

MEDIA RELEASE

NCSS signs MoU with e2i in Landmark Partnership to Further Enhance Capability and Capacity in Social Service Sector

- *e2i, a part of NTUC will help to support new entrants and current sector professionals through career guidance, employability training, job matching and placement, and funding schemes.*
- *MoU was signed at the Social Service Institute (SSI) Annual Graduation & Awards Ceremony that presented certificates, diplomas, scholarships and awards to 280 entry level and mid-career recipients, sector leaders and domain experts.*

SINGAPORE 20 January 2018 – The **National Council of Social Service (NCSS)** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **Employment and Employability Institute (e2i)** to seal a landmark partnership to further enhance capability and capacity in the social service sector through its human capital development group.

The MoU was signed at the **annual Social Service Institute (SSI) Graduation and Awards Ceremony** held this morning by the **Chief Executive Officers of e2i and NCSS** – Mr Gilbert Tan and Mr Sim Gim Guan respectively. The **Guest-of-Honour** was **Mrs Josephine Teo**, Minister at Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Manpower and Home Affairs.

Through this partnership, both organisations will work together for the career and recruitment needs of the sector. The e2i will bring to the sector enabling capabilities in areas of employability training programmes, funding and other new initiatives.

Mr Sim Gim Guan, CEO, NCSS said: “The needs in our society are evolving, and becoming more complex. It is thus imperative that we remain relevant and responsive to future challenges and changing needs. In line with the Social Service Sector Strategic Thrusts (4ST), the 5-year social service sector roadmap, this partnership will boost our efforts to bring about increased number of skilled and enterprising professionals into the sector, who will play a key role in supporting the social service organisations to be more effective.”

Mr Gilbert Tan, CEO, e2i said: “With the Social Service sector set to grow over the next few years, more jobs will be available for Singaporeans who are passionate to work in this sector. Currently in development, the Skills Framework under the Social Service Industry Manpower Plan will offer clear career progression, competencies needed and upgrading opportunities for the workers. The partnership inked between e2i and NCSS enables both organisations to identify the employment and employability gaps and work together to attract new talent and skill-up the sector workforce.”

SSI is a pioneer **Continuing Education & Training (CET)** centre appointed by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) offering Workforce Skills Qualification (WSQ) and other industry relevant courses for the social service sector. More than 200 graduands were conferred Certificates and Diplomas. These included the inaugural **WSQ Advanced Certificate (ACSS)** and **WSQ Diploma in Social Service (DSS)**, as well as the **SSI DSS** and **SSI Higher Diploma in Social Service (HDSS)**. Graduands, some of whom have made mid-career switches will contribute to the sector as social work associates and social service assistants. This will add to the sector workforce which numbers 15,000 today, and is expected to grow to 16,000 by 2019, to meet increasingly complex social needs.

To address future skills needs of the sector, SSI will also work with SSG to leverage programmes such as the SkillsFuture Series, which focuses on eight priority and emerging areas including Data Analytics and Tech-enabled Services to improve service outcomes and optimise use of resources.

Some 60 promising students and social service professionals were also presented with scholarships and awards today, for their strong leadership qualities, a passion for the social service sector and an unwavering commitment to pursue their studies in relevant disciplines. The scholars, for example, will be matriculating in various universities in Singapore and abroad.

Stories of innovation, collaboration, determination and courage emerged from many of the recipients. They included those who decided to give back despite adversities, made mid-career switches or undertook action-learning projects.

Valedictorian Beng Kim has every reason to be proud. He joined Highpoint Halfway House as a recovery coach in 2014, his first job after his release from prison a year earlier. He was sponsored by Highpoint for the SSI DSS, as it was his desire to give back to society and serve other ex-offenders. Attending classes during the course were a challenge, as well as sitting for his exams, as he was still under care of the police, but he persevered and the determination has paid off.

Other graduands, like WSQ DSS holder Timothy Chua, a youth worker, could go on to do a Bachelor in Social Work at Singapore University of Social Sciences, to become an accredited social worker. Others like Talia Lee, who ran a beauty school with drop-out kids, and Anjalai Ammal, an NParks volunteer for more than 10 years, made the switch to join the social service sector.

Leaders from 15 non-profit organisations, who completed a 10-month action-learning project on innovation and collaboration to help transform the sector, also graduated from the **ACE Capstone Leadership Programme for Non-Profits**, a signature programme developed by Finland's Aalto University and the SMU Lien Centre for Social Innovation and Centre for Non-Profit Leadership, in partnership with SSI. The programme provides participants with opportunities to collaborate with senior sector leaders, and to work on innovative solutions that may influence national policies.

One of these action-learning projects was undertaken by a team of four persons from the Tsao Foundation, Capital W, Singapore Swimming Association and the Foundation of Rotary Clubs (Singapore). In exploring how millennials can shape future giving, the project will provide valuable insights to social service organisations to more effectively engage these groups through understanding demographic and generational shifts, and behaviour patterns.

The inaugural **STAR Adult Educator Awards** were presented to five persons for their dedication towards training and development of the social service sector, in their respective areas of expertise, including eldercare, disability, mental health, children, youth and family, as well as cross-sector. The criteria for these awards include subject matter expertise, trainer effectiveness (as evaluated by the learners), active participation in SSI initiatives and activities, and raising professional standards.

Mr Sim added: “There are many inspiring stories that have come out from among our graduands, as well as award and scholarship recipients. They embody a spirit of service and passion for making a difference in the lives of those we serve in the social service sector. SSI is extremely privileged, and proud that we can provide the expertise, resources and the means to train, equip and empower persons willing to serve in this sector. In the process, we have enhanced capacity and built capability right across various social purpose entities in the sector.”

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National Council of Social Service (NCSS)

NCSS is the umbrella body for over 450-member social service organisations in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in enhancing the capabilities and capacity of our members, advocating for social service needs and strengthening strategic partnerships, for an effective social service ecosystem. Community Chest and Social Service Institute (SSI) are part of NCSS.

Social Service Sector Strategic Thrusts (4ST)

The Social Service Sector Strategic Thrusts (4ST) is a 5 year roadmap for the sector, co-developed by NCSS with stakeholders in the social service ecosystem – member organisations, service users, government, community, business leaders and civic-minded individuals. It is guided by a person-centred and holistic approach towards advancing the quality of life for individuals. The 4ST calls for active participation and collaboration so that everyone in the ecosystem plays a part to achieve a shared vision, where every person is empowered to live with dignity in a caring and inclusive society.

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