



By Sharon Lee

# Youthful Aspirations

WHAT they lacked in age, they more than made up in passion and enthusiasm.

The more than 100 youths who attended the 2DIN camp at Sarimbun Scouts Camp from 24 to 25 March 2007 came away with a better understanding of the labour movement and in the process, strengthened bonds between themselves.

The camp, organised by Young NTUC, saw participants, some as young as 16, engage in various teambuilding activities. They also took the time to brainstorm ideas and contribute feedback on making LM2011 more effective.

Speaking at a dialogue after the launch of the inaugural Uthi Campus on 25 March 2007, NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say explained the rationale behind LM2011.

"We do not want the labour movement to wake up one day and be one for low-wage workers, foreign workers and the old. Then the labour movement would have become part of the national divide and become part of the problem," he said.

The various challenges

that Singapore faces today are global challenges that other countries are facing too, observed Mr Lim. These include competition for jobs, a widening income gap and an ageing population.

"There is no easy solution."

Hence, the labour movement needs to be 'a labour movement for all'.

"We need to be a workforce, community and nation that works together, lives together and plays together," he said.

Praising the youngsters for being 'spot-on' when it came to identifying and understanding issues on the ground, Mr Lim said: "We want your ideas. We want your passion. Ideas and passion are hard to come by but with your ideas and passion, we can do anything."

"It is our challenge to reach out to the young so that they can move in a similar direction," he said.

To better engage the young, a new youth club run by NTUC Club will be ready later this year.

Young NTUC Chair Edwin Lye was heartened by the youth's obvious

enthusiasm. "These people are willing to spend the weekend to know more and find out more about the trade union movement and at the same time, talk about they can help to meet more of the future challenges. I've been here with them for the last two days and their passion and energy is awesome!"

Uthi Campus Principal Muhammad Asri Ashad, 33, said he was pleasantly surprised by the participants' enthusiasm and support.

"They came with an open heart and open mind and were receptive to the labour movement," he said.

Feedback from the participants was likewise positive.

Teacher Lorynn Madyna Masni, 25, said: "Coming to this camp really changed my perceptions about NTUC and the labour movement. I also made many new friends here."

Clinical Data Manager Sohaib Khawaja, 32, decided to sign up for the camp after hearing about it through the Young NTUC Pool interest group he was part of.

"It opened up my eyes as to how tripartism works and the role of unions. I learnt a lot in the last two days," he said. ■

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