



You Raise Me Up

A Life Community 20th Anniversary Commemorative Book



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A place where children strive for As, parents provide endless enrichment classes for their children, where students compare their holiday destinations and latest electronic gadgets, many may not notice the dejected children or families in our midst.

There exists, among the abundance in Singapore, vulnerable families and children whose highlight of the day could be receiving sufficient pocket money, a bed to sleep on or seeing a smile on their parents' faces.

This book you are holding contains their life stories. Stories of families and children who come from backgrounds that are disadvantageous, but who are not defeated in their circumstances.

Life Community has been given the humble opportunity to be a part of their lives.

We have put together this book to capture snippets of Life Community's 20-year journey.

The book cover depicts the growth of a young plant by the roadside. A seemingly uncondusive environment for the plant to grow. A metaphorical representation of the harsh conditions in which the children in Life Community have to grow up in. A good nurturing environment is not a given. They have to fight for their survival in order to overcome the odds against them. It is a picture of great resiliency in their adversity.

This book is a compilation of such overcoming stories of our children, youth, their parents and the people who have walked the journey with them.

Celebrating their successes.

Sharing their pains and struggles.

At Life Community, we hope to provide our children and youth with a place where they can feel cared for.

A place where they will find love, hope, kindness, respect, provision, and acceptance.

A place where lives are being rebuilt, destinies restored, and dreams birthed. A place where there are not just ears to listen to them, but hearts that reach out and hands that make the difference.

To pick them up when they fall.

To wipe away their tears.

Shoulders to lean on when they are weary.

A gentle voice to encourage and guide.
We hope to raise them to the level where they can discover their potential and talents, stretch themselves, and eventually soar to their dreams.

To raise them up to be more than they can be.

*"You raise me up, so that I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up to more than I can be."*

(Excerpt from 'You Raise Me Up' by Josh Groban)

Note: some names in the stories have been changed to protect the identities of the children and youth.



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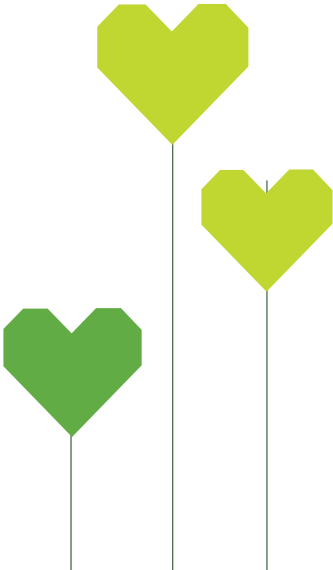
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Foreword by *Wee Eng Hwa*

I am honoured to write the foreword for this book – *You Raise Me Up* – to mark a significant event – the 20th birthday of Life Community Services Society.

Singaporeans should be proud and thankful to have in our midst this charitable organization, started 20 years ago by a handful of God-fearing and caring individuals who had only one thing in mind – to give a leg-up to a section of the underprivileged in our society who otherwise could have fallen to the ground, unnoticed.

It is truly my privilege to be associated with Life Community and its dedicated management and staff and the wonderful volunteers. Many young children and teens, who would otherwise have joined the downs and outs, have benefitted from their efforts. They clean up, shape up and give hope and self-confidence to these kids to lead independent lives and become contributing adults. I would ask you, dear reader, to join me in applauding these hard-working selfless people for their supreme efforts and achievements. Let us also remember with gratitude the donors and well-wishers, without whose financial support Life Community itself would not have been possible.

I was taught always to be a human being: to be thankful to God for the good things such as good education, jobs, health, mental abilities, family and friends; to remember and be ever grateful to people who had helped us; and to be kind and compassionate towards others. These are the Godly values and principles that my parents, the late President Wee Kim Wee and First Lady Mrs Wee Kim Wee, imparted to me and my siblings. In a nutshell, it is important to be loved and to learn to love. Their lives reflected just that – my parents were first and foremost human beings.

May this book - a collection of some of the hardest battles fought and won by the people in Life Community - help us to realize the importance of being human beings, and attract big hearts and people action to continue the good work of so many who have passed through the portals of Life Community in the last two decades.

I wish Life Community Services Society many more good years.

Wee Eng Hwa
Author of Cooking for the President





A Word of Encouragement by *Sim Gim Guan*

"There are two things children should get from their parents: roots and wings." - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Yet not all families are well placed to provide children with the two fundamental things to soar in life. Being in the social service sector, I have witnessed many families in need experiencing financial hardship and many other complex issues. Children of these families as a result are not able to maximise their developmental years, which are also the most crucial years of a child for learning and growing.

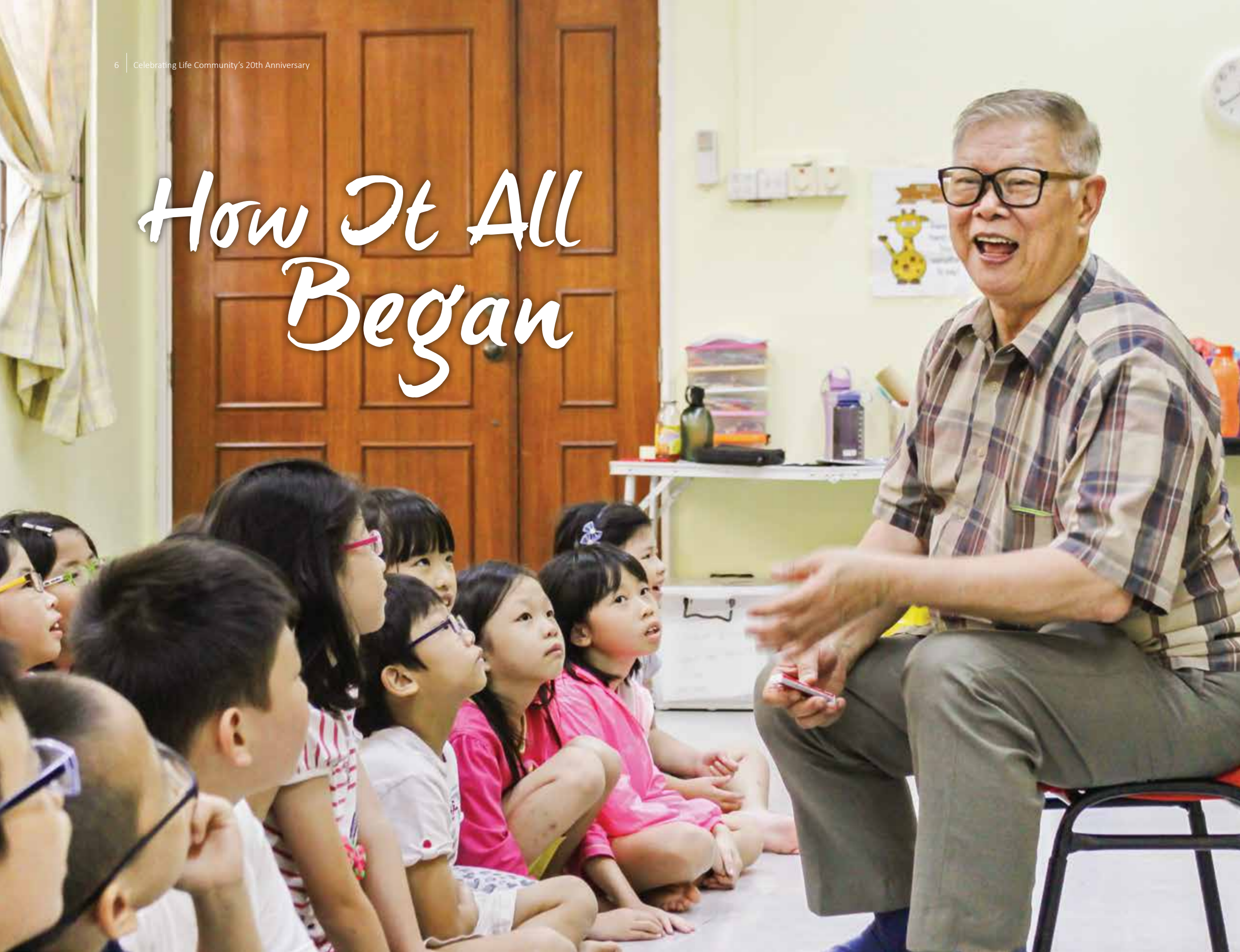
I am thankful for agencies like Life Community Services Society (LCSS), being there to watch over these children. From a student care centre in a confined space with few children, Life Community has expanded its capacity and today, reach out and impact the lives of more than 1000 families with children and caregivers today. I am heartened to know that Life Community's outreach efforts to families and the community have intensified over the years and the provision of support has extended to children and youths of incarcerated families. These programmes provide a nurturing environment for children and youths to develop skills that can help them later in life.

I congratulate Life Community for the 20 years of good work done, reflected in the collection of moving stories of this book. All of today's accomplishments would not have been possible without the active volunteers, passionate staff and the organisation's commitment in empowering the vulnerable children and families. Together with the children, youths and their families, you have demonstrated resilience and I wish you yet another fulfilling 20 years ahead!

Sim Gim Guan
CEO of National Council of Social Service



How It All Began



Struggles and sacrifices

Life Community first started out as a student care centre in a bomb shelter at Bishan. It was small, unknown, had few children and continually faced financial difficulties.

Caring for the poor

Reminiscing of his childhood, post World War Two, Dr Tan Kok Beng who founded Life Community, was grateful to his uncle who brought his two brothers and him from Malaysia to Singapore to receive an education as their parents could not afford the school fees.

“I had help from a kind uncle because my family was poor. Hence, I feel for the poor as they need help to make their lives better. This helped me shape my vision for Life Community.”

The ministry to the poor through good works, which reflects God's heartbeat, became the driving force for starting Life Community.

"I never doubted God wanted me to start Life Community, but I also knew that it would be a struggle. There is a price for success. You have to pay the price. A lot of sacrifices. I thank God for good board members who were committed to Life Community. We were all determined to make Life Community work, even though we did not have much money. The difficult circumstances did not discourage us."

Dr Tan explained that as a Christian, it was important to do good deeds (Titus 3:8); always remember the poor (Galatians 2:10); and to take care of the weak by feeding and clothing them as a service to God (Matthew 25:40).

Hope, love, respect

Commenting on the "good works" by Life Community, Dr Tan said, "Now, we have seen over the years, those children who have come to Life Community later found hope and they found love. Many of them are now better educated. So the goodness part is that they have become caregivers today. They were helped and now they become helpers."

A grateful heart

To Dr Tan, caring for the poor is a form of giving back to the community.

"Giving back to the community is a sign of gratefulness. Gratefulness is the heart of morality, it's the making of a person. The community has blessed you. You are blessed. Now, give back to the community."

Dr Tan hopes when these children and youth grow up and become successful, they will say: "I remember some aunty, uncle came from Life Community. They showed me love and care. I'm here today because of them."





When The Going Gets Tough

"I don't remember my father when I was young. My relationship with him was when I visited him in prison. I didn't really know him."

Sabrina has no recollection of her father in her childhood. Her only memory is of him been in prison several times for several offences related to drugs and the secret society.

"The hardest time for me and my family was when I was 17 years old. I was in first year of ITE. We had been staying in our rental flat for about a year. My father was out for a while and he started taking his drugs again."

Sabrina's father suffered from drug addiction which resulted in violent episodes. Sabrina's mum and four siblings lived in uncertainty and fear. Little did Sabrina know that her nightmare had just begun.

"He would force us to go to school. But how could we? We had no money at all. He took all our money, even from us (the children). If all of us didn't have money, he would get angry. My mother borrowed from relatives and friends for our school but even that money he took. We owe so many people, so much money. We cannot pay them back and nobody wanted to lend us any more money."

"He would take his drugs, wake us up at 3 or 4 in the morning and shout at us to clean the house and make food for him. If my mum scolded him, he would get angry and say all sorts of things about her. He was like a mad man."

Sabrina and her siblings were irregular at school. They either did not have enough money or their father had had a violent episode.

"There was once he strangled my mum. Another time, he hit her very badly. That time, Life Community brought her to the hospital, but because she was pregnant, they could not do many tests."

This continued for over a year, during which Sabrina's mum miscarried the baby.

Despite the family circumstances, Sabrina made great effort to pay attention in class whenever she made it to school.

"I'm most proud of my 3.2GPA in my second semester in ITE. The modules were so hard and my father was giving so much problems, but I still managed to do well with my poor attendance. That was a big surprise to me!"

Despite the encouraging results in the midst of the troubles, Sabrina felt that she could no longer carry on and her family needed a sustainable income. So she took a year of absence from school and got a job.

Her social worker from Life community was worried about this decision. "I was very concerned when Sabrina decided to take a year's break from school as most students don't return and she has so much potential."

"We left the house after the last time he tried to hit us. We packed and left when the police were there."

In 2015, Sabrina's father was finally arrested after assaulting a neighbor. He has several other charges against him.

Sabrina has gone back to complete her final year in ITE and hopes to eventually obtain a degree.

"Now I can go to school in peace. I am still working part time to help my mum. When I am older I will take care of my mother and my siblings."



Talent Hidden But Precious

Fabian did not understand what it was like to go to school even though he was already 11 years old. He never had a chance to pack a school bag, sing the national anthem, have a CCA or understand the stress that students face when they approach their examinations.

He was in this “helpless” position because his birth was never registered due to a series of complicated family situations.

Fabian has two older siblings. Their primary caregiver is their mother who is unable to work due to medical reasons. His father is incarcerated for sexually violating his daughter (Fabian’s sister).

He started life with all the odds against him.

Out of “Hiding”

There were many obstacles in the year long journey to bring Fabian out of “hiding”.

“This process took time, effort, sweat and tears, but it never crossed our minds to give up. I mean, we could not imagine the child growing up without an identity, without a proper education. It was simply unthinkable! I have never fought so hard for someone”, recalled one of the Life Community staff who journeyed with Fabian.

Holding true to their mantra of helping beyond the call of duty, the feisty staff of Life Community

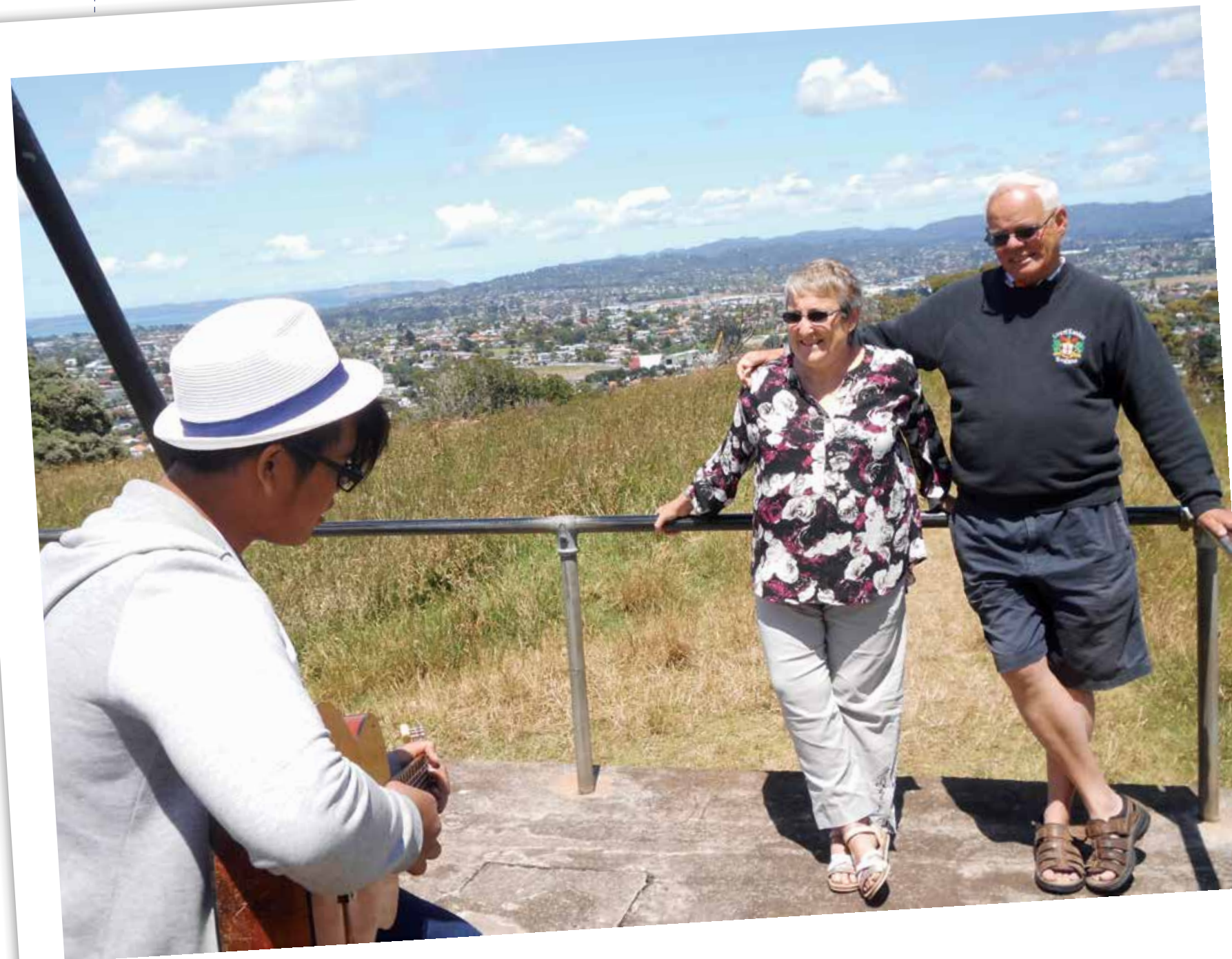
went through several authorities, including the KKH, ICA, SPS, HSA and the MOE to establish his identity. During each step of the way, it was the plight of the child that garnered support from compassionate people working in the relevant authorities. The Life Community staff first attempted to get his birth record. When that was not possible, the staff had no choice but went through the arduous process of doing a DNA profiling with blood samples from the family members, including the father who was in prison. Life Community also persevered in registering Fabian in a school while in the process of getting the birth certificate.

A Rising Star

In the course of the Life Community programme, Fabian was assigned three volunteers who mentored and tutored him. One of them was a retired special needs teacher from New Zealand, Charles David Nicholls, who had accompanied his wife, Helen Nicholls, to Singapore for work.

Charles worked on the curriculum until Fabian enrolled in school. He also went the extra mile to obtain a scholarship for Fabian to attend enrichment lessons at Lorna Whiston during the weekends.

Fabian finally began Primary Four education at age 12. Fabian attempted his PSLE when he was 14, and his score of 173 earned him a place in the Normal Academic stream. “It was the greatest joy for me. We celebrated that night,” Charles recalled fondly.





Charles has always believed in Fabian: “I looked at his potential, and not just academically. **There’s another image I always used with him; about being a rising star over the Pacific, and I will see him from southern skies in New Zealand.** We used to talk about that, it’s the belief thing too. That was the image I used with him.”

Fabian is now 17 years old and in Secondary 3. He wants to be a “musician to inspire people with his music” and write songs that can “affect people in a good way”. His first song, “Beautiful Things” was written to encourage a schoolmate suffering from depression. Besides song-writing, Fabian plays the guitar and the bass.

Commenting on Fabian’s music direction, Helen said, “He is a thoughtful young soul. He is very supportive. That’s a lovely direction for him to take his music. He has been experimenting for a long time, so it’s nice to see him going from strength to strength in his music.”



Attitude of Gratitude

“Life Community brought me up... No school, now I’ve got school. Life Community gave me the chance to be a better person in life... It’s my everything. It’s more than a home. I feel accepted by everyone here. A big thank you for entering my life and making an impact in me. Thanks for being so patient towards my attitude and craziness”, said Fabian.

As Fabian matures and moves into different phases in life, he never forgets the people who have made a difference and continue to walk this journey of life with him.

“He started off on a rough ride but I am glad that his perseverance paid off. It is just like the saying, it doesn’t matter how you start but how you end that is important. I know Fabian still has a long journey ahead of him, but I believe his heart of gratitude and willingness to give back to society will take him far”, Ms Margaret Teng, the Programme Manager in Life Community, shared as she reflected on her journey with Fabian.

One Less Child On The Street

NO! The real prisoners are NOT those who have committed the crime! The real prisoners are their family members, their innocent children who have committed no crimes. While the parents are locked in the physical jail, these children are locked in the 2nd prison. They face emotional stigma of being a child of an offender. They have inferiority complexes, and often think and believe that they are the cause of their parent/s' incarceration even though they have never committed a crime in their lives.

The caseworkers from Life Community conducts regular visits to the children and their caregivers located island-wide. During these visits, they spend time to listen to the children, to talk to them and conduct in-house value-based programme. Life Community also provides a befriending system where volunteers are matched with children and caregivers to act as role models.

Studies have shown that children join gangs for a sense of belonging. If these children are not helped in time and get into bad company, this will mark the start of possibly an irreversible, spiral down journey. Statistics have shown that children of incarcerated parents are five times more likely to get into trouble with the law. Thus, social investment in Life Community will help to provide an upstream intervention, to stop the proliferation of the offending cycle.

Mr Danial Gan, volunteer of nine years shared, "Living in a developed country like Singapore allows us to have many options to lead a meaningful life. However, personally, I feel that reaching out through volunteering, to the underprivileged individuals who are often overlooked in society, brings fulfilment that money can never buy.

Mother Theresa said: "My doctors are always telling me that I must not travel so much, that I must slow down, but I have all eternity to rest and there is so much still to do. Life is not worth living unless it is lived for others."

This is the 9th year since I have started volunteering in Life Community's Friends of Children (FOC) programme. Children from the underprivileged families are often the most affected and yet they do not get the chance to be heard. Volunteering

with Life Community allows me to help these children to have their say and be heard in this society. These children are our future - befriend them, encourage them and give them hope for tomorrow. Let's come together, regardless of race, language or religion, to serve the children of the inmates, to see the minds of these children being renewed, having a positive mind set and a great sense of hope; their hearts being filled with so much love, joy & peace;

and their lives being transformed to the extent that they can begin to touch the lives of other children around them. Let us make Singapore a better place for the underprivileged children to live in."

"When we took a case of a Primary 5 boy. He was academically weak especially in Mathematics and Chinese. We started coaching him regularly, spending time to explain the fun of learning Maths and we tried to make it more interesting for him. With all the effort and time spent with the child, he passed both his Maths and Chinese in his mid-year exam and went on to become a class monitor for Chinese. He was awarded the 'Best Performance Award' in 2009 Life Community Christmas Party." Mr & Mrs Kok Min Chuen, volunteers of Life Community for 12 years reminisced.



"The volunteering opportunity has been rewarding. The staff are great with full of passion and energy, the management & Board Members are personable, approachable and down to earth." said Min Chuen

"Life Community is playing a very critical role in empowering the children and youths to realize their potentials. Every child and youth has a great destiny ahead of them, and given the wholehearted support of Life Community, nothing could stop them from reaching that destiny. Life Community is like a catalyst that accelerates the renewal of many minds from negatives to positives; the change in many hearts from bitterness to gratefulness; and the transformation in many lives from no-hope to bright future. As long as Life Community is present, there is always hope. Life Community has a group of very dedicated staff who work wholeheartedly to serve many people. They have always run the extra mile, going beyond their call of duty to meet needs, to encourage, to comfort, to support, and to give every client a much needed hope. Kudos to Life Community and I thank God for you!" added Daniel.



Journeying with the children and families at Life Community is a shared journey. The staff of Life Community is privileged to be able to partner with volunteers in this journey of touching the lives of children and youth. It paints a beautiful picture of the diversity of humanity coming together to support one another. Volunteers from all walks of life, locals and foreigners alike, come alongside Life Community to extend a helping hand in various roles because life for these children comes with the support from everyone.

"I remember my husband and I were working with a caregiver and her children for months and they were not able to open up to us. We seemed to be facing a hard wall and there doesn't seem to be a breakthrough no matter how hard we tried. Never give up as you may not see immediate results, press in, and in the end it will be a rewarding journey when you find you can make a difference in someone's life." Mrs Vicky Thia, volunteer of 8 years with Life Community.

"Patience to connect with the child will get you far. Patience to wait for the child will see you through. Perseverance will reap immense personal satisfaction that you made a difference in someone's life." Chipped in Mrs Kok.

"...Let the child sit on your shoulder so that he or she can have a bird's eye view of life ahead..."

Mr Joel Simatupang, volunteer of 5 years who shared that the important thing is that the child respond well to encouragement in spite of the lack of success.



The Most Profitable Investment

I was 24 years old when I had my first 'intensive' case. I stood, for the first time, in the prison visit area. I cleared my pockets of all my belongings, went through a metal detector and several automated gates that only opened after the other closed. Then I was led, with a 9 year-old boy in tow, to a face-to-face visit booth. I saw the boy rush into the booth and put his hand out to touch his mum, only to be met by the thick acrylic between them. With shaky voice, he called, 'Ma', and was told that he had to speak into a microphone to communicate with his mum. The atmosphere was solemn as mother and son cried quietly. In the silence, they seemed to have exchanged a thousand words as they gazed at each other through teary eyes. This was the first time in 9 months that the boy had seen his mum.

This marked the beginning of my work in Life Community with children and youth with parent/s presently or formerly incarcerated. Little did I know that this journey would bring so much adventure.

Why I do what I do

I believe that everybody is able to reach their potential and fulfil their dreams and desires if they just had one person who believed in them. One person who will stand by them, even if they fail time and again.

I am privileged to have parents who love me in spite of my weaknesses and constant failures. I have people who stood by me in my most trying moments, to say there is light at the end of this tunnel. I have become the person I am, because I have others to guide me, believe in me and instill in me confidence of who I am and who I can become.

Who would want a stranger to intrude into their lives? Who would want to have their weaknesses laid bare before a stranger who knows so little about their lives, culture and background?

Yet everyday, I have the honor to visit children and youth who share some of the most distressing life stories with me. Families would share their lives with me, in the hope that I can bring comfort and support for their future.

One big challenge is dealing with discouragement. When we have done everything humanly possible and the situations just do not improve. When we pour encouragement and strength into the child, youth and family, only to have it all undone when they go back to the reality and challenges of life. We have feelings of inadequacy, that maybe we have not done enough.



I do my best but I cannot control the choices that others make. When things

get tough, I go back to my original motivation for working with young people - to walk some of the most complicated years of their lives with them and to stand by them, even if they fail over and over again.

I learned to find encouragement in small things. It may not seem significant to most people, but I rejoice to see a change in attitude of youth that results in the formation of beautiful friendships instead of fights.

I rejoice when a child or youth learns, after constant reminders, to say 'thank you' or 'please' and to respect one another.

I rejoice when a child/youth begins to dream again. It is wonderful to see children and youth take on responsibilities and ownership.

I rejoice when children I have mentored grow up and call to update us of their well-being.

Yes, it is a marathon and every small step in the right direction is something to shout about. I don't wait for big changes in lifestyles before I can say that my work with the child/youth has been effective. Every step forward is effective work done.



爱的大能

人与人之间的相处往往会带来很多的误解和摩擦。所谓“相见容易，相处难”。不管是亲子、婆媳、朋友、邻居、或同事之间，只要相处的时间长了，摩擦也会自然而然地变多。这可能是因为我们都是不完美的人。

在活力社区服务中心（Life Community）服务了16年的Aunty Zhang也有此体验；但借着爱和坚持，她渐渐地在克服这些障碍。这是Aunty Zhang的故事。

在我57岁那年，家里发生了一场很大的经济危机。一夜之间，我失去了一切，包括了我想在60岁那年退休的梦想。当时，我的苦是非笔墨所能形容的。每当跟人谈起我的遭遇时，泪水就会直流。

我记得牧师在为我祷告时，给了我一句话，“上帝一定有祂的旨意。祂会为你开一条新的路。”很快地，通过教会的介绍，我开始了在活力社区服务中心的工作。我从一名裁剪师变成了一名厨师。每一个周日，在天未亮的时候，我都会为孩子们上巴刹采购食材，然后回到中心切、洗、和煮一道道营养丰富的菜肴。

早年，当活力社区服务中心的工作刚刚起步时，中心的资金不多，我甚至把家里的锅盘也带到中心里。同事们一起尽心尽力，把中心搞好。大家就像一个大家庭，不分阶层，没有斤斤计较，一直守着爱神爱人的态度把中心慢慢地建立起来。我目睹了中心的增长－从之前的30名学生增长到现在四间中心的400名学生。

随着孩子的增加，员工的人数也跟着增加，人际关系也变得复杂了。有的时候，关系上的冲突也让我感到非常困扰，甚至让我产生了放弃的念头。但是我告诉自己，这是神给我的工作，我得在这里一心一意地侍奉，因为神祝福了我很多。这是一份有血有泪的工作，神帮助我克服了重重困难。

我相信孩子是神的恩赐。上帝给了我们很多的爱，我们也应该把祂的爱散发出去给孩子们。我每天来中心工作，都会求上帝牢牢地牵着我的手。

现在我虽然已72岁，可是我还有一双敏捷的手，灵活的头脑，和健康的身体。我要用神给我的爱和健康来服侍孩子们。”

“如今常存的有信，有望，有爱，这三样，其中最大的是爱。”（哥林前 13:13）
爱的力量能战胜一切！



The Power of Love



As the Chinese idiom goes, “Getting to know someone is easy, but getting along with someone is difficult.” The interactions between people often bring about many misunderstandings and friction. Whether it is between parents and children, friends, neighbors, or colleagues, friction will naturally increase as people spend more time together. This may be because we are all imperfect people.

Aunty Zhang has served in Life Community for 16 years, and has experienced this firsthand. However, through love and tenacity, she is slowly overcoming these hurdles. This is Aunty Zhang’s story:

“When I was 57, I encountered a huge financial crisis. Overnight, I lost everything, including my dream of retiring at the age of 60. At that time, my pain is not something words can describe. Whenever I talked about what happened to me, I could not stop my tears from flowing.

I remember the time my Pastor prayed for me and gave me a word of encouragement, “God surely has His plans for you. He will open a new door for you.” Shortly, through the church’s recommendation, I started working at Life Community with their student care services. From a seamstress, I became a chef. Every day at dawn, I will go to the market to purchase fresh ingredients. Afterwards, I will return to the centre to prepare nutritious dishes for the children.

In the early years, when the centre was starting its operations, we did not have a lot of funds. I even brought my own pots and pans to the centre for cooking. We were just like one big family. No one was calculative, and we held on to the belief of “Loving God and Loving People”. We worked in unity and put in all we had to build up the centre. I witnessed the growth of the centre – from a mere 30 students, we now have 400 students across four centres.

With more children, it meant we needed more staff and interpersonal relationships just became more complicated. At times, I would be troubled by the conflicts and I have thoughts of giving up. However, I told myself that this is a job given to me by God, so I have to continue serving wholeheartedly, as God has blessed me abundantly. This work involves blood and tears, and God has helped me to overcome various challenges.

I believe that children are a blessing from God. God has lavished His love upon us and we should share His love with the children. My prayer when I come to work every day is that He would hold my hand and lead me.

Although I am now 72 years old, I still have a pair of nimble hands, an agile mind, and a healthy body. I want to use the love and health given to me by God to serve the children.”

“So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”
(1 Cor 13:13)

Love conquers it all!



A Drug-fused Childhood

Most three-year-olds have their parents by their sides, hugging them, protecting them, crooning lullabies or playing with them at the playground. However, this was not so for three-year-old Samantha. From age three to six, Samantha's life was a never-ending road of unstable living conditions, drug abuse and police arrests.

Samantha has lost count of the numerous times her mother was "in and out of prison".

Drug Addiction From Generation to Generation

From young, Samantha saw her mother and sister inhaling "smoke" emitted through a straw, caused by lighting some white substance on an aluminium foil.

Samantha didn't know what that substance was, but she knew it was bad.

When Samantha was four, she flushed two packets of drugs down the toilet bowl because she knew they were bad for her sister.

"Do you know why my sister became like that? Because she saw my mother doing it. She stole [the substance] from my mum. Then my mum noticed why she didn't have enough, then she realized my sister also took. My mum was very angry. She blamed herself. Because of her, my sister also followed her path."





“I was five years old. I do not have strength...”

Samantha recalled vividly that block at Sims Avenue where her mother was arrested. It was a gathering place for drug addicts, and they were her mother's friends.

Samantha recounted: “My mother would take me to different hotels. One day, she took me to a flat in Sims Avenue... and her friend would join her and they would start to do that (taking drugs)... At one time, the police came. My mother and her friend tried to throw away ... my mother asked me to stand at the door to stop the police. I was five years old. I do not have strength to hold the door. The police caught my mum in front of me. They also took me... My elder sister asked her friend to come and bail me out because she herself just came out of prison...”

Hope For A Better Future

After her release, Samantha's sister decided to turn over a new leaf. She played the role of a mother to Samantha. To ensure that Samantha would have a better future, she sent her to Life Community at the age of seven.

“My sister raised me up so hard because she got no money to pay but Life Community took me in. Why do I want to let [her] waste those efforts on me? That was why I kept trying, carry on, even though it was very hard.

Life Community brought me to speech therapy. I didn't even know how to read A, B, C in Primary One. I only knew how to speak Hokkien. But, it's because of my sister's hard work. She was telling me, I cannot follow their footsteps. If I were to follow their steps, it's like there is no future.”

Staff and befrienders from Life Community continued journeying with Samantha by visiting her regularly at home, coaching her in her English and encouraging her.

Despite being difficult and often running away, Samantha noticed that the Life Community team never gave up on her. She saw how much they loved her.

School also helped Samantha to move ahead. A Secondary Four teacher once told her: “Never, never use your background as your shield. Because your life is created by you. You cannot use the excuse because your family is like this, so you are like this.”

Samantha's Dream

Samantha is currently studying at the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) to become a nurse. Her dream is to provide medical care to orphans overseas.



“Just because my family background was like this, but I am not the unfortunate one... there are others less fortunate... like orphans.”

She learnt to treat her patients like family, as she witnessed some of them pass away alone without any family members by their side.

Amy Fong-Chong

Board Member, 1996 – 2005
First CEO, 2003 – 2005

The Woman Who Laid the Foundation



We wanted to reach out to the community; to help children and families, and to empower them. We wanted to create a platform to touch the community and impact them.

“Sad to say, in the first three years, we were quite a failure. We lost money. Not that we are here to make money. We lost money because we were not able to get people to see what we were doing. We were quite disappointed at one point.” Recounting the early years, Amy chuckled, “We were quite greenhorn. We thought we could do things on our own.”

After the closure of the first student care centre at the bomb shelter, Life Community managed to secure from the Ministry of Social and Family Development (previously called Ministry of Community, Youth and Sports) a void deck space in the newly developed Hougang new town to run Life Student Care Centre.

“Life Community does not just run student care centres. It may be the start, but the overall aim and objective is much more. We are here to empower the children and families. We are here to build up the families again,” Amy explained.

Amy had to detach herself from the two student care centres in Hougang and Sengkang, and set up a separate corporate office. “I had to convince the staff to think beyond student care centres. I need the staff behind me.”

As Life Community was small and unknown, Amy understood the importance of working closely with the government agencies. “They have this many hands approach. How best we can come in and partner with them, and how best we can fit in.”

Amy recognised it was time to partner with the government as “one of their hands”; either by identifying a service gap or to participate in one of their projects. Immediately she saw a service gap in the prison ministry managed by the National Council of Social Services (NCSS). She hired professional counsellors, and built up a team of volunteers. The project became a Life Community programme and saw the birth of Friends of Children. In addition, Amy conducted parenting and family work life workshops at corporations and promoted inter-generational bonding through programmes such as Yum Cha with Grannies.

In addition, she stepped up her networking efforts with government agencies and successfully registered Life Community as a charity with Institution of Public Character (IPC) status to attract donors’ funds with tax deduction benefit.

Commenting on Amy’s achievements, Mr Goh Kng Yan, Chairman of Life Community said, “Her heart is very much for the community. She built the programmes with the needs of the community in mind.”





Checkmate! ♥

Tzi Seong's wakeup call came when he was mistaken as an accomplice to one of the boys who attempted stealing. A hundred questions flashed through his mind, **"What would happen if he were to be put behind bars? My future will be gone. I will never be able to have a girlfriend or a family."** It dawned on him that that was not the life he wanted. Thoughts of the people who wanted to help him flashed through his mind. He remembered the sharing of the motivational speaker at school and the coaching sessions he received at the Life Community centre. He thought of the many wonderful things that he could do with his life. It was then and there that Tzi Seong decided that something in his life needed to change.

The "past" Tzi Seong was often rowdy, indulging in rough play and vulgarities. Apart from his behavioural problems, he was unmotivated in his studies and aimless in life; without anything to look forward to. He mixed with bad company and almost picked up smoking as he thought it was "cool".

"I wanted to act "cool" to be part of a gangster group in the neighbourhood. I played basketball with them. Then, we played soccer every week... and for the first six months, I didn't study for my PSLE. After that incident, I kept on coming to Life Community. The people there are fun and easy to get along with."

"I noticed the change in Tzi Seong's life. I started teaching him how to play Chinese chess", recalled Wei who was a community worker at Life Community.

"Chinese chess is like your life. If you don't know how to manage your things well, you'll end up losing. You need to build your foundation before you can build up more things." He remembered the words shared by the staff.

At Life Community, Tzi Seong learnt to overcome his nervousness and low self-confidence. He was coached in his weak subjects. Besides educational help, mentoring and character building, Tzi Seong's leadership and presentation skills were discovered and honed at Life Community. He was given the opportunity to do a presentation on video about his dream of becoming a singer with the ukulele. Through guidance, determination and hard work, Tzi Seong did well in his PSLE.



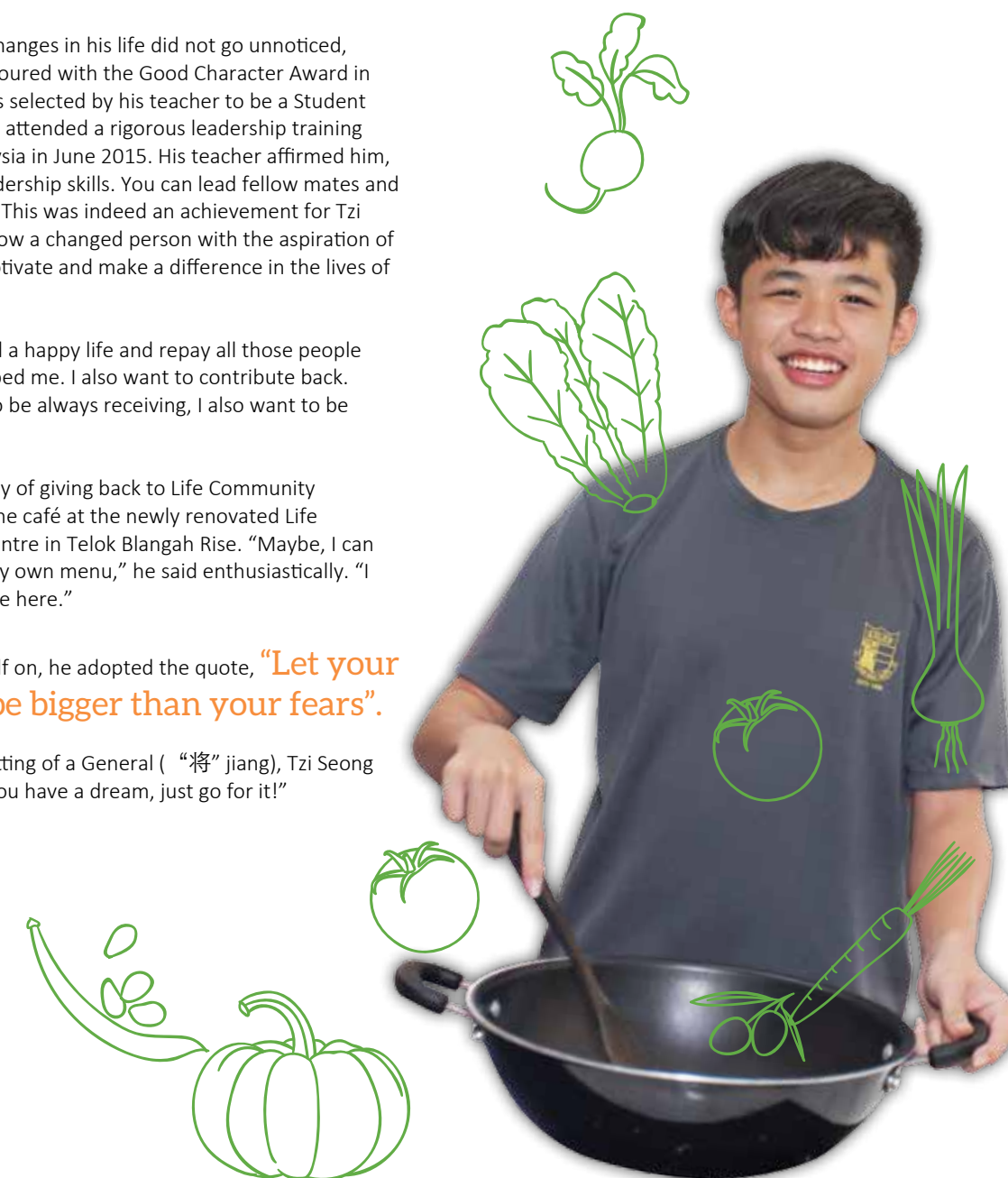
The positive changes in his life did not go unnoticed, as he was honoured with the Good Character Award in school. He was selected by his teacher to be a Student Councillor and attended a rigorous leadership training camp in Malaysia in June 2015. His teacher affirmed him, "You have leadership skills. You can lead fellow mates and present well." This was indeed an achievement for Tzi Seong. He is now a changed person with the aspiration of wanting to motivate and make a difference in the lives of his friends.

"I want to lead a happy life and repay all those people who have helped me. I also want to contribute back. I don't want to be always receiving, I also want to be giving."

Tzi Seong's way of giving back to Life Community is cooking at the café at the newly renovated Life Community centre in Telok Blangah Rise. "Maybe, I can even create my own menu," he said enthusiastically. "I love the people here."

To spur himself on, he adopted the quote, **"Let your dreams be bigger than your fears".**

In a voice befitting of a General ("将" jiang), Tzi Seong declared, "If you have a dream, just go for it!"



安心托福

我的孩子Dexter 升上小学一年级时，我和我的丈夫分居了。

当时，我需要找工作和住宿、也同时需要照顾孩子。因为来自香港，新加坡对我来说是个人生地不熟的地方。自从定居在这里后，我一直是一名家庭主妇，所以没有太多的朋友。

幸亏，我找到了在后港的活力社区服务学生中心（Life Student Care Centre at Hougang），把Dexter放学后的照顾安排好过后，我就马上开始了全职的工作来支撑我们的生活。

这些年来，我们总算熬了过去。我非常感谢活力社区服务学生中心（Life Student Care Centre at Hougang）对Dexter 细心的照顾。他从一个坐不稳、不会和别人相处的孩子，变成了一个懂事、会为别人着想、诚实的孩子。有一次，Dexter在学校捡到了一堆钞票，一共700元。担心有人会把那些钱抢走，他赶快跑到了学校的办公室，把钱交给了老师。Dexter后来把这件事告诉了我。他说在学生中心里，有个学生曾经丢失了东西，心里非常地伤心。所以，他可以想象那个失去了金钱的人有多伤心。。。。。

为了表扬Dexter，学校给了他一份“Praise Award”证书。

回报中心

Dexter非常感谢中心里的教师们的帮助，所以他希望成为一名义工，帮助能力较差的学生。我听了很开心。Dexter 和一般的青少年一样，时常会沉迷在电脑游戏当中。如果他有这个心、自愿地去帮助其他学生，我相信他也可以从中学习到很多。

活力社区服务学生中心(Life Student Care Centre)特别照顾低收入家庭的儿童。中心提供辅助学费、营养的食物、补助和户外活动。因为这样，我可以放心地工作。我选对了中心。



Soldier On The Making

Dexter had a hard time assimilating into school, academically and socially. He also often got into trouble in school for not listening to his teachers.

He explained, "In primary school, I used to be scolded by teachers as I walked around in class when they were teaching. Some teachers in school didn't like me because I behaved badly and I talked back to them. My classmates didn't care much about me."

However, Dexter found care, concern and friendship at Life Student Care Centre at Hougang. With the teachers' patience and love, they taught and guided him. Some of the things he learnt included obedience, resilience, integrity and responsibility.

"I didn't feel lonely. No matter what, the teachers cared about me... even when I talked back to them. They considered my feelings. Sometimes, I told the teachers my feelings."

Although only 14, Dexter already has his eyes set on his future.

"I want to defend the country."

His fervour in serving the country stemmed from a video on World War Two, which he caught on YouTube.

"I want to make Singapore a good country and protect the people," Dexter emphasized with pride.



James Wong

Board Member, 2004 and
Second CEO, 2005 – 2013

Overcoming the Odds

Lack of volunteers and donors, a relatively small unknown charity, high staff turnover, short of cash to fund operations and expansion - these were some of the challenges which James had to confront during his initial years in helming Life Community.

“I was walking into the FAITH journey, and it was clearly by God’s grace and favour –it was a **Fantastic Adventure In Trusting Him [God],**” James laughed. However, answering God’s calling and helming Life Community as CEO during those days were no laughing matter.

He expressed his personal conviction and concern to the Board that Life Community needs to address the hand- to-mouth approach among other things. James had to quickly build up core competencies. From addressing staff issues, improving the work environment, rebranding programs and centres, building an effective Donor Volunteer Management System, identifying strategic partners, fostering relationships with government agencies, community partners, corporations and churches to applying for funding from Community Chest and Yellow Ribbon.

Strategic Partners

Unlike one-time donors or volunteers, Life Community’s programs were directly value-added by the early strategic partners; among them were Johnson and Johnson, Seagate and Lorna Whiston. James said, “In one way or another, these partners have sponsored children’s educational field trips, raised funds, donated IT equipment and children’s books, provided support for our staff, trained our teachers and staff, ran free children’s programs, and finally even wrote some of our curriculum. These partners have given us a jump-start and we would not be where we are today without them.”

To raise a continual stream of donations and volunteers, James had to knock on doors of corporations and government agencies to do presentations, and most of them had not heard of Life Community.

Before he left the ministry, James started Run-for-Life, a Charity Run to be the voice for the less privileged children and at-risk youths. It was also to engage the community and corporates to support this meaningful cause annually. Despite being a novice in the run scene, it was a big success. It attracted about 2800 runners for the inaugural Run that brought in approximately \$475,000.

Value Adding

Although there was no requirement to have counsellors at our Life Student Care centres, Life Community chose to invest into the children’s lives by getting them on board. Our counsellors, Ying Ling and Yayah went beyond their call of duty by visiting the children’s parents at home to address issues.

In line with Dr Tan Kok Beng’s commitment to caring for the poor, families that could not afford the fees were given a discount or full sponsorship for the Life Student Care program.

Friends of Children (FOC) and Friends of Youth (FOY) programs were then very unique – social and case workers went the extra mile to visit the children daily with food rations at their homes located island-wide, instead of waiting for them to come. James commented, “This is indeed labour of love from the team.”

Greatest Joys

Against all odds, James managed to raise a few hundred thousand dollars within his first year at Life Community. Subsequently he also received a donation of \$450,000 from an overseas foundation to fund FOC and FOY over three years. Many corporations including banks also came in to support Life Community’s cause.

Life Community has come a long way. Firstly, from two operational Life Student Care Centres, a Friends of Children pilot project and a humble office above a HDB coffee shop at Hougang a decade ago to four Life Student Care Centres and one Mightykids, Family & Community Centre and a Corporate Office cum Activity Centre at Leisure Park Kallang.

Secondly, with four well developed programs to serve the community of more than 1,000 beneficiaries annually, Life Community became a more recognised Voluntary Welfare Organisation (VWO) in the community, among government agencies and corporates. Finally, the tight cash flow and no reserve in the beginning has become a financially healthy position to impact more lives.

“James strengthened the whole infrastructure. He looked at the hand-to-mouth approach and reserves from the corporate end. He built a strong base of supporters. I must say his follow-up was very good. He really has the personal touch,” commented Mr Goh Kng Yan, Chairman of Life Community.

Despite the challenges, James cherished the memories and friendships forged with stakeholders and his fellow colleagues. James said, “Many thanks for all their support. Special thanks for Kng Yan’s guidance and the latitude given to me to run the ministry, Daniel Gan and Denus Joel Ban for their years of faithfulness in chairing their committees, Mrs Wee Kim Wee, Wee Eng Hwa, Margaret Teng and Jiak Cher and their teams, Phillip Tan, Hsieh Fu Hua, Wong Meng Yeng, Stanley Gan, Dr Lucy Seet, Eunice Koh, Renee Xavier, Yap Su Yin, Celina Teo, Ranjeet Kaur, Bert Chow, Min Chuen, Noel Gifts, ADDP Architects, DG Packaging, Seagate, Verztec Consulting, Johnson & Johnson, Lournia Whiston, River Design, Little Fairyland, Deutsche Bank (S), DBS, Yellow Ribbon, Community Chest, IFGF (S), Lighthouse Evangelism and my dear wife, Lily, for their unwavering support during my tenure.”

“Life Community’s legacy of 20 years of struggle to significance puts us in a much stronger position to impact more lives in the community. Come, let’s live and leave a legacy together” James concluded.



Transformation

Lyn has seven children aged between 8 and 17 years old. Raising seven children would be a feat for any parent and Lyn had the mammoth task of bringing them up singlehandedly. To exacerbate matters, six of her children are diagnosed with dyslexia, which brought about other behavioural issues. Lyn often felt helpless.

Lyn's younger four children, daughters, aged 8 and 12 and two sons, aged 9 and 11 were especially a handful to manage. Her daughters could not read or write and kept to themselves. They did not like to talk to people. In school, when the teachers asked questions, they would only shrug their shoulders.

Her two sons had difficulty managing their anger, and expressed it by pulling their hair, hitting themselves, screaming, crying and punching the wall. They also followed "negative friends" who taught them to steal and play truant.

Lyn felt helpless and alone. She had no one to share her frustrations and stress with. She explains, **"When my children did something wrong, I would just scream at them as I don't want to take the stress. I feel that I cannot do anything. I don't know what's wrong with my children."**

That was Lyn's family 12 months ago.

Little did Lyn know that her life was about to improve by leaps and bounds just by registering her younger four children at Yishun Life Student Care Centre.

Talent-spotted

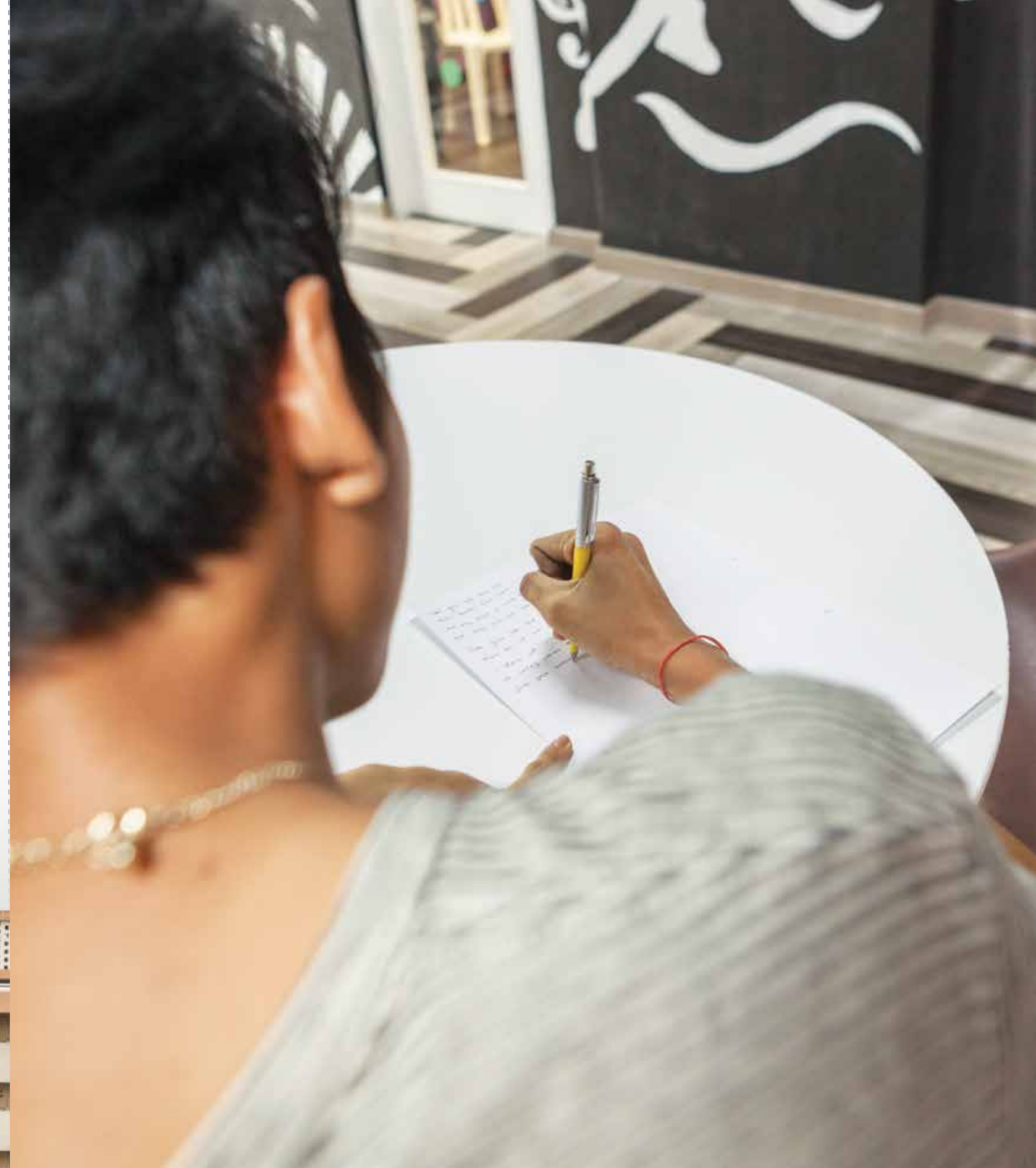
When Henry was born, his parents divorced. His mother was in jail for most of his formative years. He has never known his father. He was raised by his grandmother. At primary four, Henry was doing well in school and took on leadership roles. To all his teachers and peers, Henry was a model student.

However, Henry was far from being a model at home. When Henry got angry, which he did frequently, he would get violent, especially when his grandmother tried to correct his behaviour. The last straw came when Henry tried to strangle his grandmother from behind. Henry's distressed grandmother decided to admit him into a children's home to no avail. Meantime, his anger and violence were escalating.

Life Community empowered him with skills to manage his anger. With time, Henry made small improvements, beginning with apologising to his grandmother after an outburst.

Just when life seems to be getting better with Henry's anger under control, adversity hit him again- Henry became a target of bullies. They kicked and punched him, and used social media to further humiliate him. Henry was hospitalised for some days. But more than the physical pain, Henry was hurting emotionally. He was crushed.

Thankfully, he was able to share his hurts and struggles with the staff and the volunteer befriender of Life Community. "I talk to Uncle Gabriel from Life Community a lot. Talk about life. Talk about school. After sharing, it is a relief... Life Community staff have been really amazing and kind. I just love them so much. [Their caring] started in primary school when I had difficulty in school, bullying, and family problems."





He enjoyed making videos where he shared about himself. Henry's volunteer befriender also realised his potential in performing arts. With his encouragement, Henry performed at a talent contest. After 3 attempts, Henry finally emerged as the champion of a Life Community-organised talent competition. He then went on to put up a sterling performance to an audience of 300 guests. It was at that event, that Henry's talent was spotted which landed him a two-year scholarship at a local arts academy.

Always seeking opportunities to hone his skills, Henry signed up for an audition, and was selected to participate in a national singing competition, and even performed for the National Day celebrations.

"I want to be a successful singer and YouTuber. I am still climbing the ladder toward my dream... I will not stop doing something if I have not achieved what I have come for. I get to express myself before the camera... I am happy making videos. I want to help others be happy and pen down their feelings."

"I am very glad to see Henry at where he is today. We do our best to help but the choice was really his to make. In my journey, I have the chance to walk with different children and youth who have had a hard start in life. The ones that finally made it are the ones who were able to overcome their limitations, harness their energy and turn their lacks into energy, endeavouring to make a better tomorrow for themselves." Shares Gabriel Lee, Community Welfare Executive, Life Community.



Lam Moi Kwai

Current CEO, 2013 – Present

Moving from Corporate to Social Service

Climbing up the 4-storey steps in her high heels to the LCSS office in a Hougang HDB flat because it was not served by elevators, the initial thoughts that she was too good for the job soon faded into a realisation that the job had an extraordinary calling. She almost dared not take up the offer.

That was almost three years ago when Moi Kwai had to overcome a string of other obstacles to move out of a multinational corporation that she has served 17 long years. Having just led the team to win two prized contracts for the Singapore office, Moi Kwai was at the height of her career. She had to let go of her comfortable and familiar environment, and the successes she was enjoying. But what pained her heart most was having to leave behind a team who had stood by, and fought battles with her.



Moi Kwai grew up in Singapore with a pork-seller father as the sole breadwinner of the family. Although she did not come from a well-to-do family, disadvantaged children scarred by financial and emotional pains was not something she understood until she stepped into Life Community. Never did she imagine that her journey with Life Community will be one filled with heartaches for the beneficiaries, overcoming a personal mindset, managing changes, seeing Life Community continue to do more to reach out the community, and staying relevant to meet the multi-faceted needs of the vulnerable children of Singapore.

She saw how children had to suffer in the absence of parental love. She asked herself what it would be like as a child living in a broken home with a biological father who had openly taken drugs in front of his young children; or where the child needed medical attention with no one to accompany her; or a home that constantly accuses the child of wrong behaviours like stealing when the truth of the matter was that the money was the child's hard-savings. Or one where there was not even sufficient food on the table for their physical meals and three growing up children had to share a \$5 packet of fried rice. Or one where the child laid in bed silently wishing her nightmare would end, while her father raped her – yet again. The list goes on.

“We may not have all the answers to the problems. But we are there with the children, to walk through with them; to wipe away the tears from their faces; to let them know that they are not alone; that there are people in the community who care for them.”

Overcoming personal mindset

The concept of fund raising was not familiar with Moi Kwai.

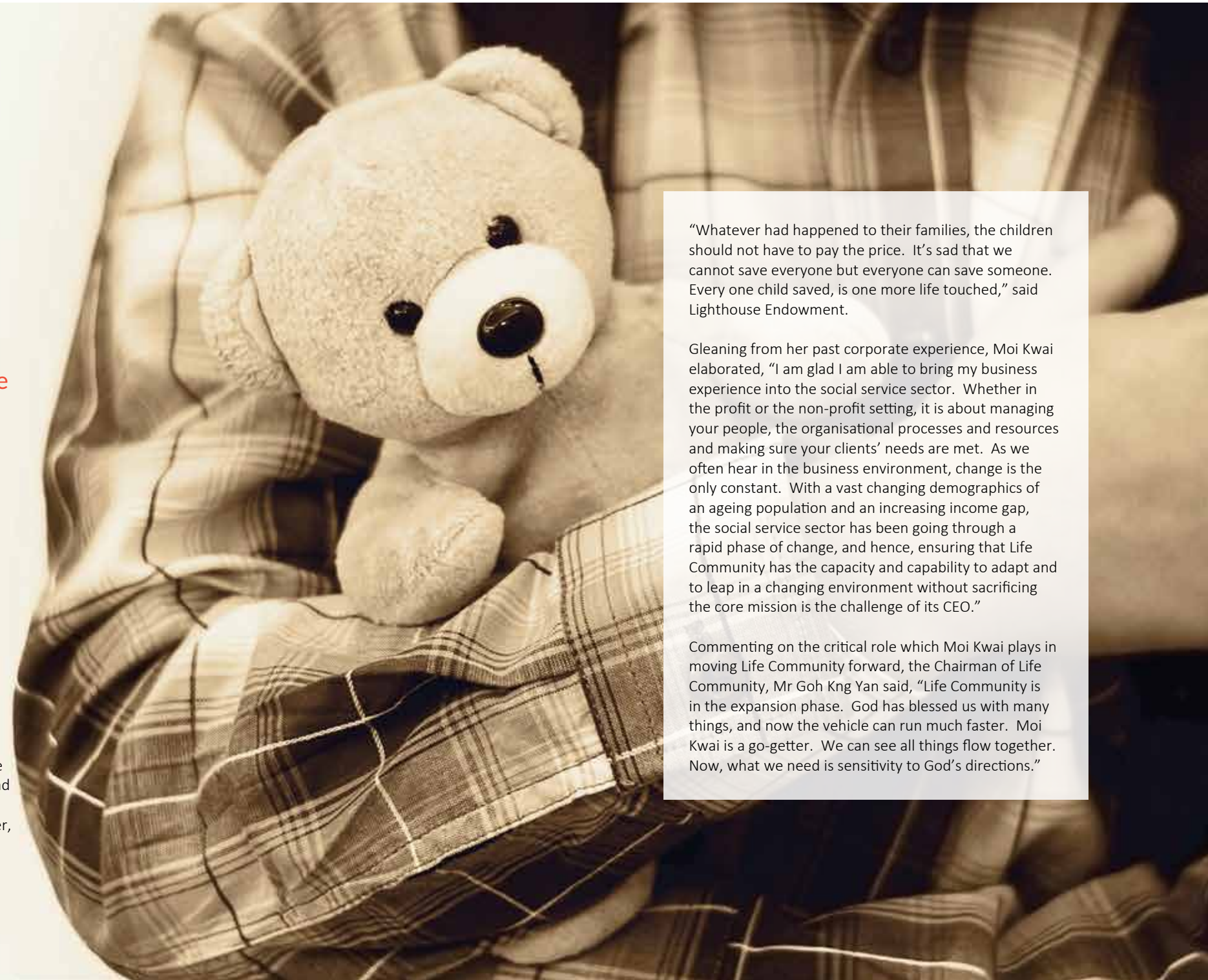
“The initial hurdle was the need to raise money; it's like begging people for money. That's something I am not used to. I have been trained to earn my own keep. We don't go around asking people for money.”

Through her experience of fund raising, Moi Kwai has met supportive donors who have encouraged her. The MD of Noel Gifts International, Mr Alfred Wong commented, “As a home-grown gift-giving company, we are delighted to be able to give back to society and help those in need. We hope that through our efforts, we will be able to touch lives, spread love and compassion for the underprivileged, and inspire individuals and companies especially SMEs to do so. However, you guys are the real heroes who have contributed beyond monetary means.”

“Whatever had happened to their families, the children should not have to pay the price. It's sad that we cannot save everyone but everyone can save someone. Every one child saved, is one more life touched,” said Lighthouse Endowment.

Gleaning from her past corporate experience, Moi Kwai elaborated, “I am glad I am able to bring my business experience into the social service sector. Whether in the profit or the non-profit setting, it is about managing your people, the organisational processes and resources and making sure your clients' needs are met. As we often hear in the business environment, change is the only constant. With a vast changing demographics of an ageing population and an increasing income gap, the social service sector has been going through a rapid phase of change, and hence, ensuring that Life Community has the capacity and capability to adapt and to leap in a changing environment without sacrificing the core mission is the challenge of its CEO.”

Commenting on the critical role which Moi Kwai plays in moving Life Community forward, the Chairman of Life Community, Mr Goh Kng Yan said, “Life Community is in the expansion phase. God has blessed us with many things, and now the vehicle can run much faster. Moi Kwai is a go-getter. We can see all things flow together. Now, what we need is sensitivity to God's directions.”





Reach More Families, Touch More Lives

Life Community Chairman Goh Kng Yan shares his vision.

“We recognise in many cases both parents of the children are working. There is a big risk that they can wander off and go astray, and to do corrective work is much more difficult. The ones who haven’t got into problem, we want to start from there. That’s why we started student care centres. That was our first angle. For those children whose families are dysfunctional, parents being incarcerated... this is where Friends of Children and Friends of Youth come

in. Through no fault of theirs, they were in such predicament. Many of them are downtrodden or feel society is against them and are very withdrawn.”

LCSS wants to make a positive difference in their lives.

Like the founder Dr Tan Kok Beng, Kng Yan knew it was a calling, he too believes there is a “price to the call”.

They had to close down the Bishan Life Student Care Centre after running it for more than a year as they only had six to seven children then. They also chalked up a deficit of \$10,000 every month.

As Life Community was going from hand to mouth in its early days, donations were critical for the survival for the centre. I have seen how God provided for us year after year, “Whatever that is vested in us, is not for our hoarding. We want to reach more families, touch more lives. Life Community wants to serve the needs of children in Singapore.”

From the Inside-Out

Kng Yan believes in Life Community going beyond material giving.

“We can give, but the moment we impart our lives, we make a difference. It is about the inner core of the heart. And this will last. When we touch their hearts, the results will be different. We are anchoring them for life. What is sowed

into their inner core will not be lost. It is not about glorious publicity, but serving from the heart. We cannot give what we do not have. We have to start from our own lives. It’s more than a matter of training; it’s from the inside out.”

He added, when lives are touched, transformation will follow and the results will speak for itself.

“Our children are trapped in the environment. So the first step is to help them to see beyond their circumstances. This is where the volunteers come in and show them that there are people who care for them. People who really care and love them. This is where they begin to experience something they have never experienced before.”

Every year, LCSS organises a Christmas programme, where children were recognised though various awards for having overcome challenges or disabilities in their lives.

From Beneficiaries to Volunteers

One key measurement of the success of LCSS programmes is “freely you receive, freely you give”, we have children who became volunteers after going through the programs. They volunteer their time and talents to help those who were like them before, as they saw the need.”

The Next Lap

Life Community has been wonderfully blessed with committed workers and support from donors and volunteers. Life Community looks forward... touching more lives in our next lap.



About Life Community (LCSS)

Life Community Services Society (LCSS) believes that the value of the individual and the importance of the family lay foundation to the growth and progress of the community.

In its mission, Life Community seeks to affirm, nurture and develop the intrinsic value of the individual to the fullest potential, and inculcate love and develop respect within the family. Started in 1996, Life Community focuses on social and community work like mentoring children, youth and families and the provision of before and after school care. We also partner with like-minded social service agencies to provide effective care for the less advantaged children and their families.

Life Community provides five core programs:

Reach out to primary school children in heartland areas by providing quality student care services and focusing on the total development of the child in a safe and caring environment.



Provide care and support for children (7-13yrs) with parent/s presently/formerly incarcerated through Social, Physical, Emotional, Educational and Dollars S.P.E.E.D intervention.



Befriend and mentor youths (12-19yrs) with parent/s presently/formerly incarcerated by harnessing their energy and talent into positive outcomes through Social, Physical, Relational, Emotional, Academic and Dollars S.P.R.E.A.D intervention.



Serve and mentor the community children and youth; affirming and nurturing them within a loving and learning environment. Our focus is on building their Character, Competency and Connection through creative and enriching activities.



Strengthen social mobility of children from low-income families by adopting a relational approach where community mentors are matched to the children, supporting their aspirational, character, educational, financial and relational growth. This is a joint project with WeCare@MarineParade.



Corporate Office and Activity Center
5 Stadium Walk, Kallang Leisure Park,
#04-04/07
Singapore 397693
Tel: 6387-3700

Life Student Care Centre @ Hougang
Blk 665 Hougang Ave 4 #01-365
Singapore 530665
Tel: 6489-8720

Life Student Care Centre @ Sengkang
Blk 306C Anchorvale Link #01-77
Singapore 543306
Tel: 6489-8718

Life Student Care Centre @ Yishun
Blk 611 Yishun St 61 #01-199
Singapore 760611
Tel: 6755-0678

Life Student Care Centre - Happy Meridians
20 Pasir Ris St 71 (Meridian Pri Sch)
Singapore 518798
Tel: 6581-0087

Mightykids, Family and Community Activity Centre
Blk 32, Telok Blangah Rise, #01-267
Singapore 090032
Tel: 6270-7198

Behind The Scene

Working tirelessly behind the scene, not expecting anything in return, is a group of dedicated board members of Life Community who are volunteers themselves. Some have a pastoral calling, some are business leaders with access to community and financial resources, some have specialised skills and competences. And they all united with a passion for the mission – to empower children and families through care and mentoring.

Mr Nicholas Goh
Vice Chairman



To be able to come together with our other fellow board members and to bless others in Life Community is indeed a privilege and a good learning journey for me personally. We are all created differently and we have our unique gifts and talents. What we do with those gifts and talents, is our gift back to God.

Dr Gilbert Tan
Treasurer



When I realised that needs are plentiful, every small contribution on my part will make a difference.

Mr Goh Kng Yan
Chairman



Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them. I strongly believe that if children are given the necessary love, guidance and support to succeed, they will succeed beyond their wildest dreams! That is why Life Community has our FOC, FOY, MKFC, LSC & EduGrow for Brighter Tomorrows programs. That love, guidance and support we find in our board, staff and volunteers. We thank God for them working selflessly as a team, to give our Life Community's children and youth a hope and a future.

Mr Seow Kiat Wang
Secretary



It is a privilege for me to participate in meeting the needs of our community through Life Community and to serve alongside many who are similarly motivated.

Mr Shaun Tan
Vice Treasurer



Those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed. I have been blessed to bless those who need a helping hand.

Dr Tan Kok Beng
Founder



Loving the poor and ministering to them is a manifestation of God's love. It brings satisfaction and fulfilment to the human heart.

Denus Joel Ban
Member



I count it all joy for the ability to reflect God's love through voluntary works. Especially, when lives are touched and transformed in a meaningful way.



An original art piece by the children of Life Community

Support Us

As a charity, we continually need financial support to defray the cost of our operation. Presently, we require approximately S\$2.6 million per year to sustain and run the five programmes. We are thankful that God has provided for our needs through the generous giving of our donors in the last 20 years of serving the community.

Every Contribution Counts. Be part of the Life Community journey by making a donation to support children in reaching their fullest potential.

5 Quick Ways to Make a Donation!

1



Write a **cheque** payable to **Life Community Services Society**

2



Make an **Internet Transfer** to DBS Account Number **0330151217**

3



Give via **NVPC** portal at <https://www.giving.sg/life-community-services-society>

4



Contribute through **Credit Card** (call 63873700 for an authorisation form or download the form directly <http://life-community.org/wp-content/uploads/DE.pdf>)

5



Pledge monthly **GIRO** donation (call 63873700 for an authorisation form or download the form directly <http://life-community.org/wp-content/uploads/DE.pdf>)

All donations are eligible for 2.5 times* tax deduction.

For tax deduction receipts, kindly provide your NRIC number & contact phone number.

Mailing address: 5 Stadium Walk #04-04 Kallang Leisure Park Singapore 397693

Contact Number: 63873700 (Mon – Fri, 9am – 6pm)

Email: lcss@life-community.org

Website: www.life-community.org

*Information accurate at time of print, subject to prevailing tax policies in Singapore.

A Song Dedication

The lyrics and tune of this song have been written by two of our beneficiaries.

It is dedicated to all our old friends, who have contributed and made a difference, as well as the new ones who are inspired to join us as we take the next lap. It really does not matter how big or small your contribution is, it is the heart that matters. As we commemorate the 20 years of Life Community's journey, we want to express our deepest gratitude to all the donors, volunteers, partners and staff of Life Community. While we are not able to name you one by one, it does not dilute the intensity of our appreciation. We believe you will be rewarded at heaven's end. Please accept our humble thanks and appreciation because without your support, we could not have done it - Raising the children up to be more than they can be!

I'll Take A Long Walk With You

Music: Fabian Lyrics: Henry

Intro: C, G, Am, F

Verse 1

C. G.
There was a time
Am. F
When all seems like darkness
C. G
Oh I felt confused
Am
As there was no way
F C
I was hopeless
G
I almost gave up
Am
I cried alone
F
With all my mightiness
C. G
There came a light
Am
Could this be what
F C
I've been waiting for?
G. Am. F
Ohh ohh ohh

Chorus

Verse 2

C G
You helped me a lot
Am
And gave me hope
F
I soon felt relieved
C G Am
And we pushed our way through
F
To find the light
C G
You held both my hands
Am.
So tight ohhh
F
That's why I say

Chorus

Bridge

C. G
As the light shines

C
Oh won't you
G. Am
Walk along with me
F
To see the sun
C
Rise from the start oh
G
Won't you walk along
Am
With me to start
F
the fire from within
C G
cause you and I
Am
Will find our ways
F
To live through the storm
C G
With hearts and minds
Am
You and I
F
Will help each other
C G
And soon we'll be alright
Am F
Alright alright alright x2

Am F
It guides through our lives
C G
with you supporting me
Am F
We'll push our way through ohhhh

Chorus


Verse 3 (slow)

C. G
With you and I
Am
We found the light
F
To push us through the dark
C. G
With you and I
Am
We've been through all the pain
F
And we have gained
C G. Am. F
So time to share the light

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him
who loved us. Romans 8:37




Life Community would like to thank
everyone who have contributed and
made this book possible.

A portrait of a woman with long dark hair and bangs, smiling. She is wearing a white sleeveless top and a necklace. The background is a plain grey wall.

As we celebrate Life Community's 20th Anniversary, I am waiting in anticipation to see how God will continue to lead and guide us as we persevere in the work. It means that we can reach out to more children of lower income families and help them in all aspects of their growing up years. I see this as a way to contribute to the community and the society.

Chu Li Hui

A portrait of a woman with long dark hair, smiling. She is wearing a red and white striped shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in the distance.

It warms my heart when a child is comfortable with me and wants to share with me about his/her life. Through their sharing, sometimes we discuss about certain things that I could guide them on, but often, a child's passionate sharing about some things in his/her life inspire me instead. Their sharing help me to take a step into their little worlds, and let me think about how they live their lives with their circumstances and perspectives.

*Jessica
Lim*



I learnt to listen to every child and parent with my heart and to know the real struggles and challenges they faced. Of the many cases I have experienced, I began to increase in my empathy and compassion for them. I rejoiced when the Lord answered prayers through divine appointments and reconciliation between the child and the parent.

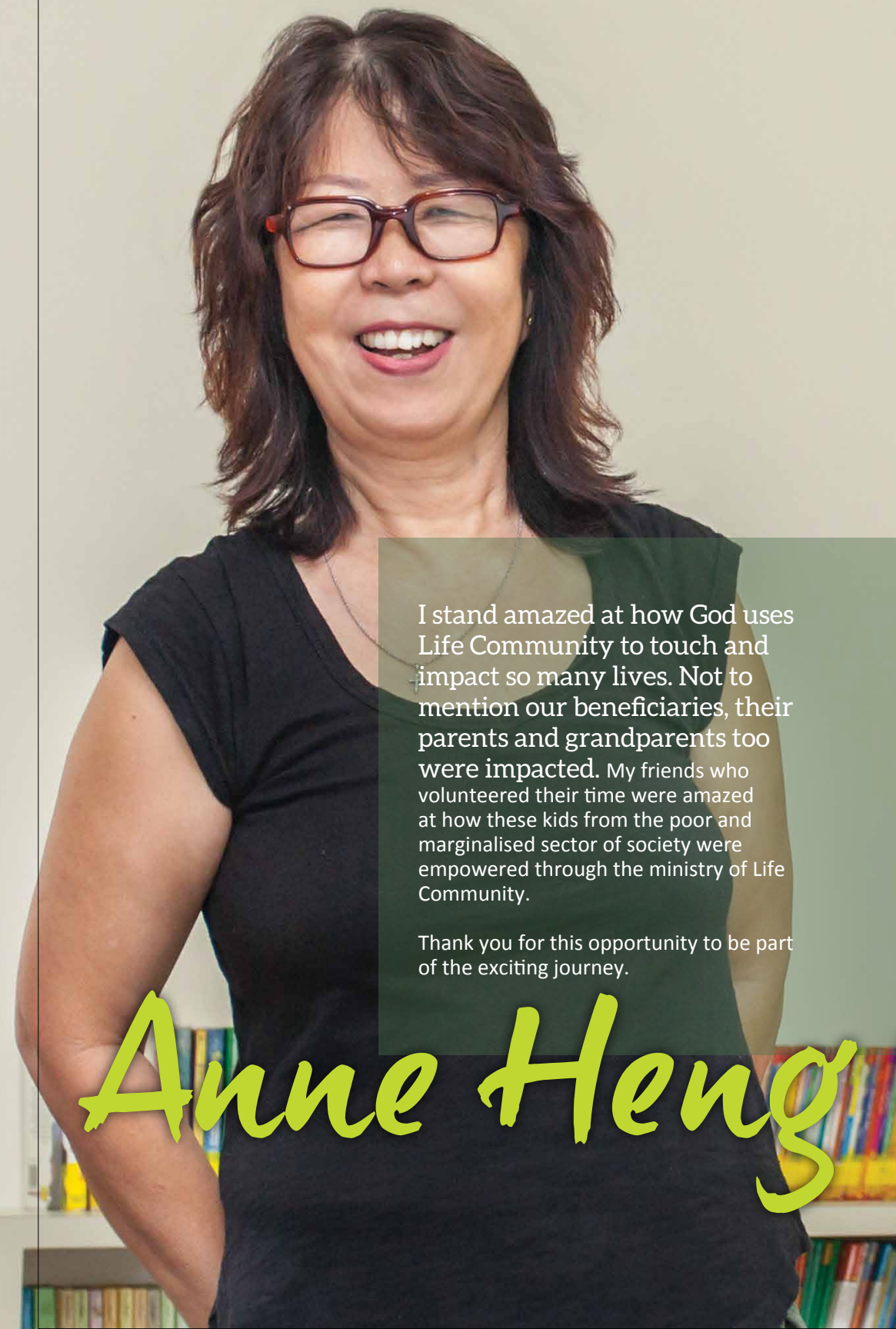
Sharon Loh



What keeps us going is the innocent smile on the children's faces, the little notes that they write to us with messages that deeply touch and encourage the team to journey on with them in this marathon race. We give our best to these children/youth and in return, we feel that we receive more than what we have given to them. We learn to recognize the uniqueness of each individual child/youth.

For it is in giving that we receive.

Margaret Teng



I stand amazed at how God uses Life Community to touch and impact so many lives. Not to mention our beneficiaries, their parents and grandparents too were impacted. My friends who volunteered their time were amazed at how these kids from the poor and marginalised sector of society were empowered through the ministry of Life Community.

Thank you for this opportunity to be part of the exciting journey.

Anne Heng



Ann Tan

A kind word of affirmation brings out the twinkle in a child's eyes. What a joy it is to be a channel of hope that contributes to the positive transformation in a child's life!

It is really heart-warming to know that we are not alone in serving the disadvantaged and the at-risk children. **Life Community is privileged to have many individuals and corporations who have gone beyond philanthropic giving to being personally engaged with our children.** Combining their different talents, skills and resources, they co-labour with us in plowing, in sowing the seeds of love, nourishing the tender shoots and even pruning for effective growth. This grace of community spirit and volunteerism is what cheers us on in enabling and empowering young lives for the present and future generation.

Together, we cultivate the garden of these young hearts, motivating them to intentional fruitfulness.



