

**SPEECH BY DR TONY TAN KENG YAM, CHAIRMAN OF SINGAPORE PRESS HOLDINGS FOUNDATION, AT THE CHEQUE PRESENTATION CEREMONY TO 20 CHARITY PROGRAMMES FOR THE DISABLED HELD ON MONDAY, 21ST AUGUST 2006 AT 3.00PM AT SPH NEWS CENTRE AUDITORIUM**

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Ms Jennie Chua  
Chairman of Community Chest

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure this afternoon to present donation cheques to charity programmes providing services to the disabled. This is the third year that Singapore Press Holdings is making a group donation to charity and it represents our commitment to sustain our corporate citizenry efforts, which is one of the core values of our organisation.

This year, we want to highlight the needs of the disabled in our society and channel our donation towards this cause. We were told the story of 21-year-old Bernard Teo who is wheelchair-bound and suffers from severe spasticity. He first attended a special school and later joined the Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD) Day Activity Centre in 2003 upon graduation.

Since then, Bernard has learnt to be more independent in his daily activities and made many friends at the centre. He is also enrolled in a Mathematics programme and now studies the subject with the help of assistive technology devices.

The SPD Day Activity Centre is one of the programmes that we are donating to. We want to support the opportunities that the centre provides for its disabled members to socialise and to develop useful daily functional skills as well as its day care services which provide family members of the disabled some respite from the burden of often intensive care-giving.

Besides the SPD Day Activity Centre, we are also donating to 19 other programmes that serve the various needs of the disabled, such as training and job employment, home day-care, rehabilitation, counselling and other services to more than 5,000 disabled adults .

Finding jobs for the disabled has always been a challenge and it is gratifying to mention that 5 of the 20 charities we are supporting through today's group donation provide job employment programmes and services for disabled workers. Job placement agency for the disabled, Bizlink, for example, helps to emplace more than 250 people each year.

With the Government announcing last month that \$520,000 will be set aside to help companies cover the higher costs of hiring disabled staff, we hope to hear of greater success in job placement efforts by Bizlink and other similar agencies.

While our contribution to the charity programmes may provide some financial relief, I would also urge all of us to play our part in supporting the integration of the disabled into the community. Our care and encouragement will help to motivate the

disabled to go beyond the constraints of their disabilities. We should bear in mind that disability does not mean inability.

Paralympic swimmer Theresa Goh, for example, brought pride to our nation when she became a world record holder for the 200m breaststroke about a week ago at the U.S. Paralympic National Swimming Championships.

We are happy to see many beneficiaries here today and we want to thank the National Council of Social Service for working in close consultation and partnership with us in identifying the 20 charity programmes that will receive a donation from us this year. We hope there will be more Theresa Gohs out there among the disabled and we want you to remember that the disabled can live an enriching and rewarding life, as long as we are there to support them and they are willing to try.

Thank you and I wish you all the best in your endeavours.

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