



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEGA VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT TO RAISE AWARENESS OF PRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

“International Volunteer Day Walk with Me” event includes a multi-sensory exhibition that helps people understand the daily challenges faced by the under-privileged, as well as a showcase of over 40 non-profits and their causes

Singapore, 18 November 2011 – International Volunteer Day celebrations will take on an added meaning this year. Apart from recognising and affirming the giving spirit of volunteers, the event titled “**Walk with Me**” seeks to help more people empathise with the plight of the under-privileged, and inspire them to pledge their help towards a cause they care about.

Featuring an interactive exhibition of social needs covering areas including Community; Health; Special Needs; Elderly; and Animals and the Environment, participants can experience the daily challenges beneficiaries face through hands-on experience, simulation through their five senses and the use of multi-media technologies. Experiences include what life is like in a one-room flat in Singapore; a dark room where participants will be led by a visually-handicapped person to go through various activities without their sense of sight; learning sign language and lip reading; manoeuvring through a circuit of obstacles seated on a wheelchair; understanding common elderly ailments like stroke and gradual loss of sight and even mental issues like schizophrenia through an audio room and shadow casting techniques.

Environmentalists and animal lovers can look forward to pot-planting activities by Ground-Up Initiative, a forest trail by NParks where they can learn about tree-tagging and a wildlife enclosure exhibit by ACRES.

Said David Fong, NVPC’s Director of SG Cares, “We often hear of many people who would rather go overseas to volunteer and that is good, because the needs in some

countries are obvious. But in Singapore, the needs are not so apparent, so we hope to highlight these needs through this interactive exhibition and get more people to empathise, and volunteer for a cause they care about.”

Participants will also be able to connect and interact with over 40 charities at a larger exhibition area, choose a cause they care about and pledge their help. Pledging can be done on a pledge card or online at www.walkwithme.sg or via the “Singapore Cares” app on www.facebook.com/sqcares.

Another highlight of the event is **Fire Pitch**, where non-profits will pitch their cause to a live corporate audience for adoption. Two cash prizes will be given out to the pitch with the most compelling idea and the one that is most innovative.

Families can relax in an air-conditioned area where they can enjoy a massage, relax in a nature setting, shop at a charity flea market or simply have fun with arts and craft activities. Complimentary snacks like curry puffs and ice-cream will be available while stocks last.

The evening will culminate in a concert **“Rock with Me”** to appreciate and affirm volunteers for their selfless giving. MediaCorp 987FM radio hosts Divian and Jacqui will bring the house down with local celebrity performers Gurmit Singh and Hossan Leong. Other highlights include high energy acts from 10 year-old Miguel Antonio - a child prodigy singing sensation touted as Singapore’s very own Justin Bieber, to the oldest and most happening rock guitarist, 73 year-old Grandma Mary.

Also catch international artistes like ClaraC, winner of many prestigious competitions in the U.S, and Charles J Tan, accomplished songwriter showcasing their talents for a good cause. Other highlights include funky Hip-hop Korean moms from YMCA, The Strikeforce drumming group and performers from various charities.

International Volunteer Day 2011 Walk with Me will be graced by Guest-of-Honour, Acting Minister for Community Development Youth & Sports, Mr Chan Chun Sing. The event is jointly organised by Asian Women’s Welfare Association, Lions Befrienders, Methodist Welfare Services, National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC), Pertapis, Sathya Sai Organisation, Singapore Association for Mental Health, Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society and YMCA of Singapore.

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About the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC)

Transform. Catalyse. Connect.

These words shape what we do, which is to help people and organisations give well to causes they care about, so as to build a sustainable future for all in Singapore. We do this by working with other non-profits, companies, and public sector bodies to facilitate and strengthen giving in Singapore, whether of time, money or in-kind.

NVPC is an independent, not-for-profit organisation. Visit us at www.nvpc.org.sg

About SG Cares

Doing good has never been easier with SG Cares.

NVPC's volunteering initiative, SG Cares provides a wide range of volunteer opportunities for individuals, groups, corporates and schools. Its online portal (www.sgcares.org) features real-time volunteer activities from over 200 volunteer host organisations. Individuals can search and sign up for various volunteer opportunities that best suit their time, interest, skill and location.

Asian Women's Welfare Association

AWWA (Asian Women's Welfare Association) is a registered voluntary welfare organisation in Singapore and a full member of the National Council of Social Service. AWWA has been providing services to families, the elderly, children and young people with special needs since 1970.

Lions Befrienders

Lions Befrienders Service Association (Singapore) [LBSA] is a Voluntary Welfare Organisation which was founded in 1995 by the Lions Clubs of Singapore and a Lions District Project. We are also a registered member with the National Council of Social Service, the local social services sector's umbrella body. Our core mission is to aid in the social, psycho-emotional and physical well-being of lonely seniors through community participation whilst upholding our belief that every older person is a valued member of society and deserves to age with grace and dignity.

Methodist Welfare Services

In Christian love, Methodist Welfare Services provides quality services to address prevailing social needs, touch lives and advance a compassionate and caring community.

Pertapis

PERTAPIS is a registered organisation under the Societies Act since 1970. The principal activity of the association is to engage in self-help projects for the betterment of the community's welfare in Singapore. It is an approved charitable organisation under the Charities Act, Cap 37. It is accorded the status of an Institution of Public Character (IPC) by the National Council of Social Services.

Sathya Sai Organisation

The main objective of the Sathya Sai Organisation is to help people recognise the divinity inherent in them. So, their duty is to emphasise the One, to experience the One in all they do or speak. Also not to give importance to differences of religion, sect, status, or color and have the feeling of one-ness permeate all their acts. Only those who do so have a place in this Organisation; the rest can withdraw. - *Sathya Sai Baba (Sathya Sai Speaks IX, 35, 187-188)*.

Singapore Association for Mental Health

The Singapore Association for Mental Health is a voluntary welfare organisation (non-government and non-profit organisation), which seeks to promote the social and mental well-being of the people of Singapore. More specifically, the organisation aims to promote mental health, prevent mental illness, improve the care and rehabilitation of the mentally ill and the emotionally disturbed, and to reduce the misconception and social stigma that surround mental illness.

Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society

Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society (THK) is a not-for-profit voluntary welfare organisation for more than 30 years. Since 1978, THK plays a key role in providing community, social and welfare services to all people. THK manages more than 50 services, programmes and centres island-wide to serve anyone who needs help.

YMCA of Singapore

YMCA of Singapore is a voluntary welfare organisation which seeks to serve all members of the community, regardless of race, language or religion through wholesome programmes which are based on Christian principles. YMCA organises 17 structured and sustained YMCA-Tan Chin Tuan Community Service Programmes to enrich the lives of the beneficiaries from 34 partnering voluntary welfare organisations and self help groups. The beneficiaries include the intellectually, mentally and physically challenged, out-of-school youth and youth-at-risk, abused and underprivileged children, the visually and hearing impaired, the elderly and the poor. Some of the other programmes include the YMCA-Lim Kim San Volunteers Programme, overseas community service programmes, rebuilding programmes for disaster-hit communities and YMCA Financial Assistance & Capability for Employment Scheme. YMCA was conferred the 2008 Outstanding Non-Profit Organisation Award by the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre on 13 November 2008.

The organisation also owns social enterprises, such as the YMCA International House, YMCA Child Development and Student Care Centres, YMCA School and YMCA Tertiary Education.