

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HEALTH MINISTER GAN KIM YONG OFFICIATES THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE
NATIONAL SENIOR VOLUNTEER MONTH**

9 October 2015 – National Senior Volunteer Month (NSVM), RSVP Singapore’s major campaign to promote senior volunteerism at the national level, officially came to an end today. Held at RSVP’s Multi-Purpose Hall, the closing ceremony was graced by Health Minister Gan Kim Yong as Guest-of-Honour.

A scintillating Hawaiian guitar performance by Thomas Lin, an RSVP volunteer, and a creative origami activity by clients from the Muscular Dystrophy Association Singapore (MDAS), opened the ceremony and set a joyful tone for the rest of the morning.

In his address to the gathering, Health Minister Gan Kim Yong lauded RSVP’s efforts to promote senior volunteerism, saying: “To achieve successful ageing in Singapore, we also need the support of numerous civic organizations to jointly catalyse programmes with us. Community partners such as RSVP Singapore play an important role in bringing together like-minded seniors and creating more opportunities for Singaporeans to give back to the community.”

RSVP President Koh Juay Meng too emphasised in his welcome speech the significant role seniors can still play in society after retirement. He said, “Singapore’s senior citizenry is talented and skilled. They have played critical roles in many key sectors of Singapore’s history and development. They are the silver lining in an ageing population.”

To showcase the experiences of a few of our volunteers, RSVP Pioneers – Mr Dexter Tai and Mr Jeffrey Law – took centre stage to share their poignant recollections of their volunteering journeys, prompting enthusiastic applause from the appreciative crowd. Guests also saw a video presentation which fused different elements of senior volunteerism and paid tribute to the multitude of volunteering activities spread out over the year.

To demonstrate that VWOs can and should help one another and cooperate closely, Mr Koh presented a gift to Ms Sherena Loh, Executive Director of MDAS. The gift, a symbol of friendship and an encouragement to MDAS to continue its good work, was made possible as a result of a successful garage sale held as part of an NSVM activity in March this year.

Minister Gan was also shown an innovative “Volunteer Self Discovery Tool” designed by A*Star with input from RSVP Singapore. The volunteer match-making tool prompts users to answer a few simple questions and uses the answers to generate a few recommended activities to volunteer in. Users can then leave their contact details through the application if they wish to sign up for or find out more

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about the recommended activities. Through this application, RSVP Singapore hopes to reach out to more potential volunteers by more effectively matching their volunteering interests.

The Ceremony ended with a tour of RSVP's premises by Minister Gan.

NSVM activities are ongoing until the end of this year. To-date, after 9 months of promotional activities, more than 1800 seniors had stepped up to volunteer, some for the first time. Additionally, another 1000 signed Volunteer Pledge Cards to show their interest. The Opening Ceremony held on 4 September attracted several thousand visitors. Many had made inquiries about volunteerism. 16 co-exhibitors at the Ceremony showcased their mission and spoke to visitors of the volunteer roles in their respective organizations.

RSVP welcomes more seniors to join the ranks of volunteers. Seniors who are interested to volunteer can visit www.rsvp.org.sg to find more or call us at 62590802.

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About RSVP Singapore

RSVP Singapore - The Organisation of Senior Volunteers is a non-profit organisation launched by the then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong in October 1998 and approved as an Institution of Public Character in 1999. Its mission is to provide opportunities for seniors to serve the community with their talent and experience through purpose driven volunteerism. Its major programmes are Cyberguide, Mentally Disadvantaged Outreach, Mentoring, Enriching Lives of Seniors, Silver IT Care, Senior Guiding, MyBuddy, Changi Service Ambassadors and Hosting.

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