



Campaign  
y 2004

## Perfect Time Sign Up; Perfect Time Recruit

### INCENTIVES! INCENTIVES! INCENTIVES!

- ▲ New Members
- ▲ \$5 NTUC FairPrice Voucher
- ▲ Special Gift for Ordinary Branch Members
- ▲ Lucky Draw
- ▲ Recruiters
- ▲ \$5 NTUC FairPrice Voucher
- ▲ Lucky Draw - The More You Recruit, The More Chances You'll Get to Win

### LUCKY DRAW PRIZES

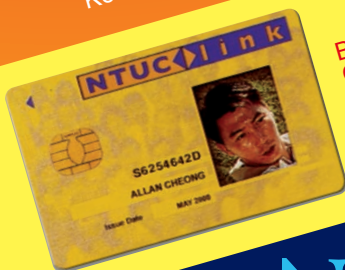
- 1st Prize
- 2nd Prize
- 3rd Prize
- 20 Consolation Prizes
- \$500 Fairprice vouchers
- \$350 Fairprice vouchers
- \$200 Fairprice vouchers
- \$50 Fairprice vouchers

### OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- \* Road Show to Launch Campaign on 15 April
- ▲ Redemption Booth with gifts items for union members to redeem their LinkPoints on the spot!
- ▲ LinkPoints' Terminal for union members to transfer their LinkPoints from their old to new link cards.

### WHERE:

Recruitment Booths at Outram campus - SGH Junction of Central & 2nd Street (out Koufu Cafeteria)



Be a Union Member and Enjoy Benefits from Co-operatives, a golf and country club, local and overseas subsidised training courses, the NTUC Link Card and

Call HCSSU @ 63213803 for more information.

## NTUC Gets New Home

## Gobi and Prof Tan Ser Kiat receive May Day Award

Read All About it on Pg 2

## HCSSU Membership Recruitment in Full Force



# Congrats, Gobi



HCSSU General Secretary Mr R Gobi Nathan received the Comrade of Labour Award while Prof Tan Ser Kiat, SingHealth Group Chief Executive Officer, under the Union's nomination, was presented with the medal of commendation. They received the awards at the May Day Dinner held this year for their contribution to the labour movement.

## The citation reads:

"Mr R. Gobi Nathan's involvement with the union movement goes right back to the 1970s, when he first started as a Branch Official in the

Amalgamated Union of Public Employees.

Since then, he has played pivotal roles in subsequent changes seen by the unions. When the Government decided to restructure public hospitals in 1988, Mr Gobi was one of the pioneers who founded a new union that would represent workers in the Health Corporation of Singapore.

Subsequently elected as Assistant General Treasurer at the Union's Inaugural Delegates' Conference in 1991 with strong support by fellow council members, he was appointed as the union's General Secretary three years later, a position he holds today.

Under Mr Gobi's leadership, the union grew tremendously: From two branches with a membership of 800 in 1989, to one currently representing more than 5,000 workers from 13 institutions.

Communication has been one of the unionist's main concerns, and to this end, he spearheaded the launch of the union's website in 1999, and an in-house newsletter in 2002.

Yet the unionist has never let the results eclipse the method. Fellow unionists know Mr Gobi for his great compassion towards the less fortunate, the listening ear he extends to workers in the health care sector, and the ever-readiness to make time for those who need help.

He has also helped to resolve many a grievance at the union's headquarters and at all the branches, and is well-versed in the area of industrial relations.

Amazingly, Mr Gobi still finds time to serve in various capacities at the national level. He is currently a member of the NTUC Industrial Relations Committee (Service Sector), the NTUC Income Development Organisation, and the NTUC Club Advisory Committee at Union Square."

# and Prof Tan Ser Kiat!

"Professor Tan Ser Kiat was appointed Group Chief Executive Officer of Singapore Health Services (SingHealth) following the clustering of government restructured hospitals in 2000. Under his leadership, relations between the Health Corporation of Singapore Staff Union (HCSSU) and the organisation have escalated to new heights.

That Professor Tan is an advocate of open communication was shown when he was invited by the HCSSU to deliver a keynote address at a seminar on 'Change Management Programme' in July 2002. The CEO unreservedly shared SingHealth's vision for change with the 100 or so union officials present. It marked his belief in a culture of information sharing.

It was this culture, along with the openness and trust he had helped to build within the organisation, that enabled it and the union to sign the most recent Collective Agreement in just four meetings, within a month.

Indeed, Professor Tan has never stinted in his care and concern for his employees. One example was during the SARS outbreak in 2003, when he played an instrumental role in protecting the well-being of healthcare workers.

The CEO is also a firm supporter of training, and believes strongly in enhancing the workers' employability. Besides supporting many NTUC initiatives, SingHealth is currently working with the HCSSU and the NTUC on job redesign to make jobs in the Healthcare sector more attractive to Singaporeans.

Professor Tan has also shown his support of union activities, such as providing office space for the HCSSU headquarters and the secondment of staff to do full-time union work."



# SingHealth Staff Agreement signed and sealed



On 16 December 2003, HCSSU signed the SingHealth Staff Agreement with Singapore Health Services Pte Ltd. The renewed collective agreement, which took effect from 1 October 2003 to 30 September 2006, covers the following hospitals - Singapore General Hospital, KK Women's and Children's Hospital, Changi General Hospital, National Dental Centre, National Heart Centre,

The agreement was signed by (from left): HCSSU General Treasurer Mr Tan Pin Cheow, Union General Secretary Mr Gobi Nathan, Union President Ms Diana Chia, Singhealth Group CEO Prof Tan Ser Kiat, in the presence of Group Human Resource Director Mr Wilson Hon and Union Executive Secretary Mr Chan Tee Seng.

National Cancer Centre, Singapore National Eye Centre and SingHealth Polyclinics.

Members working in the Singhealth cluster will each receive a copy of the Agreement in the form of a booklet. The booklet will be mailed together with this issue of the HCSSU newsletter.

## National Healthcare Group CA still in Progress

The Collective Agreement (CA) negotiation between the Union and the National Healthcare Group reached a stalemate. An agreement could not be reached over issues such as family care leave, scope of representation and over time claims. The case has been brought to the attention of the Ministry of Manpower for conciliation.

The Union would like to thank the members for their patience and understanding. They will be kept informed of any further progress. The current CA is extended until an agreement is reached by both parties.

## Diana Chia's views on Prolonged Maternity Leave

At the budget debate, one of the hot topics discussed was on maternity leave. HCSSU News speaks to Union President Diana Chia on the issue.

"Prolonged maternity leave has recently been a hot topic of debate. Most working women certainly support and look forward to a longer maternity leave period.

In some countries, the practice has already been widely adopted and staff policies have been outlined clearly to stipulate the remuneration for maternity leave.

The implementation of longer maternity leave does bring about many advantages for the working mother. It reduces the physical and mental stress of juggling between the demands of work and caring for the newborn. A longer leave period also encourages bonding between the mother and

child. At the same time, the family will have ample time to make adjustments and plans to look after the child after the mother returns to her workplace.

However, if the total cost of longer maternity leave is to be paid fully by employers, they may be concerned about the future cost of employment and be reluctant to implement the practice. This may prove to be a disadvantage for women of reproductive age as their chances of employment may decrease.

In conclusion, we have to look into the issue with care and be able to pre-empt potential problems and come up with a good solution to balance the needs of our members and the Management."



# Membership Recruitment



HCSSU Membership Campaign  
15 April 2004 - 14 July 2004

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**The Perfect Time to Recruit**

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The Membership Recruitment Campaign was successfully launched on 15 April 2004. In conjunction with the launch, a roadshow was held at the Outram Campus. Almost 100 members have signed up to join the union. For existing members, here is your chance to get incentives when you recruit new members, as the campaign is still on until 14 July 2004!



# Campaign Launched



## Where can you get so much for so little? Only when you are a union member!

- Free Group Insurance Coverage (SLF Gift Plus).
- Free Advice on Employment Issues.
- Free entry to all 6 NTUC Clubhouse.
- Up to 80% subsidies & discounts for IT courses.
- Enjoy yearly rebates at NTUC Fairprice supermarkets.
- Enjoy \$7 monthly rebates at NTUC Childcare.
- Enjoy \$5 monthly rebates at NTUC Childcare.
- Enjoy higher discounts on chalets located at Pasir Ris, East Coast and Sentosa.
- Access to Orchid Country Club (golf & recreational facilities).
- Earn higher Linkpoints from Link merchants.
- 30% more value for in-house linkpoints redemption.
- Cash benefit of \$35 per day from the 11th day of hospitalisation up to a maximum of 52 weeks.
- Additional cash benefit of \$20,000 if member suffers permanent disability or loss of life as result of an accident occurring after office hours.

### More Protection for HCSSU Ordinary Members

For the additional \$2 you pay monthly, you are covered by the following benefits.

#### Death/Disability benefits

- Cash benefits ranging from \$250 to \$2000.
- Cash benefit of \$150 upon the death of a member's spouse.
- Cash benefits of \$75 upon the death of a member's child aged 1 to 17 years old.

#### Mutual Aid Scheme III Hospitalisation Benefits

- Cash benefit of \$25 per day for the first ten days that the member is hospitalised.

### SLF GIFT PLUS

SLF GIFT PLUS is a group insurance that covers death, and permanent and total disability due to natural causes and accidents. It is an enhanced package of SLF GIFT.

| Description   | SLF GIFT PLUS                    |                                |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|   | Less than 10 years of membership | 10 or more years of membership |
| Death or PTD due to natural causes (24 hours) or accidents (during working hours) | \$4500                           | \$5500                         |
| Death or PTD of member due to accidents (outside working hours)                   | \$20000                          | \$30000                        |
| The aggregate of all payout per member shall not exceed                           | \$20000                          | \$30000                        |
| Death or PTD of member's spouse due to all causes                                 | \$250                            | \$500                          |

\*PTD: Permanent and Total Disability

# Union Officials sharpen IR Skills

After spending two-and-a-half months attending twice-weekly lessons, HCSSU Exco member Mohd Noor and SGH Branch Official Narinder Kaur received the Advanced Certificate in Industrial Relations at the Ong Teng Cheong Institute of Labour Studies Graduation Ceremony held on 15 November 2003.



At the ceremony, Ms Narinder Kaur, who works as a clerk in the department of Theatre Sterile Supply Unit, received a special award as the second top student of the cohort.

In an interview with HCSSU News, Ms Kaur pointed out that her newly acquired knowledge has enabled her to serve the members better.

"I am now in a better position to give advice. For example, I can now explain clearly to members why certain actions cannot be taken by the union, after learning about employment and trade union laws and regulations," she said.

Though it was tiring having to balance work, study and family life, the mother of one enjoyed the course - thanks to her course mates. "It was stressful but fun as I had nice

course mates who made the lessons light-hearted. I learnt so much from them. For example, five of my classmates were PSA members who were involved in the retrenchment exercise last year. Their experience was an eye-opener for me," said Ms Kaur who has been a union member for 9 years and has served in the branch committee for three terms.

Senior Medical Technologist Mr Mohd Noor also pointed out that the interaction between the course participants gave deeper insights into trade unionism. "We get to meet people from different organisations and set-ups and understand how they work. The bond between the unionists from different unions was strong. We often meet up to compare notes and share experiences," he said.

Describing the course as an essential in building confidence of union leaders, Mr Mohd Noor commented: "Many union leaders are not familiar with the employment act and industrial relations laws. Therefore this course equips them with the knowledge that can help them to deal confidently with the management, whether in giving presentations, negotiating for collective agreements or representing members in industrial relation issues."

"The advanced certificate in industrial relations can be a stepping stone for those pursuing a degree," he shared. "From the advanced certificate, a participant can go on to pursue a diploma and eventually a degree." Ms Kaur is doing just that. She is now pursuing a 20-month Diploma in Employment Relations course.

Though both HCSSU leaders had to sacrifice their personal and family time during the course of their studies, they felt that the time spent on upgrading is worth the while. "We are both enriched by it," Mr Mohd Noor said.

# NTUC celebrates May Day in new Home

This year's May Day was celebrated in NTUC's new home at One Marina Boulevard. The NTUC Centre will be officially opened by Prime Minister Mr Goh Chok Tong on 1 May 2004. The May Day Rally was held in the new NTUC Centre Auditorium.

The NTUC Centre, which overlooks Marina Bay, is a brand new 32-storey building that sits impressively against the backdrop of commercial buildings in Shenton Way.

The new home of NTUC, which took two years to complete, opened its doors on 1 March 2004 to serve union members better, boasts of 4 levels of amenities including a 600-seat auditorium for various events, meeting and training rooms and a one-stop customer service centre. Not only is the centralised new location a better spot for members to converge, it reinforces NTUC's importance as the pillar of the labour movement and a significant force behind Singapore's progress.



Switchboard Tel: 6213 8000

NTUC Customer Centre Tel: 6213 8008 (one stop call center for enquiries)

# HCSSU Website gets a makeover

Better design, more information and more interactive, the HCSSU website has now been revamped to give members a brand new web surfing experience.



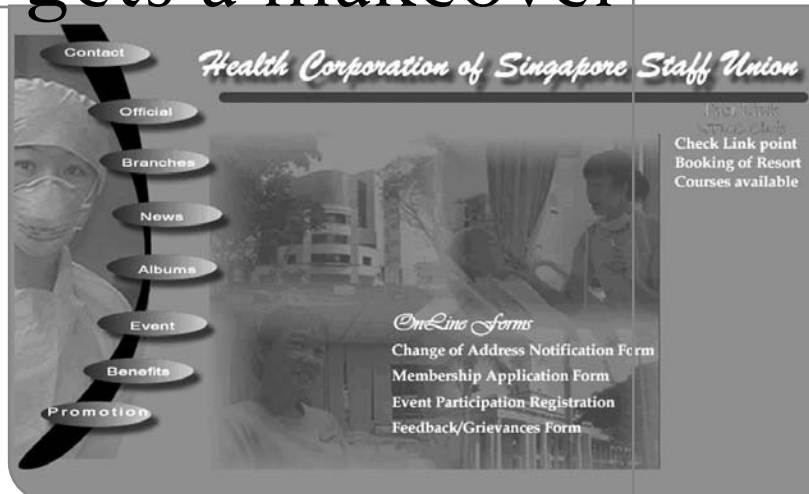
"The revamped website is less static and more interactive. It is an effective tool in bridging the communication gap between branch committees and members," said the man behind the new site, Assistant General Secretary Mr Tan Eng Hua.

Beside the union newsletter, the website is also a good communication tool to reach out to the web savvy members. In the website, members can find application forms for union activities, feedback and grievances, notification for change in address and membership application forms are also available for non-members.

Mr Tan pointed out several advantages that come with the revamped website. "From the website, members can find out who their branch committees members are and who to go to for advice or assistance," he said. "Between the Union headquarters, branches and members, there is also better communication. We can also post an online version of the newsletter to the members who have missed out on the printed copies," he said.

The union has received positive response since the revamp. "We have received quite a number of membership applications since we put up the recruitment forms online," said Mr Tan.

The HCSSU website also features useful links for checking LinkPoints, chalet bookings and available courses for upgrading.



Log on to [www.hcssu.org.sg](http://www.hcssu.org.sg) to check out the benefits you can get from the revamped HCSSU website.

# May Day celebration at the Esplanade

Happened on 1 May 2004 at the Esplanade Waterfront, the May Day Carnival 2004 offered an exciting line-up of activities for everyone. There were kiddy rides, game and retail stalls offering henna tattoo, accessories, watches and handicraft. The highlights included entertaining acts by jugglers, fire twirlers, mime artistes and balloon sculpturist. The night hit a crescendo with the fireworks display.

MediaWorks artistes made their appearances during the carnival. Familiar faces Kym Ng, Michelle Chia, Sun Ho, Sheikh Haikel, Adrian Pang, Elamaran, Celest Chong and 'OK No Problem' cast charmed the crowd.

The May Day Concert was held at the Esplanade Concert Hall with an expected crowd of 1,600 invited guests. The Singapore Symphony Orchestra performed familiar tunes like Voices of the Heart and local favourites like Di Tanjung Katong, Home and more.



# \$64,000 of Aid Rendered to Needy Members

More than \$64,000 worth of Education Grants, Public Transport vouchers and FairPrice vouchers were given away to HCSSU members during the presentation ceremony held on 27 December 2003 at level nine, block 6 of SGH.

The guest-of-honour for the event was SingHealth Chief Executive Professor Tan Ser Kiat, who presented the grants to 175 members.

| Type of Grant             | No. of successful applications | No. of awardees receiving grant | Total amount presented |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Education Grant           | 175                            | 256                             | \$25,600               |
| Public Transport Vouchers | 175                            | 364                             | \$21,840               |
| FairPrice Vouchers        | 175                            | 175                             | \$17,500               |

One recipient was Mr Chong Pian Seng, a health attendant from the IMH branch, who found the Public Transport vouchers helpful. He said: "One of my kids is in primary school and the other is in junior college. The transport cost each year comes up to a few hundred dollars, so the public transport vouchers really come in handy. The FairPrice vouchers are also useful as we buy most of our necessities there. I hope that the Union will offer another round of the FairPrice vouchers."

## Public Transport Assistance (PASS) Vouchers

The objective is to assist union members who are in financial hardship, to meet the public transport expenses of their school-going children (Primary to Tertiary level) through the issuance of the vouchers, which could be used from January 2004 to June 2004.

### NTUC/HCSSU Education Grant



The \$100 grant is to help members supplement the schooling expenses of their children studying in Primary, Secondary, Junior College and Polytechnic level.



Guest-of-honour Prof Tan presenting the awards.

### NTUC FairPrice Vouchers

NTUC FairPrice Vouchers are given out to assist union members who are in financial hardship, to help them defray their living expenses. Each eligible family received a \$100 FairPrice voucher which they could use for their grocery shopping.

Any member who missed out on the above but feel that they need assistance can approach the union.

### Measures that Help

"Being in the union, we understand how these changes impact the lives of our fellow comrades. Their anxieties over their cost of living and fear of losing their jobs are very real. And it is not just anxieties - they do feel the pinch of lower incomes. We as leaders of the labour movement should and must help those in need through practical and meaningful ways."

"What we have provided may not be comprehensive to solve all the workers' financial hardships but they are simple meaningful ways in which the labour movement is helping to ease the various adjustments which a majority of our workers face.

Mr Lim Boon Heng, NTUC Secretary-General