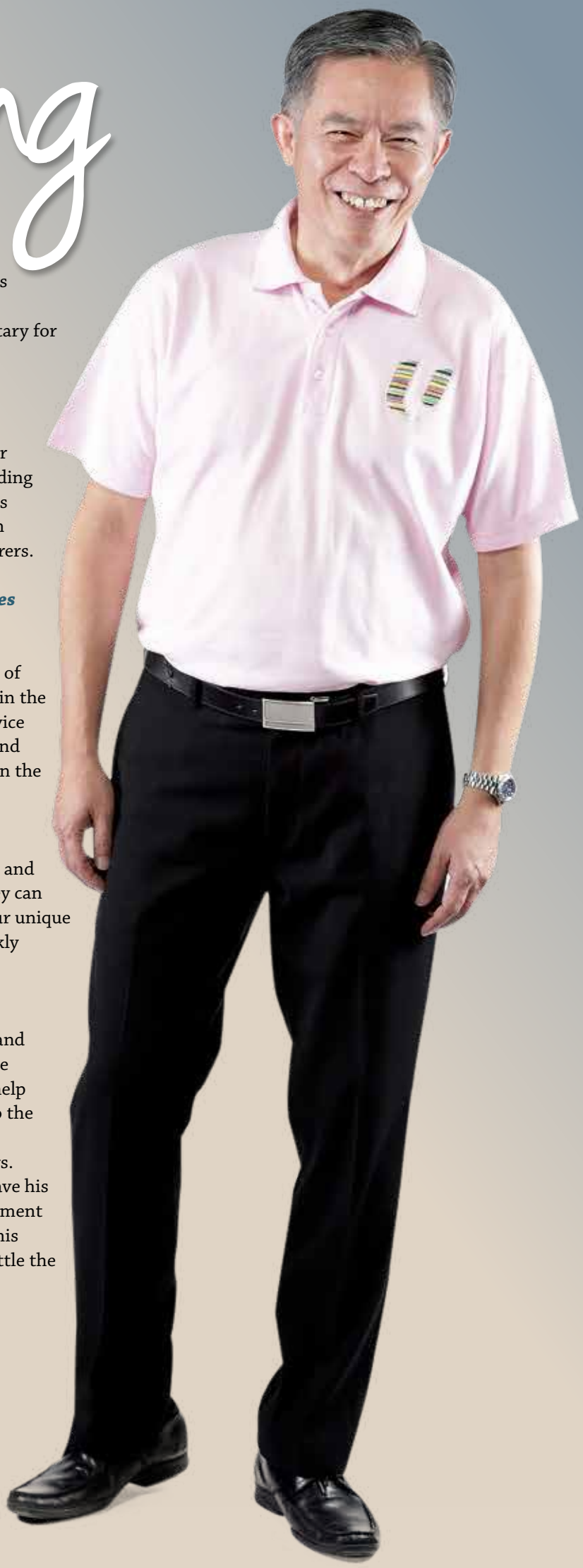
Did You Know: ACCA Singapore has a total of 25,000 members, affiliates and students in Singapore. As women make up half of the association's membership, it is a firm supporter of the women and family agenda.

www.accaglobal.com/sg/en.html

FACE 2 FACE WITH

Yeo Chun Fing

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**



Ever since he started with the Amalgamated Union of Public Employees (AUPE) in 1984, the union has become his second home. One of his tasks then was to produce the union newsletter.

Yeo Chun Fing, 60, is currently AUPE general secretary and assistant secretary for financial affairs in the NTUC Central Committee.

He caught up with *NTUC This Week* on his work in the union.

NTUC This Week: What are some of the key issues in AUPE currently?

Yeo Chun Fing: The profile of the public sector has changed. More than 50 per cent are professionals, managers and executives. We have succeeded in persuading the management of several statutory boards to allow more of the higher grades of officers to be represented by AUPE and will continue to do so. We are now in discussions with the management of the polytechnics to let us represent lecturers.

How is AUPE encouraging public sector employees to keep up with the times and upskill?

We work with different agencies to conduct training sessions with the help of NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) to cascade the message of upskilling and being future-ready. For lower-wage workers, most of whom are in the Education Ministry like the school attendants, we worked with the Public Service Division (PSD) on a job redesign project in 2014 to rescope their jobs and extend their salary ranges. Since then, 820 out of 2,000 officers have been promoted in the recent three years to higher grades.

How have your meetings with foreign unionists benefitted you?

Among the issues many of the unions are grappling with is the future of work, and the future is scary as things are moving too fast. The general feeling is that they can see the problem but no one has the right answers. I am optimistic that with our unique tripartite structure, we may be able to address some of these issues more quickly and adequately.

Share with us a memorable case you handled.

A pensionable enforcement officer had multiple debts from a few credit cards and moneylenders far in excess of his salary. He could have been dismissed and lose his pension. His team leader and colleagues found out and asked him to seek help from AUPE Co-operative. The co-op was not able to lend him the money due to the extremely high risk.

Together, they sought the union's help and volunteered to be his guarantors. Touched by the brotherly support among the team members and in order to save his job, AUPE convinced the co-op to grant him an exception loan with partial payment over 10 years, guaranteed by all the colleagues in his team. He was diligent in his repayments and on the 10th year, he kept his word and came to the co-op to settle the outstanding balance.

INSIDER'S GUIDE

Amalgamated Union of Public Employees (AUPE)

Date of Registration: 8 August 1964

Date of Affiliation to NTUC: 26 September 1959

Membership: 20,000 members

History: Two unions came together in 1959 to form the Amalgamated Union of Public Employees (AUPE). They were the Postal and Telecommunications Uniformed Staff Union and the Singapore Union of Postal and Telecommunications Workers. That same year, six more unions came on board and many more followed suit in the years to come.