

MEDIA RELEASE

Embargoed until 10.00 am on 19 March 2010



10 COMMUNITY CHEST – FUNDED FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES GET \$1 MILLION FROM NTUC FAIRPRICE FOUNDATION

Singapore, March 19, 2010 – NTUC FairPrice Foundation donated \$1 million to 10 Community Chest-funded Family Service Centres (FSCs), which provide critical services to help families build their resilience and strengthen family relationships.

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, received the cheque on behalf of Community Chest from Mr Ng Ser Miang, Chairman of NTUC FairPrice and NTUC FairPrice Foundation, this morning.

“The family unit has always been close to the heart of our operations. Not only do we ensure that families have quality food on the dinner table, we also want to help families live a quality and happy life. We hope that by providing financial aid to these 10 FSCs across Singapore, these centres can continue their meaningful work of supporting families and strengthening the family and community bonding,” said Mr Ng Ser Miang, Chairman of NTUC FairPrice and NTUC FairPrice Foundation.

Mr Hwang Peng Yuan, Vice-Chairman of the Community Chest Committee, said: “Since its inception in 2008, NTUC FairPrice Foundation has been zealously supporting Community Chest’s fund-raising initiatives, including the TrueHearts charity show, ComChest picnic and the Charity Movie Premiere held last year. We are grateful for their generous donation of \$1 million to 10 FSCs under the auspices of Community Chest, which would enable these FSCs to continue to serve our beneficiaries from low-income families.”

The 10 FSCs supported by NTUC FairPrice Foundation are AWWA FSC, Fei Yue FSC (Choa Chu Kang), Hougang Sheng Hong FSC, MacPherson Moral FSC, PPIS Jurong FSC, REACH FSC, Tanjong Pagar FSC, Moral FSC (Bedok North), Moral FSC (Bukit Panjang) and Whispering Hearts FSC. Together they served more than 37,000 people¹ last year.

¹Include direct service users, caregivers and public education projected for FY2009

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170 Ghim Moh Road #01-02 Singapore 279621 • Tel: 6210 2500 Fax: 6468 4909 • www.comchest.org.sg

There are a total of 36 FSCs in Singapore, which served a total of 149,707 people² last year.

Learn a skill, start a home enterprise

Besides counselling, case management and referrals, some FSCs also run programmes that help individuals pick up skills to start a home enterprise, and to manage their finances.

PPIS Jurong FSC runs the Skillz@Home programme that enables women to learn skills such as sewing, bread-making and cooking. After completion of the courses, the women will be able to start a home enterprise to improve their family's income with the FSC helping to link them to potential clients. Since the programme started in 2002, 500 women had completed the programme.

Madam Noridah Bte Haron was one of the service users that had benefited from the Skillz@Home programme. Having attended courses on sewing, she was able to earn some income from the sewing assignments which helped to increase her family income by 40%. Please refer to Annex A for more information.

Play the game, learn to manage finances

Other FSCs like the Moral FSC (Bedok North) started a financial planning training to help families manage their finances. Some 60 families have gone through the programme so far.

Besides the workshops, the Moral FSC (Bedok North) also came up with the idea of learning through playing a financial planning board game.

Families would learn to review their current financial situation, manage limited income, debts and arrears, and prioritise expenses. After playing the board game and acquiring budgeting concepts, families would be given vouchers to spend in the supermarkets. "These activities make the concept of prudent spending more meaningful and much more effective than making them sit through financial planning classes," said Ms Faridah Ridwan, case worker, Moral FSC (Bedok North). The FSC plans to expand the financial planning training to a five-month programme, which it hopes to attract 112 families to attend every year.

41-year-old Madam Chng Pek Har attended the financial planning training provided by Moral Family Service Centre (Bukit Panjang). Now she is more aware of her family's financial situation and has become more prudent in her household expenses. Please refer Annex A for more information.

²Include direct service users, caregivers and public education projected for FY2009

Reach out to the youths-at-risk

Besides helping the needy families, FSCs also reach out to youths-at-risk. Hougang Sheng Hong FSC's Rainbow Connection Programme, helps more than 60 to 70 youths per year through academic tuition, character building workshops and school holiday programmes. Through this programme, the youths were able to increase their self-confidence and do better in their studies.

15-year-old Nurmasrinayu used to lack motivation. After she attended the Rainbow Connection Programme, her confidence and self-esteem increased. She has improved in her studies and is now the leader of a dance group. Please refer Annex A for more information.

For media enquiries and interviews, please contact:

NCSS:

Ms Kong Chui Fun
Corporate Communications Manager
Corporate Communications Division
National Council of Social Service
Tel: 6210 2636, HP: 9787 3120
Email: kong_chui_fun@ncss.gov.sg

NTUC FairPrice Foundation:

Mr Chan Kwai Seng
Senior Account Manager
Fleishman-Hillard
Tel: 6424 6383, HP: 8207 1665
Email: kwaiseng.chan@fleishman.com

Mr Winston Ng
Assistant Manager
Corporate Communications
NTUC FairPrice
Tel: 6424 7895, HP: 9741 8955
Email: Winston.ng@fairprice.com.sg

Community Chest

Community Chest raises funds on a yearly basis to meet the needs of the social service programmes we help support. Community Chest ensures that the fund-raising costs are kept to a minimum. As these costs are covered mainly by Tote Board and Singapore Pools (Private) Limited, every dollar raised by Community Chest will be made available to social service programmes under its care.

Community Chest has made it easier for individuals to donate from the comfort of their homes via websites such as www.comchest.org.sg and www.vpost.com.sg, through the internet (DBS, UOB or Citibank) or phone banking (DBS or POSB) and even at SAM machines across the island. Individuals can also reap tax benefits on donations

through hassle-free modes like the Community Chest's SHARE programme (the sign-up form is available at www.comchest.org.sg) where one can make monthly donations via GIRO, credit card or payroll and have his or her tax deductions automatically included in their tax assessments.

About NTUC FairPrice Foundation

In March 2008, NTUC FairPrice Foundation, a registered charity 100 per cent funded by NTUC FairPrice, was launched with the mission to “provide a better life for the community.” NTUC FairPrice Foundation focuses its giving on six strategic thrusts – helping the poor and needy, nation building, community bonding, education, sports and health, and workers’ welfare. The foundation provides a structure to NTUC FairPrice’s corporate giving by contributing to causes that are aligned with NTUC FairPrice’s social mission in a systematic and sustained manner. The foundation also serves as an institutional tribute to NTUC FairPrice’s commitment to serve, care and share with the community. For more information on NTUC FairPrice Foundation, please visit www.fairpricefoundation.org

About NTUC FairPrice

NTUC FairPrice Co-operative Ltd was founded by the labour movement in 1973, with a social mission to moderate the cost of living in Singapore. From one supermarket, it has grown to become Singapore’s largest retailer, with a network of more than 230 outlets comprising FairPrice supermarkets, FairPrice Finest, FairPrice Xtra, FairPrice Xpress and Cheers convenience stores. NTUC FairPrice also owns a Fresh Food Distribution Centre and a centralised warehousing and distribution company. Today, with its multiple retail formats serving the varied needs and interests of people from all walks of life, the social mission of NTUC FairPrice has evolved to make the dream of living well accessible to everyone by moderating the cost of the good life.

**Issued by: Corporate Communications Division
National Council of Social Service
Friday, 19 March 2010**

Madam Noridah Bte Haron

50-year-old Madam Noridah Bte Haron is a widow with four daughters, aged between 10 to 23 years old. Three of her younger daughters are still in schooling. Besides providing financial assistance, PPIS Jurong FSC encouraged Madam Noridah to sign up for the Skillz@HOME programme. She has since completed six courses on sewing, beading, henna painting and pastry making. Madam Noridah's family income has improved and she was able to expand her social support and network. She said: "I have benefited from the programme. It has given me the opportunity to pick up many skills and I have made many friends as a result of the classes that I attended here."

Madam Chng Pek Har

Madam Chng Pek Har's husband is the breadwinner of the family of five. He works as a karang guni man and earns about \$1,200 a month. Madam Chng approached Moral Family Service Centre (Bukit Panjang) to seek financial assistance. The FSC helped her to apply for the School Pocket Money Fund for her three school-going children, aged 11, 13 and 14 years old. The FSC also helped Madam Chng to explore employment opportunities and taught her how to manage her finances. "The FSC is very helpful. They were able to provide temporary financial assistance when I was in difficulties," said Madam Chng.

Nurmasrinayu Binte Johari

Nurmasrinayu Binte Johari enjoys dancing and has gained from the Hougang Sheng Hong FSC's Rainbow Connection Programme. Known as Ayu to her counsellors at the FSC, she had attended the tuition and character building workshops. Through the help of the FSC, her academic grades have improved and her self-esteem has grown. She is now taking part in the Teens Canopie, a sports, adventure and performing arts outreach project, and working towards fulfilling her aspirations in the future.