

# "thisweek

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## *Helping Hands*

Apart from  
taking care of workers  
at the work front, we have  
also been doing our bit to give  
back to those who need help the most.  
Big or small, every little deed counts.  
You can do your part too.

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The NTUC marching contingent has been training hard ahead of this year's National Day Parade. We catch up with the two leading the march.

## From the Heart

Young NTUC's U Heart initiative sees the Labour Movement come together in the spirit of volunteerism.

By **Jonathan Tan**

Caring for workers has always been at the heart of what the Labour Movement does, and this spans beyond just protecting interests at the workplace to helping them achieve better and more meaningful lives outside of it.

NTUC communities such as nEbo (NTUC's junior membership arm), U Live (NTUC's community of active agers), Migrant Workers' Centre and Centre for Domestic Employees regularly organise various projects to do social good and give back to the community where they can. (Read about the experiences of a few volunteers who have given back through the Labour Movement on pages 4 and 5).

### MAKING AN IMPACT

In the build up towards this year's National Day, NTUC has opted to mark the celebrations a little differently by having its network of unions, communities and social enterprises come together to make a positive difference in the lives of fellow Singaporeans through the U Heart series of youth-led volunteerism initiatives.

Organised by Young NTUC in collaboration with Income OrangeAid, the U Heart programme will take place between now and August.

The U Heart initiative will reach out to people in Singapore through 95 activities across the island (see U Heart map on facing page).

The U Heart framework was designed to nurture, train, inspire and connect young workers and volunteers with a social cause they are passionate about. To enable them to do so, each of the 95 activities in the U Heart framework has received support in the form of \$1,000 in seed funding, mentorship and marketing.

Collectively, more than 2,500 volunteers from 30 unions and 13 NTUC communities, including public sign-ups, will be reaching out to more than 6,500 beneficiaries through the activities (see box story for event categories).

"We want to create platforms like these where we can allow our young workers to not only contribute back to society, but more importantly, gain knowledge on organisational and leadership skills and the ability to inspire fellow young workers and Singaporeans to come forward and help other Singaporeans. This is truly in line with the Labour Movement being with workers and helping them succeed, not only in their careers, but in discovering their own aspirations and contributing back to Singapore," said Young NTUC Executive Secretary Desmond Choo.

# Volunteering Across Singapore



**YOUNG NTUC**  
*Uheart*  
 In collaboration with Income OrangeAid

The U Heart map shows the various spots where our volunteers will share their time and company.

## Kick Off at Sentosa



Taking place in Sentosa on 13 July 2016, the first U Heart activity saw more than 100 volunteers – comprising members from the Attractions, Resorts & Entertainment Union, Amalgamated Union of Public Employees and members of the public who had signed up – fan out across the island to meet the staff working tirelessly behind the scenes with chocolates as little tokens of appreciation. The various locations visited included Sentosa’s nursery, the Sentosa Beach Station and Sentosa Express counter.

The volunteers were joined by NTUC Secretary-General (SG) Chan Chun Sing.

“Sentosa would not have been what it is today were it not for each and every one of you... It takes years of hard work and you would know the blood, sweat and tears that you have put in as a team to get Sentosa to what it is today, so kudos to all of you,” said SG Chan, when addressing Sentosa staff and volunteers during the appreciation tea reception.

**i** To participate in upcoming U Heart activities, visit [www.youngntuc.org.sg](http://www.youngntuc.org.sg).



### Five Pillars, One Heart

The U Heart activities will reach out to beneficiaries across these five different categories that also spell HEART on the first letter:

- 1 HOME**  
Reaching out to low-income families and the elderly living alone.
- 2 ENVIRONMENT**  
Reaching out to nature – animals in shelters, wildlife, the environment.
- 3 APPRECIATION**  
Reaching out to workers behind the scenes.
- 4 RESPECT**  
Reaching out to individuals with physical disabilities and our pioneer generation.
- 5 TENACITY**  
Reaching out to underprivileged children, children and young persons in residential care programmes.

# No Holding Back

There is a reason volunteers give their precious time to help or share moments with others. We talk to a few to hear their stories about a shared bond with fellow human beings.

By **Ryan Chan**

“It’s amazing to see genuine happiness spread across my classmates’ faces when they begin to truly experience how fulfilling volunteering can be.”

## NEBO

### Roy Tan, 19

Roy Tan’s first venture into volunteerism was a reluctant one, tagging along with a friend to a nEbO Care community event.

“I was admittedly rather *sian* of having to wake up so early,” he mused. But the pieces of the puzzle fell into place when, with guidance from his mentors at nEbO, he experienced for himself the joy that his contributions could bring to the people he helped.

“I’m not really sure the best way to describe that kind of happiness,” the 19-year-old Victoria Junior College student shared. “But it’s an addictive, fulfilling satisfaction.”

#### MORE TO LIFE

Just as he was mentored when he first began volunteering, Roy has been mentoring his peers and has helped his school collaborate with nEbO to organise a kite-flying session for underprivileged kids.

For students his age, volunteering is merely a means of achieving the required Community Involvement Programme (CIP) hours that students have to clock. But Roy hopes his school’s event with nEbO has helped to change a few mindsets.

“It’s amazing to see genuine happiness spread across my classmates’ faces when they begin to truly experience how fulfilling volunteering can be,” he shared.

The spirit of volunteering is contagious, he said, and a few of his peers have stated their intent on participating in future nEbO events.

“It is my hope to see Singapore become a more caring society that wants to give back more. Many people do it for the CIP hours and a better-looking resume. I hope they take a step back and appreciate there’s more to life than just the paper chase,” he said.



## YOUNG NTUC

### Chen Chuan Yi, 32

Chen Chuan Yi was only a secondary student when he last participated in a volunteering event.

“I’ve never quite had the opportunity to become involved in volunteering again after my schooling years,” he said.

When invited appealing for volunteers at Young NTUC’s inaugural U Heart event made the rounds, he decided to seize the chance to become involved again more than 15 years on.

He was one of some 100 volunteers touring Sentosa (see story on page 3) to show their appreciation to workers for the hard work and dedication they put into serving guests.

#### HEART-WARMING FEELING

When asked to share his thoughts on his first volunteering participation after his long hiatus, Chuan Yi excitedly spoke about how the workers’ reactions left a lasting impact on him.

“People always say doing social work leaves you with a very heart-warming feeling. After today, I now know what they mean.”

“The workers here on Sentosa are always giving away plenty of smiles, but hardly receiving any in return. Nobody warned them we were coming, and the look on their faces when they happily received the gifts we brought truly made me happy too,” he said, animatedly.

The experience has left him wanting more, and Chuan Yi has already made plans to join Project Refresh, another U Heart initiative that will see volunteers give homes of needy families a fresh coat of paint.

“People always say doing social work leaves you with a very heart-warming feeling,” Chuan Yi said. “After today, I now know what they mean.”



## MIGRANT WORKERS' CENTRE Kanna Kannapan, 40

As an account director with two young children, it is not often that Kanna Kannapan, 40, has the luxury of time. But he spends whatever spare time he has to volunteer on an ad-hoc basis.

Married for five years now, Kanna has been actively volunteering to help the less fortunate, a journey that started since his university days.

His involvement with the Migrant Workers' Centre (MWC) began in 2014, when he chanced upon a pamphlet appealing for volunteers for a Deepavali celebration with his wife. Both of them also participated in MWC's celebrations for International Migrants Day and their May Day celebrations last year.

"I would like to help anybody I can, but in recent times, I've been spending more time with this group. It helps you understand their hardship and realise you've got it good," shared Kanna.

### PUTTING THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE

"I need to travel often for my job, and a week away from my family already makes me miss them so much. These guys are here for years. Some have shared how their wives have given

"I need to travel often for my job, and a week away from my family already makes me miss them so much. These guys are here for years. Some have shared how their wives have given birth to their newborn, and they have yet to meet their baby. It really puts things into perspective."

birth to their newborn, and they have yet to meet their baby. It really puts things into perspective."

There is plenty Singaporeans have to thank them for, Kanna said, and we can all do our part to help make their lives easier.

"There are a few who want to appreciate these workers, but are unsure how to do so. I urge them all to come forward and not hold back.

"And I can guarantee the satisfaction they feel will be immediate," he said.

## NTUC HEALTH Fred Chin, 44

Although volunteering was something he had always wanted to do, 44-year-old Fred Chin only found the time to do so recently after scaling back on his business.

Currently, he volunteers with NTUC Health through the CAN (Caring Assistance from Neighbours) programme, where he provides support to elderly residents in Tiong Bahru. His duties involve monitoring their well-being, frequent home visits and connecting them to other organisations for various types of assistance, such as financial issues.

For Fred, his desire to help others stems from his extended family, which has faced gambling and drug abuse problems.

"As family members, we offer all the help we can give, but unfortunately, there is only so much that can be done. Some people are in need of additional assistance, and it is my hope that my efforts will help make their lives just that little bit better," he shared.

### ON THE SAME SIDE

Singapore is often thought of as an uncaring society, but Fred rubbishes the notion. People, he said, have it in them to prove the doubters wrong.

"There are a lot of Singaporeans who care, but based on my experiences, I would say that out of every 10, six or seven are unsure of the channels to go into," he explained.



Fred also feels that while there are plenty of organisations that pledge to help the less fortunate, better organising can go a long way in creating a bigger impact for these people.

"They have the very best of intentions, but I do feel these efforts are rather dispersed, and they can be more concerted, much like NTUC Health. Perhaps organisations can work together more. After all, it's not a competition to see who can do better, and we are all on the same side," he added

"Some people are in need of additional assistance, and it is my hope that my efforts will help make their lives just that little bit better."



# Volunteering with the NTUC Family

Thinking of giving a little of your time to those who need help most but don't know where to start? Here are some places with kind faces you can approach.

## CENTRE FOR DOMESTIC EMPLOYEES

The centre provides a toll-free 24-hour hotline for domestic employees in Singapore and provides humanitarian aid. There are also mediation and counselling services provided to help them through any difficult times.

**i** To find out more, visit [cde.org.sg](http://cde.org.sg) or email [contact@cde.org.sg](mailto:contact@cde.org.sg).

## MIGRANT WORKERS' CENTRE

The help centre for migrant workers provides representation, free non-employment legal service, emergency shelter and soup kitchen services. There are also opportunities for social integration and upgrading. Volunteers can sign up to help during major events or on an ad-hoc basis to handle cases, man the MWC kiosk or do translation work.

Some of their ongoing activities are:

- ▶ U Heart: Come Flyer With Me (30 July)
- ▶ Case-handling – shadowing MWC specialists for walk-in cases
- ▶ Assisting in mid to large scale events like Deepavali (Oct) and International Migrants' Day (Dec)

**i** To find out more, call **6536 2692** or visit [www.mwc.org.sg](http://www.mwc.org.sg) to apply.

## NEBO

nEbO is the junior membership arm of the Labour Movement that targets youths aged 12 to 25, with a motto of engaging them to be work-ready, world-ready and life-ready. While one can simply participate in the various events, nEbO also supports its members in spearheading events to give youths opportunities to pick up leadership skills while instilling values of altruism.

Some of their upcoming activities are:

- ▶ Race to Save (Aug)
- ▶ The Cooking Cause (Sept)
- ▶ Hands on Music (Sept)
- ▶ W.I.S.H. 2017 (Jan 2017)

**i** To find out more, visit [www.nebo.sg/community/care](http://www.nebo.sg/community/care).

## YOUNG NTUC

NTUC's youth wing is the largest youth movement in Singapore, with more than 180,000 working adults aged 35 and below. They are activists for causes such as environmental issues and animal welfare. Check out their website for volunteering opportunities.

**i** To find out more, visit [www.youngntuc.org.sg](http://www.youngntuc.org.sg) or [www.facebook.com/tynvolunteers](https://www.facebook.com/tynvolunteers).

## NTUC HEALTH

An NTUC social enterprise, NTUC Health aims to provide affordable health and eldercare services. They have seven senior activity centres known as SilverACE that provide a social, communal environment for the elderly. Volunteers can help through the CAN (Caring Assistance for Neighbours) or CREST (Community Resources, Engagement and Support Team) programmes.

Some of their ongoing activities are:

- ▶ Providing eldercare services
- ▶ Managing emergency alert response calls
- ▶ Monitoring frail and/or homebound elderly

**i** For more information, visit [ntuhealth.sg/senior-activity-centres](http://ntuhealth.sg/senior-activity-centres) and [ntuhealth.sg/forms-for-eldercare-services](http://ntuhealth.sg/forms-for-eldercare-services). Volunteer registration forms can be downloaded on the site. To apply, send the completed form to [volunteer@ntuhealth.sg](mailto:volunteer@ntuhealth.sg).

## NTUC FAIRPRICE

Every year, NTUC FairPrice gets staff to contribute 5,000 volunteering hours in total as part of their corporate social responsibility. This year, FairPrice announced they will open their volunteering programmes to the public later this year, with further details to be announced soon.

**i** Stay updated at [www.fairprice.com.sg](http://www.fairprice.com.sg).

## Calendar of U Heart Activities

Here are the U Heart activities that you can be a part of:

### JULY

**23<sup>rd</sup>** Project Refresh for Low Income Families' Housing Unit

**12<sup>th</sup>** Come Flyer With Me

### AUG

**5<sup>th</sup>** National Day Celebration with Canosville Children Home

**8<sup>th</sup>** Appreciation to Assisi Hospice Palliative Caregivers

**12<sup>th</sup>** Food Outreach – Distribution of Staple Food to Low-Income Families

**12<sup>th</sup>** Gift of Time @ SilverACE

**13<sup>th</sup>** Appreciation to Bus Captains

**13<sup>th</sup>** AWWA Family Service Centre Youth Outing

**13<sup>th</sup>** National Day Celebration with Society for the Aged Sick

**14<sup>th</sup>** U Heart to Heart with Domestic Workers

**20<sup>th</sup>** Beach Cleanup

**20<sup>th</sup>** Outing with Rare Disorder Society Singapore

**27<sup>th</sup>** Shelter with Love @ Save Our Street Dogs

**i** To find out more information and to register, visit [bit.ly/29wYNOK](http://bit.ly/29wYNOK).

# Speaking up for Workers

Labour Members of Parliament (MPs) address various ministries on behalf of workers during the latest session of Parliament.

By **Shukry Rashid**

## Ministry of Manpower (MOM)



NTUC Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) and MP for Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC Zainal Sapari asked about the number of complaints the Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices (TAFEP) has received on alleged discriminatory practices at the workplace between 2011 and 2015. He also wanted to know the trend of such practices based on race and religion.

Minister of State for Manpower Teo Ser Luck replied that MOM and TAFEP receive on average about 400 complaints each year, and about 10 per cent, or nearly 30, are related to race or religion.

ASG Zainal also queried the actions taken by TAFEP or the Ministry against companies with these discriminatory practices and whether TAFEP has sufficient authority to mediate or resolve those that are reported.

Minister Teo replied that prior to 2014, TAFEP took an advisory approach in counselling employers, all of whom have since heeded the advice. He added that MOM and the tripartite partners will step up its public education campaign and ramp up training for HR practitioners on selection and recruitment of employees.



## Ministry of Finance

ASG Zainal asked whether any ministries and statutory boards have adopted the Price-Quality Method for tender evaluations when procuring cleaning, security and landscape services. He also queried the average percentage of price over quality adopted in such procurement contracts awarded in 2015 to date, and whether the Government will consider adopting a 30:70 ratio for the Price-Quality Method as recommended by the Tripartite Committee for Low-Wage Workers and Inclusive Growth.

Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Finance Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam replied that the public service has been practicing the Price-Quality Method for many years.

He added: "However, its adoption and the weightage of the 'Quality' factors used vary from procurement to procurement, depending on the context of each procurement."

'Quality' factors were also considered in the award of all tenders in 2015 to date, making up 20-70 per cent of the total evaluation criteria.

According to DPM Tharman, the Government agrees that such services should not be procured based on price alone, and is further reviewing the emphasis of 'Quality' factors in the evaluation of tenders.



## Ministry of Transport



NTUC ASG and MP for Ang Mo Kio GRC Ang Hin Kee asked whether there has been adequate dialogue during the Ministry's engagement with stakeholders on the recently announced 'light touch' regulations requiring private car hire drivers to be licensed, undergo

background checks and medical screenings and register their cars.

Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan replied that consultations were held with private hire companies, the National Taxi Association, the National Private Hire Vehicles Association and commuters.

He added: "While we need some regulations to protect commuters' interests and safety, we have strived to ensure that these are not so onerous that they stifle innovation of new services and business models."



National Transport Workers' Union Executive

Secretary and MP for Tanjong Pagar GRC

Melvin Yong asked whether the Land

Transport Authority (LTA) has any plans to work with the public bus operators to recruit more women to join the bus captain profession, especially those seeking to re-enter the workforce.



Minister Khaw replied that LTA has been working with bus operators to recruit more local bus captains, including

women. For example, SBS Transit and SMRT Corporation have introduced part-time employment schemes, which can appeal to those who need work schedule flexibility. Tower Transit Singapore and Go-Ahead Singapore also offer female employees up to 26 weeks of paid maternity leave. Female employees at Tower Transit enjoy an enhanced maternity benefit of \$300-\$700 annually, as well as additional childcare leave.

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ANDROID



# Brimming with Prospects

A newly-announced Water Academy is about to change things in the water sector – workers will now have a place to pick up skills and knowledge to bring them into the future.

By **Jonathan Tan**

Over the years, Singapore has built up a global brand name in sustainable water management and as a provider of water solution. Things are not stopping there – there's now a Water Academy to further drive the sector into the future.

"The water sector is brimming with exciting prospects, and as we continue to work with the industry to focus on strategic areas for the next phase of growth, we will build on these achievements, and cement Singapore's status as a leading global hydrohub," said Public Utilities Board (PUB) Chief Executive Ng Joo Hee.

In line with that, the PUB announced the setting up of the Singapore Water Academy at the sidelines of the Singapore International Water Week (SIWW).

Besides catering to the specific development and training needs of the organisation's staff, Mr Ng shared that the Singapore Water Academy will have programmes that will serve the needs of water services professionals both locally and internationally.

"Ultimately, our aim is to guarantee that everyone who comes through the portals of the Singapore Water Academy will acquire the skills, competencies and proficiencies he requires to do a good job," he said.

Welcoming the prospect of better training and upgrading for staff, Public Utilities Board Employees' Union (PUBEU) General Secretary

Shafari Baharawi said: "PUBEU has always worked with management to encourage our members to go for training. We are supportive of the setup of the Singapore Water Academy, as this means more concerted efforts in building up the skills and preparing our members for the future."

## BUILDING SUCCESS

Singapore's water industry is set to receive a \$200 million boost from the Government over the next five years, said Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize awards ceremony on 11 July 2016.

The funding comes under the Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) 2020 Plan, in which the water sector is part of the Urban Solutions and Sustainability domain, and will be channelled into the areas of research, development and commercialisation of water technologies, and talent development.

The sector currently employs some 14,000 professionals, managers, executives and technicians, and contributes more than \$2 billion to Singapore's economy. With the funding, the water sector looks set to have 15,000 jobs by 2020.

**i** To find out more about the training programmes and opportunities available at the Singapore Water Academy, visit [www.pub.gov.sg/waterhub](http://www.pub.gov.sg/waterhub).

## Green Jobs of the Future

Building on the success of the Green Jobs Symposium that was held in April 2016, Young NTUC collaborated with the Public Utilities Board (PUB) to organise Careers@SIWW on 12 July 2016 at the Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre.

Held in conjunction with the Singapore International Water Week (SIWW), Careers@SIWW saw 18 companies offer more than 90 vacancies in roles that ranged from technical to business support. These included specialists and civil engineers, logistics coordinators and office administrators.

"This is a second in a series of green jobs-type networking platforms that we have developed. Principally for younger workers, it also benefits more experienced workers. Apart from offering you opportunities in the water space, Young NTUC is also working with partners like PUB and NEA (National Environment Agency) to share opportunities in the renewable space, the green building space and other related green job opportunities," said Young NTUC Executive Secretary Desmond Choo.

Besides connecting job seekers with opportunities in Singapore's vibrant water sector, the fair also saw a line-up of speakers share perspectives and career opportunities within Singapore's growing green industry.

**i** To find out more about upcoming green job events, visit [www.youngntuc.org.sg](http://www.youngntuc.org.sg).

# USE: New Executive Council

Union of Security Employees (USE) sees some familiar faces returning to the new executive council and a few new names joining in.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

**U**nion of Security Employees' (USE) 13<sup>th</sup> General Convention of Delegates held on 13 July 2016 at Downtown East saw branch delegates elect a new executive council to lead the union in the upcoming four-year term. A total of 19 branch delegates contested for the 15 seats in the council.

The appointments of president, general secretary and general treasurer remained unchanged and are still held by Mr Hareenderpal Singh of Premier Security Co-operative, Mr Raymond Chin of Reachfield Security and Safety Management, and Ms Sivamani Taigrajan of Excellent Security and Safety respectively.

Prior to the convention, six seats in the executive council were vacant. These included the appointments of vice-president, now held by Mr Jason Chua of CBM Security; assistant general secretary, now held by Mr Ardi Amin of Spear Security Force; and assistant general treasurer, now held by Mr Louis Ng of Danmax Security Management.

"I am glad to see the executive council members returned to office, and with additional new members, making a 15-man team. Together, this new council is placed in a strong position to continue to look after the interests of all workers in Singapore's security sector," said USE Executive Secretary Steve Tan.

## PREVIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS

Under the leadership of the previous executive council from 2012 to 2016, USE has made progress in areas such as increasing the wages of security officers, industrial relations, membership and leadership.

Based on a wage survey conducted by the union in March 2016, the basic wages of security officers have risen to about \$1,100 as many security officers

are now being paid under the Progressive Wage Model (PWM), as compared to the median wage of \$800 in 2012.

In industrial relations, the union achieved an increase of 70 per cent in the total number of collective agreements (CA) and memoranda of understanding (MOU), having signed 28 CAs and 55 MOUs between 2012 and 2016.

Meanwhile, the union's membership numbers have also grown from 10,730 in 2012 to 13,516 today.

The union added that its leadership development framework has led to the number of its union leaders double from 23 to 46.

Commenting as USE's president, Mr Singh said: "Given the strong mandate many of the returning executive council members received, it shows the delegates understand that the executive council did its level best to increase membership, industrial relations protection, and overall bring the union to a higher level in the last four years."

## INTO THE FUTURE

Mr Singh said that the new executive council plans to continue to further expand the five-tier PWM track beyond physical guarding by working with bigger unionised agencies to implement schemes similar to the Security Specialist Vocation Scheme launched with Soverus Group in June this year.

He added that there are plans to recommend to the Security Tripartite Cluster (STC) to include the yearly National Wages Council guidelines as a licensing condition for security agencies.

"If we do this, the STC won't need to deliberate to include the NWC guidelines in security officers' wages every year. We'd just have to let the NWC guidelines take its course and agencies will follow suit," said Mr Singh.



The newly elected 15-member Union of Security Employees executive council pledges to continue to improve the lives of security workers and the industry.





# Changing Mindsets on Training

The call to all employers – invest in upgrading your employees' skills, even if they leave tomorrow. You will eventually gain a new employee who has been trained by another company.

By **Shukry Rashid**

**E**mployers need to take more ownership of employees' upskilling, said Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Tharman Shanmugaratnam (pictured below) at the Switzerland-Singapore Business Forum called 'SkillsFuture – Developing a Future Ready Workforce' held on 12 July 2016 at the Shangri-La Hotel.

According to DPM Tharman, evolving our work culture is an area where Singapore has the most to learn from Switzerland.

He said: "That involves two dimensions

especially. First, the ownership that employers take in education and training, and ownership is a distinctive feature of the Swiss system. And second, the culture of society where anyone feels that they can improve continually, step by step, can become a master of a trade."

About 200 representatives from both countries attended the forum, which was jointly hosted by Swiss Confederation President Johann N. Schneider-Ammann and DPM Tharman.

It was the first time such a forum was held in Singapore as President Schneider-Ammann

employee who has been trained up to the same standards. What goes around, comes around."

## EMPLOYERS' VIEW

Singapore National Employers Federation President Dr Robert Yap agreed with DPM Tharman that there needs to be a mindset change to encourage companies to invest in training of employees even though they may leave for competitors.

He said: "But in the longer term, it is always important to train your workers because they will definitely be more loyal once they are trained by you [employers]."

Even if they leave the company to join competitors, they may return to the company in the future, added Dr Yap.

## UNIONS' VIEWS

Also present during the forum was NTUC President Mary Liew, who said that the Labour Movement can support and partner employers on training of workers.

Such support includes the NTUC-Education and Training Fund, and collaborations with institutes of higher learning like Nanyang Technological University to develop technology-enabled learning courses.

Workers in companies that are afraid to invest in training may also find themselves stuck with the same set of skills.

To mitigate this, President Liew said: "There can be a two prong approach. First, to inculcate productive culture in companies through the IGP (Inclusive Growth Programme) scheme. In this aspect, we can push employers to have a key responsibility to build a productive culture and sharing of productivity gains with their workers.

"Second, individuals can take ownership for their own lifelong learning at the different stages of their lives."

**“ You will lose these employees after training, but you will gain another employee who has been trained up to the same standards. What goes around, comes around.”**

*Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam*

made his state visit to the island-republic.

DPM Tharman also said that Singapore has to develop a collaborative culture between employers in the industries. He cited an example of Lernzentrum Industrielle Berufslehren Schweiz (LIBS), a consortium of companies led by Swedish-Swiss company ABB that invests in training all workers of the consortium.

He also said that employers in Singapore may have the fear of training their own employees as they may leave after being trained.

But DPM said: "You will lose these employees after training, but you will gain another





## Encouraging Lifelong Learning

The latest round of SkillsFuture Study Awards go out to 349 workers.

By **Ryan Chan**

A total of 349 Singaporeans across 13 industry sectors were presented the SkillsFuture Study Awards on 9 July 2016 in recognition of their commitment towards pursuing continuous learning.

Each award consists of up to \$5,000 funding to defray the costs of the courses. This will be on top of any existing Government subsidies.

The SkillsFuture Study Awards, which is supported by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), are for early to mid-career Singaporeans looking to further develop their skills.

First announced in Budget 2015, the awards have since expanded to cover 18 industry sectors. A total of 2,000 awards are made available each year and applicants can be nominated by their employers or apply individually.

### CONSTANTLY STRIVING

WDA Chief Executive Ng Cher Pong said that the strong response in the applications received is a good indication that workers and employers are keen in deep-skilling.

He said: "... More individuals are taking ownership of their learning and career progression. This is vital as we seek to build a future-ready workforce with a strong Singaporean core."

Acting Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills) Ong Ye Kung, who presented the awards, said that we should constantly strive to excel, and not let setbacks define us.

He said: "Never let one set of less than stellar academic result decide your future. It has to be so because it takes one year to learn something, but a whole life to master something. It is that mastery that decides your station in life, and your recognition at work and in society."

### GOOD TO KNOW



To find out more about the SkillsFuture Study Awards and to apply, visit [www.skillsfuture.sg/studyawards](http://www.skillsfuture.sg/studyawards).

# Foreign Workers Matter

Foreign workers need to be looked after too, and the all-inclusive Unusual Labour Movement assures that they are not forgotten.

By **Shukry Rashid**



Yes, foreign workers matter. They form one-third of the total workforce that drives the economy. Their concerns, protection and opportunities to grow are important to the Labour Movement as part of its all-inclusive focus on workers.

NTUC Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) Patrick Tay said this when he was asked how the Unusual Labour Movement is relevant to the foreign workforce in Singapore, seeing that the country will continue to be dependent on them in the many years to come.

This was raised during the Institute of Policy Studies-Committee on the Future Economy's (IPS-CFE) Conference on the Future Economy of Singapore held on 13 July 2016 at Orchard Hotel.

### HELPING FOREIGN WORKERS

ASG Tay said there are two levels where the Labour Movement are representing workers. On the unionised level, considering that the foreign workers supplement the Singaporean core, he said: "The unions do represent foreign workers as well. In the collective bargaining and agreements, they are also within the scope of our negotiations."

This can be exemplified by the similar wages and benefits they receive when compared to local workers.

But there is also the other 75 per cent of foreign workers working in non-unionised companies in Singapore.

ASG Tay said: "This is where the tripartite partners have felt that they need to take considered steps to help foreign workers, particularly the lower skilled and waged ones."

He cited examples of the Migrant Workers' Centre that was set up by the tripartite partners in 2009, which aims to improve the welfare of migrant workers in Singapore by addressing their concerns like wage and workplace disputes.

The Centre for Domestic Employees was also launched by NTUC in January 2016 to better assist domestic helpers in Singapore, who are predominantly foreign maids.

The Lion City is all set to roar this coming National Day. We join this year's NTUC marching contingent to find out how they are getting ready for the big day. Watch this space for ongoing stories about participants from NTUC and their NDP journey.

By **Shukry Rashid**

Starting as early as April this year, the 37-strong NTUC contingent has been training tirelessly every Saturday to perfect their drills for Singapore's 51st birthday bash. The contingent consists of participants from 20 unions and one affiliated organisation, the youngest being 18 and the oldest, 72. Each training takes up almost half a day, come rain or shine.

# Prepping for the March Past



Meet Chief Trainer 1WO A.S. Nagaratnam from the Singapore Armed Forces going through the drills with the NTUC contingent since day one.



The NTUC contingent has been spending its Saturdays practising marching drills at the Nee Soon Camp.



Let's face it, the weather has been at blistering levels lately. And we hope all participants remember to keep themselves hydrated.



Since 1966, NTUC annually sends a contingent to participate in the National Day Parade.



Amalgamated Union of Public Employees member Kalimuthu Manoharan, 62, is proud to be participating with the NTUC contingent for the ninth time.



Every detail counts: one of the SAF trainers makes sure that training is in order.



# Leading the Contingent

Introducing NTUC's contingent commander and deputy contingent commander for the upcoming National Day Parade. We catch up with them at a recent rehearsal.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

## **YEO CHUN FING** Contingent Commander

In his school days, NTUC Central Committee Financial Affairs Assistant Secretary and Amalgamated Union of Public Employees' General Secretary Yeo Chun Fing led a Red Cross contingent in a foot drill competition.

And 39 years on, he finds himself in a similar position but only on a bigger scale. Mr Yeo will lead NTUC's contingent as its commander at this year's National Day Parade.

For weeks, the NTUC contingent has been practicing tirelessly to sharpen their foot drills with the help of instructors from the Singapore Armed Forces.

"I'm a little rusty with the foot drills, but it's a skill that, once you have, can be brushed up on quite quickly. The trainers have been very helpful in fine tuning our marching. I believe when the actual day comes, we will all be ready," said Mr Yeo.

NTUC has sent a marching contingent to participate in every National Day Parade since independence and to Mr Yeo, the contingent is an evergreen one that will always have a place in the parade.

He said: "I believe the entire Labour Movement is proud of us. We hope to put up a good show and not disappoint anyone. I'm honoured to be part of this contingent and to the participants, I want to tell them to continue to do their best and keep the NTUC flag flying high."



## **EVLYN CHAN** Deputy Contingent Commander

Evlyn Chan describes her experience as NTUC's deputy contingent commander to be "very enriching and fulfilling."

At 28 years old, Ms Chan is one of the youngest deputy contingent commanders NTUC has ever had.

"I volunteered to be part of the parade as I believe everyone should dedicate their time to participate at least once in their lifetime and I am proud to be a Singaporean. Although I didn't know I'd be picked to be the deputy commander, I was up for the challenge," said Ms Chan, who is a member of Young NTUC and Union of Power and Gas Employees

As deputy contingent commander, Ms Chan will be leading the contingent at the preview of the National Day Parade and will be the one who will lead the contingent in the actual parade should the commander be unable to do so.

"I'm glad that I've been given the opportunity to be the deputy commander. NTUC grooms the youth to take on leadership roles and the parade is one of the platforms where NTUC does this," said Ms Chan.

She also believes that the NTUC contingent will do well, saying that many of the participants are veterans of the parade.



# Facing Challenges Together

National Transport Workers' Union Executive Secretary Melvin Yong calls for all stakeholders to work together to deal with challenges as they transition to the new bus contracting model.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

In his latest blogpost "Managing the Tower of Transition" on [labourbeat.org](http://labourbeat.org), National Transport Workers' Union (NTWU) Executive Secretary Melvin Yong shared that stakeholders in the public bus industry can overcome the challenges of transitioning to the new bus contracting model if they work together.

"Given that the bus contracting model is new, it is only natural that the different stakeholders in the public bus industry – Government, bus operators and workers – experience teething issues regarding transition," said Mr Yong.

Referring to Tower Transit Singapore, which was the first company to operate under the new model when it started operations on

29 May 2016, Mr Yong said: "We have been facing issues, but we have been working hard together to resolve these issues," said Mr Yong.

He cited an example where Tower Transit, the Land Transport Authority and NTWU worked together to discuss and manage transitional issues prior to the company commencing its operations.

"No stones were left unturned during these discussions, and concerns raised by the union were taken seriously by the operators and LTA. When services began, we continued to work together to take care of our workers," said Mr Yong.

He added that the example shows how tripartism is practiced in Singapore, with the Government, employer and union "working

hand-in-hand to manage and address issues."

"I call upon our future entrants to support this collaborative model. Let us work together in the spirit of tripartism to emerge better and stronger from the new bus contracting model," added Mr Yong.

## MAKING ADJUSTMENTS

Drawing from Tower Transit's experience, Mr Yong said new transport operators joining the public transport industry will likely face challenges in helping new hires from different work backgrounds and affected employees (AEs) from other operators adjust, especially for those who are employed under foreign transport operators.

"I met and spoke with some of these new hires who used to be cab drivers, port workers and even housewives. New hires or AEs alike, could still 'breathe' their previous organisational culture. Furthermore, these workers have to adjust to an organisation which is foreign to Singapore's culture and landscape," said Mr Yong.

## OVERCOMING CHALLENGES


To help resolve the challenges, Mr Yong added that all parties must do their part in managing and making adjustments to both organisational and cultural differences.

He said: "Both management and bus workers have to adjust their mindsets. Likewise for the union too. The new operator, if foreign, needs to know that they are operating in an environment different from their home country.

"AEs and new hires must accept that the new operator would have different operating cultural philosophies and practices ... The union needs to continue to stay relevant as it serves a growing pool of public transport workers and work closer with the Government and other stakeholders to ensure ground feedback gets reflected timely and that issues and concerns are resolved promptly."



NTWU Executive Secretary Melvin Yong (far right) with Tower Transit Singapore's management and workers at Bukit Batok Bus Interchange on the company's first day of operations.

**LABOURBEAT** 

Read the full post 'Managing the Tower of Transition' on [www.labourbeat.org](http://www.labourbeat.org).

# 不遗余力的协助

义工们肯拨出宝贵时间助人或与他人分享时光，背后必然有着一股支撑的力量及因素。让我们聆听几位义工细谈他们的经验。



## nEbO的陈子豪（19岁）

陈子豪起初参加义工活动时并不情愿。当时，他是跟随朋友参加一次由职总青少年团体nEbO主办的社区关爱活动。

他若有所思地说：“以前我对于须一早起身参加活动而感到厌烦。”但在nEbO导师引导他亲身体验助人的愉悦之后，他对此有所改观。

目前在维多利亚初级学院就读的他表示：“我真的不知道如何形容这种内心的愉悦，但这份真切的满足感确实能鼓舞人去进行义工活动。”

### 丰富人生

诚如他初加入义工队伍时一切都由导师带领的情况一样，现在子豪也带领着一批同辈，并协助自己就读的学校与nEbO举办放风筝活动，为弱势儿童带来欢乐。

像子豪这种年纪的学生，当义工往往只为了符合社区服务计划的规定，完成若干小时的公益服务。但子豪希望看到的是校方与nEbO组织的活动改变人们以上的一贯想法，从心出发，为民服务。

他说：“令人惊喜的是，当我的同学们真正体验到当义工的满足感后，他们的脸上无不流露出幸福的神采。”

投向义工服务的精神是富具感染力的。子豪透露，在他的同侪之中已有几位表示有意参加下一次由nEbO主办的活动。

他表示：“我希望新加坡社会变得更加富有爱心，人人都想回馈社会。我知道，很多人做义工是为了达到社区服务计划规定的时间标准，也为了加强个人的履历。我希望这些人能够进行反思，生命中除了追逐分数，还有更高层次的意义。”

## 在外籍劳工中心（MWC）服务的甘纳（40岁）



庆祝国际移徙者日，以及参加去年的五一劳动节庆祝活动。

他表示：“我希望我能够帮助任何须要帮助的人。最近我花比较多时间照顾这组客工。做义工让我深入了解受援者的困难，也感恩自己的幸福。”

### 深切体会

“我的工作须要经常出差，但只要出国一周我便很想家了。你看，客工们来这里工作是算年的，他们不常能与家人团聚。有些客工告诉我，他们连做了爸爸都没有机会回家抱抱自己的孩子，看看自己的老婆。这确实让我们深切体会到客工的辛酸！”

他说，我们国人要感谢客工的事项还真不少，而我们完全可以尽自己的能力帮助他们减轻生活上的负担。

“有些人心里感谢客工，但不知道该如何表示。我呼吁这些人别犹豫，挺身而出以实际行动来表达感谢。我可以保证，当你向他们伸出援手那一刻起，心里便会有一股说不出的满足感。”

在一家公司担任主任一职的甘纳结婚至今已有五年了，膝下育有两名小孩的他，私人时间并不充裕，但却尽量抽空，时不时参加义工活动。

大学时期甘纳便有过义工经验，加入外籍劳工中心是因为2014年一次他和太太参加屠妖节庆祝活动时偶然发现了招募义工传单。之后，他们俩便毅然到外籍劳工中心



## 职总青年团的陈传逸（32岁）

陈传逸上一次当义工的时候还是一名中学生。他说：“离校后我就很少有机会当义工了。”

时隔15年后，他在青年团爱新行动计划的首个活动中得知当局正在招募义工，于是当下决定再次投入服务大众的行列。

他是100名巡回圣淘沙岛，向那些辛勤服务旅客的人员致敬的义工之一。

### 暖孜孜的感觉

当询及他沉寂一段长时间之后重新投入义工行列有何感想时，他兴奋地答说工友的反应给他留下了持久的影响。

“圣淘沙的员工个个笑容可掬，但难得有人回应。当我们到访时，他们事先毫不知情，看到他们满心欢喜地接受我们赠予的礼物，喜悦充满了我的心房。”

这次经历使得传逸对下一次的活动充满期待，并且已准备参加下一次的爱新行动，为弱势家庭打扫和粉刷他们的住家。

传逸表示：“人们常说做社会工作，心里总有一股暖孜孜的感觉。经历过这一天的活动，我才真正体会到这句话的含义。”

# “职总周报”

2016年7月17日  
售价 60c  
MCI (P) 028/12/2015

Touching Hearts



## 服务社会献真心

职总青年团推出爱新行动计划(U Heart)，大力弘扬工运的义工精神。

**工运**一向以照料工友为己任，除了维护工友及其在职场的权益，还跨越其服务至社会上的弱势群体等，让工友在职场以外也能生活得更精彩，更富意义。

例如职总社区内的青少年组织nEbO、年长会员组织U Live、外籍劳工中心(MWC)和家庭佣工中心(CDE)等，定期组织各种义工活动，造福和回馈社会。

### 发挥影响力

为配合今年国庆，职总别出心裁，发动属下各家工会、各社区组织及社会企业，参与由年轻人领头的爱新行动计划。

爱新行动计划是职总青年团与职总英康的OrangeAid携手合办的。该计划的实施时间是从即日起至8月份，活动内容高达95项，旨在培养、培训、激励年轻工友及义工们热情献身社会服务。为了鼓励义工展开爱新行动，95项志愿活动中的每一项，都获得了1000元的活动经费津贴及寻求指导和宣传协助。这回共有2500多名义工投入计划，他们来自30家工会、13个职总社区，以及部分自愿报名的社会人士，而从此计划中受益的人士将超过6500名（详见框文）。

职总青年团执行秘书朱陪庆表示：“我们的用意是设立这样的平台，让年轻工友不仅能回馈社会，更希望他们从中学习组织与领导技巧，以及掌握激励年轻工友和国人帮助他人的能力。这么做符合工运的宗旨，即不止协助工友在事业上取得成功，也让他们发掘并实现自己的志愿，从而回馈社会。”

### 在圣淘沙启动计划

爱新行动计划的首个活动于2016年7月13日在圣淘沙举行，当天共有100多名来自旅游景点、度假村及娱乐业雇员联合会(AREU)，公共雇员联合会(AUPE)和自愿报名的义工参与了活动。他们先后拜访了圣淘沙幼儿园、圣淘沙单轨列车的沙滩站和圣淘沙单轨列车柜台，向在那里工作的员工分发巧克力，以表示对他们的感谢。

职总秘书长陈振声也出席了这一次的活动。他在感谢茶会上对圣淘沙员工和义工们表示：“圣淘沙的发展少不了你们的贡献……那是你们多年辛勤劳动的结果。你们的团队在发展圣淘沙至今的过程中留下了血汗和泪水，荣誉应该归于你们所有。”

有意参加爱新行动计划的朋友，敬请浏览[www.youngntuc.org.sg](http://www.youngntuc.org.sg)

### 五大类别一条心

爱新行动计划的服务对象分成五大类别，各类别的头个英文字母拼凑起来便形成“心”的英文字样 - HEART。不论哪个类别，义工们都抱着同一条心为他们服务：

1. 薪家庭和独居老人。
2. 动物（饲养与野生）与环境。
3. 幕后的工友。
4. 残障人士及建国一代。
5. 弱势儿童及接受居家护理的儿童和未成年人士。