

Youthful Aspirations

By Sharon Lee

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 Uth! 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!"

Uth! Campus Principal Muhammad Asri Arshad, 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 Mazlyna 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 Khawajua, 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. ■

“Coming to this camp really changed my perceptions about NTUC and the labour movement. I also made many new friends here.”

Teacher Lorynn Mazlyna Masni



She's Born To Sing

By Sharon Lee

DON'T be misled by Miss Selly Marina's demure exterior. Soft-spoken and polite to a fault, the 27-year old Assistant Manager hardly looks like the type to perform on stage.

However, a different side of her emerges when she sings. Miss Marina, who is of Indonesian descent, transforms into a confident and sassy performer and carries a tune with gusto.

She snagged the coveted role of Mei Ling, one of the two lead characters in A Labour of Love - NTUC's first musical as part of this year's May Day celebrations.

Set against the tumultuous 1960s to present day Singapore, the musical will star more than 20 fellow performers from the labour movement's performing arts group, p.L.a.Y!.

Miss Marina stars opposite Mr Spencer Tan who plays Ah Keong in the production written and directed by local thespian Jeremiah Choy.

"The musical depicts how they go through thick and thin and how the relationship blossoms between the pair over the years," explained Miss Marina.

The lady is quite the veteran in terms of performing.

She started singing at two when her grandfather taught her to sing his



favourite Theresa Teng song, Ni Zhen Me Shuo, and as a youngster, joined a performing arts school in Jakarta where she honed her singing, acting and dancing skills.

In 2001, she was part of the chorus for Action Theatre's Chang and Eng The Musical and was a cast member in TheatreWorks' Festival 30 Plays in 30 Days. Miss Marina was also a chorus member in Phua Chu Kang The Musical.

"Performing is my passion so it's a good opportunity for me because one seldom gets the chance to work with the best. We've got the best writer, songwriter and best director so what else can you ask for?" she said.

"The lyrics are wonderful and so is the cast so come and catch it!" she added. ■

“It's a world-class musical. Catch the show quickly before it goes to Broadway and West End. The singing is fantastic; the dancing is fantastic; everything is fantastic.”

Lim Swee Say



Date: 30 April to 2 May 2007 (1 May only by invitation)
Venue: University Cultural Centre, National University of Singapore
Time: 8pm
Price: Public (Category 1) \$60, (Category 2) \$40, (Category 3) \$20
 Union Members \$42, \$28, \$14
 OCBC Card Members \$52, \$34, \$20

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Music To Feed The Soul



Chorus of Dreams: A Music Extravaganza

Date: 27 April 2007
Venue: The Republic Cultural Centre Republic Polytechnic 9 Woodlands Ave 9
Time: 7.30pm (Shuttle service will be available at Woodlands MRT Station from 6.30pm onwards)
Price: \$28

Tickets are available through Ticketcharge. Students, NS men and NTUC Members enjoy a 25 per cent discount.

IT'S A star-studded concert that is all for a good cause. "Chorus of Dreams: A Music Extravaganza" will be held at the Republic Cultural Centre at Republic Polytechnic on 27 April 2007 to raise funds for the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped.

Among those performing are Project SuperStar 2005 winner Kelvin Tan Wei Lian, SuperBand winner Mi Lu Bing, Anugerah 2005 first runner-up Syed Azmir, Singapore Idol finalists Mathilda D'Silva and Leandra Rasiah.

The project, supported by Young NTUC and Republic Polytechnic, hopes to raise \$150,000 for SAVH which relies solely on public donations.

Funds raised will be used to provide vocational rehabilitation and skills training for SAVH's visually handicapped members and maintain its Low Vision Clinic which helps enhance the remaining vision of members.

"Chorus of Dreams" Campaign Director and Producer Najib Ahmad decided to start the project after volunteering at the association.

"I felt that there could have been a lot of improvements if there was more money to spend for its programmes and equipment. I wanted to make a difference and create a better world for them to be independent in society, part of the mainstream," explained Mr Najib, who is also part of NTUC's performing arts group p.L.a.Y!.

The process has been a character-building one for Mr Najib.

"I have had so many hard knocks along the way I have lost count. It's been a really, really tough experience, but one that is truly character-building and enriching for the soul. I get to see how society can be charitable and brutal at the same time. It's my source of motivation," he said.

The concert is the charity's first key event after regaining Institute of Public Character status in September 2006. This allows the association to issue tax-exempt receipts.

For donations to SAVH, please call Alyse or Karen at 6251 4331 or email alyse@savh.org.sg ■