

DSA NEWS

25 years of service to the Down syndrome community



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After a two-year hiatus, Mystique Charity Gala Dinner returned in full swing.

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14 adult learners were employed to pack mooncakes over a period of five days.

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Long-awaited Overnight Stayover

Learners from ILT Centre experienced their first overnight stayover.

From the ED's Desk



A huge thank you to everyone who came to, or otherwise supported, our Mystique Charity Gala Dinner on 24 September 2022. It has been our privilege and pleasure to host all of you in person at the Shangri-La Singapore after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. We were delighted with the resounding response from our members and supporters and the exuberant energy and engagement of our audience that were on full display that evening. We could not thank you enough for making this possible.

Speaking at the event, Minister Chan Chun Sing shared that the event's theme, "What does Inclusion Mean" was a timely question as Singapore sought to tighten its social compact amid global turbulence. Minister Chan added that while managing change may seem daunting, he encouraged all to take advantage of the changes to co-create a more inclusive Singapore that all of us can be a part of, one that, hopefully, can surpass even the wildest dreams of the first parents who started DSA.

Minister's statement truly resonates with DSA, our members, and caregivers. We believe that our beneficiaries' contributions can be even greater if we remove barriers to their participation. Personally, a practical action is to remove those barriers that would impede the establishment of an accessible and inclusive society for persons with special needs, and to do that, we must continue and progressively promote public awareness of existing barriers to the full inclusion of their participation.

At DSA, we engage, support, and empower persons with Down syndrome alongside their caregivers. Through our various programs and services, we not only enhance our beneficiaries' skillsets so that they too can thrive in the community, lead fulfilling and productive lives and make valuable contributions to their family and society, but we also impart essential knowledge and skills to their caregivers so that they can be better equipped to support their loved ones.

In the same breath, I am looking forward to the launch of two new initiatives in the upcoming months - Early Start Program (ESP) for Infants and Toddlers and the Work Readiness Assisted Program (WRAP) for Adult Learners. These new programs will enhance the capabilities of DSA through innovative service designs that provide a continuum of supports that respond to the needs and characteristics of each child/adult and their family. We will be sharing more details about this in time to come.

With the assistance from family members, caregivers, and support from the community, we envisage that our beneficiaries can develop the skills to live independently well into later adult life. We all can make this possible by reinforcing and recommitting ourselves to providing our beneficiaries a conducive environment for their development, empowerment, and independence by planting the seeds of inclusion within ourselves and the community for genuine change to take place in our society.

Mr. Yeo Ando
Executive Director

The Return of Mystique



The opening performance by Ms Rahimah Rahim and DSA Fusion Dancers livened up the atmosphere of the ballroom

After a two-year hiatus, Mystique Charity Gala Dinner returned in full swing on 24 September 2022 at Shangri-La Singapore with more than 300 guests in attendance. We were honoured to have Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Education, as our Guest-of-Honour.

The opening performance featuring renowned performer, Ms Rahimah Rahim and DSA Fusion Dancers generated much excitement among the attendees with their strong vocals and sleek moves. Performers from the Speech & Drama program put up two riveting plays titled "The Attack of the K-Pop Princess" and "The Emperor's New Hair" which were well-received among our guests. The event ended on a high note with 14 beneficiaries as young as 9-year-old strutting down the runway for a specially curated Auction

show which combined the elements of a fashion parade and an auction.

All 38 performers put in their best effort, practising, and memorising their steps, lines, and sequence to showcase to our guests over the past four months leading up to the event.





It was a memorable evening for both guests and performers as the performances showcased their passion, enthusiasm, and commitment.

The evening also saw the presentation of Long Service awards to Patron, Advisors and Board members to thank them for their relentless contribution to the Association and a special posthumous 'Champion of DSA' award to the family of the late Mr. R. Sivanandam, a founding member of DSA who passed on in June 2022.

We are heartened by the overflowing support from guests who cheered on our performers and bid for the auction items. We would like to convey our appreciation to Singapore Airlines for donating a pair of Business Class tickets for two to Zurich, Switzerland and L'Oreal for the luxurious goodie bag and thank them for their unwavering support at our Mystique events.

Mystique 2022 would not have been a success if not for the fervent support of our donors, sponsors, members, and volunteers. On behalf of the organising committee, DSA Board of Management, staff, and the Down syndrome community, we would like to express our deepest gratitude and thanks to all for being a part of the Mystique 2022 Charity Gala Dinner.

From the top:

GOH Minister Chan Chun Sing delivering the Opening Speech

Act 1: The Attack of the K-Pop Princess

Act 2: The Emperor's New Hair

One of the younger participants, Nicole Teoh strutting down the ballroom for the Auction Runway



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From top (left to right):
Champion of DSA: Kirthikan receiving on behalf of his grandfather, the late Mr R. Sivanandam; **25 Years Award:** Dr Balbir Singh; Dr Bhavani Sriram; Ms Kristin Van Burm; **15 Years Award:** Mr Tan Soo Khoon; Mr Khairul Alam; **10 Years Award:** Ms Li Shu Yun; **5 Years Award:** Mr Alex Yan, Mr Gerard Lim; Ms Lia Marahusin; Mr Gopalan Nair

Mr Jonathan Seow, Co-Chairperson of Mystique presenting the token of Appreciation to GOH Minister Chan Chun Sing

Our deepest appreciation to



AES packs Mooncakes



In the spirit of inclusivity, 14 adult learners from our Adult Enhancement Program (AEP) and Independent Living and Training (ILT) Centre were offered a supported employment opportunity from 1 to 5 August 2022. They were involved in the packing of Marina Bay Sands (MBS) mooncakes for the Mid-Autumn festival organised by Old Seng Choon (OSC).

The learners received job skills orientation and training from our trainers before their deployment. During the employment period, our trainers were at the job site to guide our learners in picking up the required job tasks and skills, identifying possible job modifications and working with the employer to ensure a seamless job flow process. Throughout the employment period, our learners were well cared for with lunch, snacks and transport provided by OSC.

This was the very first time that our learners had such an opportunity outside DSA premises. We

were very impressed with our learners who rose to the occasion and completed their tasks with sustained commitment throughout the program. Their dedication gained traction with the management in MBS and OSC who visited the job site and personally thanked and gave tokens and certificates to our learners. We would like to thank Old Seng Choon for providing our Learners with this precious job opportunity.

Contributor: Premalatha Parasuraman, Assistant Director (Services)



AEP Learners, June Lin and Samuel Lee unpacking the containers for the mooncakes to be placed inside

Supported Employment is a model of employment that provides people with disabilities who require more assistance, the appropriate ongoing support that is necessary for successfully completing the tasks in a work environment that may be competitive. It is supported by the employer, the Job Coach/Trainer, and the caregivers.

Accumulating Work Experience at Eat What



Wei Jian helps to sort the cutleries



Mark Lim rinses the used plates before placing them in the dishwasher

As part of the Job Readiness Training, two adult learners from DSA's Adult Enhancement Program (AEP), Mark Lim and Wang Wei Jian were given the opportunity to work at Eat What cafeteria located at DB Schenker Asia Pacific Regional Office for a period of three months. Since August 2022, Mark and Wei Jian have been accumulating work experience by learning to maintain the cleanliness of the dining areas, sort cutleries, and place plates and bowls in the dishwasher, among other assigned duties. This helped equip them-

selves with vocational and soft skills which are required for open employment.

Mark and Wei Jian look forward to travelling independently to their workplace and working in the cafeteria every week. We are thankful for the supportive staff who warmly welcomed them and accommodated their needs.

Contributed by: Nur Shuhada Binte Suhaimi, Senior Training Officer, Adult Enhancement Program

Happy Teacher's Day

Being an ITP Early Intervention Teacher or IFSP Special Education Teacher is a noble profession. Each day brings about a new development or a new learning moment. The list of 'ah-ha' moments we have had with the children is endless.

In ITP, there is nothing more gratifying than having a high-five moment with a parent when the infant smiles or babbles a little, and at the heart of IFSP, there is a desire to play a role in setting the foundation for a rewarding educational journey. IFSP is a constant influence in the lives of our children who are eager to learn and make their mark in the world.

My heartfelt Teachers' Day best wishes to CES colleagues for placing a clear focus on the small triumphs and moments of growth they experience along the way with the children they serve. Teaching young children is a gift that continues to give. Happy Teachers' Day!

Contributor: Viemala Davie Kelaver, Head, Children Education Services



ILT Centre Gives Back



In the spirit of giving back to the community, the learners at the ILT Centre prepared a gift basket for the custodians at Telok Blangah Crescent. These men have been helpful and friendly to-

wards our learners and are always ready to assist. As a way of appreciating them for their hospitality, our learners chose to put together a gift basket to present to the custodians.

Each learner contributed in their own way with Toh Wei Kang typing out the message while Lee Pei Yun decorated the card. Dylan Kwok, Jenny Chen and Angie Ng helped to arrange the goodies in the basket, and Kenneth Tan and John Grace added finishing touches to the basket with coloured "Thank You" cards.

Contributor: Yoginita D/O S Vanu, Lifestyle Educator, Independent Living & Training Centre

Long-awaited Overnight Stayover

The ILT Centre learners experienced their first overnight stayover on 22 September 2022. This was put on the backburner due to the pandemic. The overnight stayover provides another opportunity for learners to practice the independent living skills they are learning each day.

The learners were so enthusiastic about the prospect of staying with their friends, as they had been preparing for weeks. They discussed their meal plans and made a grocery list. After working at the Thrift Shop on Thursday afternoon, they headed to the nearby supermarket to purchase the ingredients listed on their shopping list for their meals.

During the stayover, each learner prepared their own meals, cleaned up and went to bed on their own accord. This experience proved to be a beneficial one that showed the learners and their caregivers that they are capable of doing more, and that they deserve the chance to prove themselves.

Contributor: Todd Simonson, Head, Independent Living & Training Centre



Therapy Services for AES



Since May 2022, DSA's Adult Education Services has been engaging a physiotherapist and an occupational therapist from SATA CommHealth for selected learners to improve their health and well-being. Individualised treatment plans were tailored according to the needs and abilities of these learners.

26-year-old Govinda attends AEP and is able to do familiar tasks such as packing his belongings, feeding himself and toileting, however, he has challenges in comprehending novel tasks. With ongoing occupational therapy, we are confident that Govinda's visual perceptual skills and fine motor skills will improve. He will be able to match and trace simple shapes and do simple household chores independently in time to come.

Contributor: Angeline De Cruz, Training Officer, Adult Enhancement Program

Nutrition and Meal Recommendations

A talk on 'Nutrition and Meal Recommendations' to reduce the risk of chronic diseases was conducted by Ms. Liow Min Choo, a dietician from SATA CommHealth for our AEP caregivers. Ms. Liow shared with the caregivers how an appropriate diet could help in reducing the onset of gout attacks and excess weight gain and lower the risk of getting diabetes. She also shared examples to illustrate the right portion sizes of the food intake that our learners need to consume which includes carbohydrates, proteins, and fiber.

Our caregivers found the talk very informative, and they also took the opportunity to ask questions relating to their child's diet.

Ms. Liow will be conducting three onsite workshops focusing on obesity, diabetes, and gout for our learners in the upcoming months.



Contributor: Catherine Michael, Supervisor, Adult Enhancement Program

Music in Sync

Over a period of 12 sessions from May to August 2022, nine child-caregiver pairs participated in a series of creative music and movement sessions. The program modelled music therapy approaches and customised creative music and movement activities to create a safe space for learning and enhancing individual and group social-emotional growth using materials and resources found at home.

The group explored themes like drum and dance, aquarium, moving beats, and many other activities. The program shared many useful activities that caregivers can continue conducting for their children at home.

Contributor: Amelia Sim, Senior Executive, Membership & Enrichment Programs



NDP Celebration with Infineum



The Piazza was in a celebratory mood on 8 August 2022 with new friends from Infineum. Our AEP learners were very enthusiastic and excited to welcome our first group of visitors for the National Day celebration since the relaxation of the COVID-19 measures. Our patriotic spirits were lifted high during the singalong to National Day songs and craft work sessions such as kite painting, National Day parade shakers and NDP wind-mills. The celebration ended with a sumptuous buffet lunch spread and a game of bingo where winners were given a reward!

We are thankful to be able to celebrate National Day, an occasion close to many of our hearts, with our new friends from Infineum!

Contributor: Alicia Ang, Senior Executive, Community Partnerships & Corporate Communications

ISG Moves for DSA

In support of Suicide Prevention and Awareness Day held on the 10th of September each year, ISG, a global dynamic construction specialist, hosted their annual global move challenge, Move for Charity, from 12 to 18 September 2022.

Move for Charity is an annual initiative where #teamISG along with their families, suppliers and clients are invited to get active to raise funds and awareness for their chosen charity partner. The premise of the movement is to encourage everyone who takes part to get active in any way they like such as running, walking, swimming or dancing, taking on yoga or hitting the road with their bikes.

ISG staff kicked off the #MoveforCharity event in Singapore with an evening nature walk at Fort Canning together with beneficiaries from DSA. Throughout the week, TeamISG clocked 1,369km through running, cycling, and walking across Singapore.

Thank you, ISG Singapore for raising a total of \$5,120 which will help support DSA's Adult Enhancement Program designed to equip beneficiaries with independent living and useful work skills to succeed at the workplace, just like one of our beneficiaries, Chunru who has been working at ISG for the past 10 years.

Contributor: Alicia Ang, Senior Executive, Community Partnerships & Corporate Communications



ISG website:

<https://www.isgltd.com/sg/en>

Coming Soon



Ryan Lim, 28



Dawson Tan, 22

Do Good

CHARITY FUNDRAISER

28 - 31 Oct 2022

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100% of the nett proceeds from the sales will be donated to DSA.

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Dear Friends,

Greetings to you from all of us at Down Syndrome Association (Singapore).

Your support will enable us to support our children and adults with Down syndrome through various educational, developmental and social programs with the aim to assist them to become more independent and lead productive lives.

Whether in big or small ways, we hope that you will continue to support our Cause. If you wish to make a contribution, kindly complete the donation form below and return it to us via post or at DSA Centre.

Once again, our heartfelt thanks and appreciation from the DSA Board of Management, staff and our community of persons with Down syndrome!

DONATION FORM (NEWS/2022/09)

Name [as per NRIC/FIN/Registered Company]: (MR/MS/MDM/DR)

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Address: _____

Email: _____

I would like to make a contribution of:

A donation of \$50 / 100 / 500 / 1,000 / Others: \$ _____

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One-time Monthly Contribution

Visa/Mastercard Credit card no.: _____

Card Holder's Name: _____

Expiry date: _____ Signature: _____

All outright donations are entitled to a tax deduction of 250%.

Kindly drop off this form together with your contribution at our reception counter or mail to DSA Centre, attention to "Team CPCC".



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TO BE THE CENTRE OF
EXCELLENCE FOR INDIVIDUALS
WITH DOWN SYNDROME,
THEIR FAMILIES AND
THE COMMUNITY.



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