



In the spirit of



MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 14 OCTOBER 2020, 12PM

PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE ENCOURAGES THE COMMUNITY TO CONTINUE TO ENGAGE IN VOLUNTEERISM IN SUPPORT OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

SINGAPORE 14 OCTOBER 2020, 12PM – The President's Challenge Volunteer Drive (PCVD) 2020 is encouraging the community to find ways to engage in volunteerism safely despite disruptions to regular volunteering activities. This was announced today by President Halimah Yacob at CapitaLand's #CareKitWithLove event, held at Metta School.

2. The volunteerism sector has had to adapt to the unprecedented challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic in order to continue reaching out to vulnerable groups. Since the start of the year, the PCVD has rallied more than 2,200 volunteers from over 20 organisations to support its benefitting agencies. Many volunteering groups have made use of technology to pivot activities online to engage both volunteers and service users.

3. Volunteers from youth volunteer group Heartware Network held online Hand Yoga sessions – where participants were tasked to follow a set of hand movements and execute them to the beat of a song – to help service users improve hand-eye coordination. Corporate volunteers from IT services company Cognizant conducted virtual training workshops for various President's Challenge (PC) benefitting agencies to improve digital literacy among adults and orient students to cybersecurity. The company's volunteers also took part in weekly virtual singing sessions with service users from Singapore National Stroke Association.

4. A youth volunteer who has been actively involved in virtual volunteerism is 19-year-old student Sarah Yew. Since the start of the circuit breaker period, she has led numerous online engagement sessions with children from PC benefitting agencies like Care Community Services Society and Morning Star Community Services, helped vet the content and conducted rehearsals for other volunteers before their sessions with the children. She also ensures that these sessions are structured to be engaging and encourage interaction between the two groups.

5. “The virtual format was initially challenging as we faced technical problems and difficulties in keeping the children focused. But over time, we found ways to solve these issues, for example, by choosing the right topics to engage the children in and getting them to respond to our questions. I have enjoyed making use of my time in a meaningful manner during the pandemic. I hope that others who are thinking of volunteering will step up to do so, especially during this time when more may be in need of our support,” said Miss Yew.

6. CapitaLand’s #CareKitWithLove initiative aims to rally volunteers to sew over 9,000 mask pouches and raise funds for PC. Since its launch last month, more than 250 volunteers have signed up to produce these mask pouches that will be donated to 20 special education schools. From 14 October, volunteers who are comfortable facilitating a simple art session virtually and enjoy interacting with children and youth can sign up to conduct virtual art lessons for students with special needs, to help them design and personalise mask pouches. For more information on the initiative, visit www.capitaland.com/carekitwithlove. Please refer to Annex A for the list of benefitting schools.

7. “This year, many volunteering activities cannot take place in their usual forms due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But I am glad that many volunteers have leveraged technology to continue their volunteering activities. Today’s event is a good example of how PC has been rallying Singaporeans to contribute their time and skills to help those less fortunate among us. I hope PCVD will build on this positive momentum and create more regular volunteering opportunities through the use of technology to help the vulnerable groups in Singapore – in line with the theme of PC 2021 on ‘Building a Digitally Inclusive Society’,” said President Halimah Yacob.

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About President's Challenge Volunteer Drive

The President's Challenge Volunteer Drive (PCVD) is a President's Challenge (PC) initiative where individuals, schools and organisations are encouraged to participate in a host of programmes and volunteer activities. PCVD aims to help people understand the critical needs facing the less fortunate in Singapore, and at the same time to experience the satisfaction of volunteerism.

Besides creating volunteer opportunities and matching the needs of PC benefitting agencies with interested volunteers, PCVD also carries out workshops to train volunteers to make them more effective and to enhance capability in the sector.

List of benefiting special education schools

Mask pouches sewn and produced by volunteers under #CareKitWithLove will benefit 20 special education schools across 12 social service agencies:

S/N	Agency name	School name
1	Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) Ltd	AWWA School
2	Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN)	Chaoyang School
		Delta Senior School
		Katong School
		Tanglin School
3	Autism Association (Singapore)	Eden School
4	Autism Resource Centre (Singapore)	Pathlight School
5	Canossa Mission Singapore	Canossian School
6	Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS)	Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore School
7	Metta Welfare Association	Metta School
8	Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS)	Fernvale Gardens School
		Lee Kong Chian Gardens School
		Towner Gardens School
		Woodlands Gardens School
9	Presbyterian Community Services	Grace Orchard School
10	Rainbow Centre, Singapore	Margaret Drive School
		Yishun Park School
		Yishun Park School (Woodlands)
11	Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH)	Lighthouse School
12	St. Andrew's Mission Hospital	St. Andrew's Autism School