

prisonnews

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JANUARY 2025 ISSUE



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the January 2025 issue of Prison News!

The Singapore Prison Service was honoured to host the International Corrections and Prisons Association Annual Conference again after 13 years. Soak in the key highlights of the conference and ground up initiatives in SPS that aim to empower inmates and ex-offenders in their rehabilitation journey and heal broken ties between inmates and their families.

Let us also take you through the key highlights of Yellow Ribbon Prison Run 2024, which would not have been made possible without the support from the public and our very dedicated community partners! To commemorate the inaugural Yellow Ribbon Community Day, this issue also sheds light on the invaluable work of our CARE Network partners and their motivations to build a community of support for offenders and their families.

SPS is dedicated to supporting staff in their professional growth and we hope that this feature inspires the spirit of lifelong learning in our readers. This issue features a SPS officer who embarked on a journey to upskill himself and obtain a degree in Public Safety and Security with a Minor in Crisis Management.

Last but definitely not the least, we share a recap of the exciting Yellow Ribbon Project activities held in the past months - the "Moving HeARTS in the City" roving truck exhibition and Yellow Ribbon Project 20th Anniversary concert!

Moving towards the vision of a Nation Beyond Second Chances would remain a dream without the stellar support from the community. We hope that this issue will be an enjoyable and inspirational read for you!

RO2 Jolene Ngo
Editor, Prison News



**SINGAPORE
PRISON SERVICE**

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International Corrections and Prisons Association Annual Conference 2024 – Enabling Desistance: Beyond Recidivism



Minister for Digital Development and Information and Second Minister for Home Affairs Mrs Josephine Teo welcomed the ICPA delegates to the Conference.

International Corrections and Prisons Association Annual Conference 2024 – Enabling Desistance: Beyond Recidivism

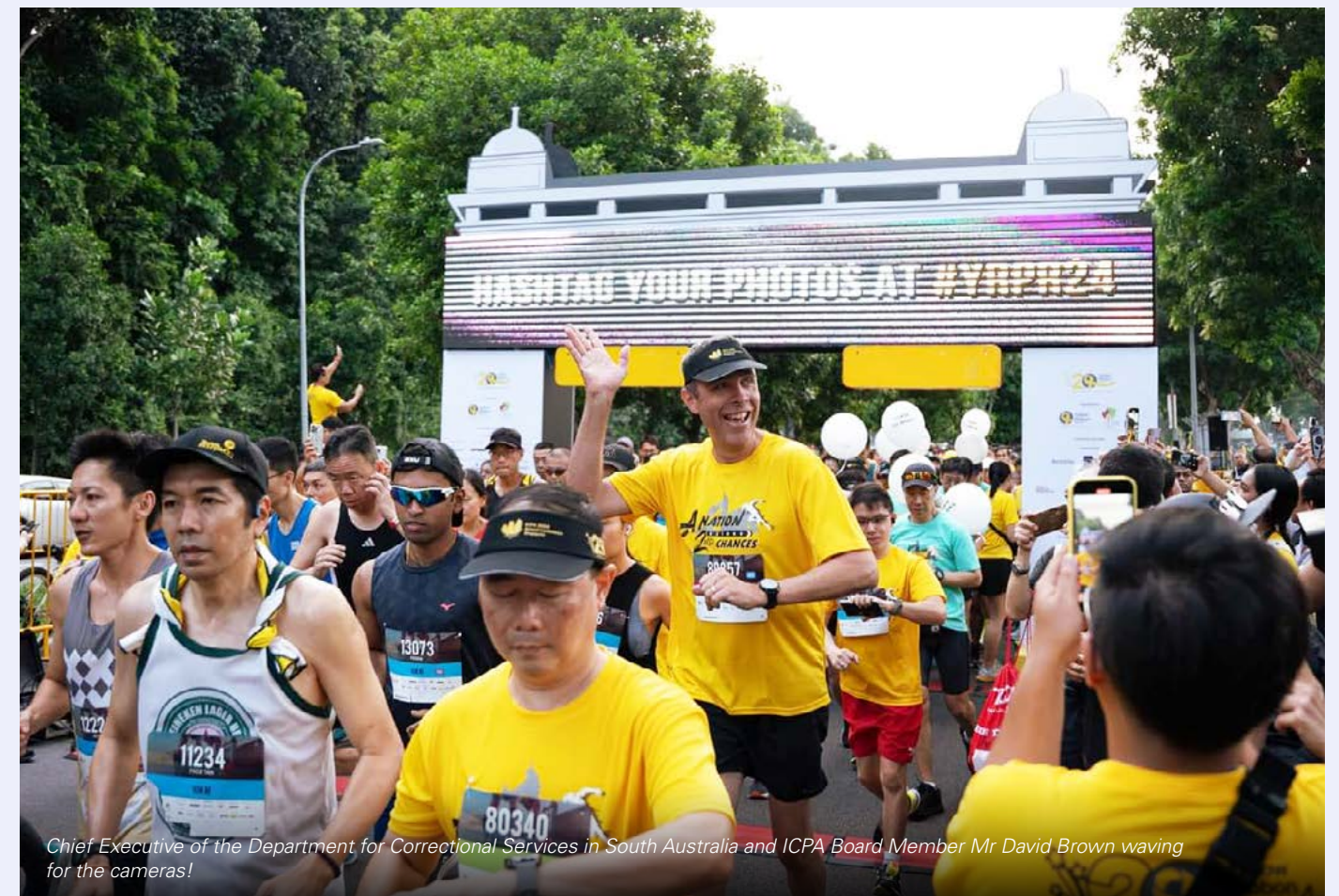
Welcoming over 800 participants from over 70 countries, SPS hosted the **International Corrections and Prisons Association (ICPA) Annual Conference 2024** at the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel, Singapore from 1 to 6 September 2024. The event brought together global correctional experts to share best practices and learn from one another, to advance the standards of corrections.



Reported by RO2 Gan Zi Xing

Delegates Participated in the Yellow Ribbon Prison Run

ICPA kicked off with over 100 ICPA delegates joining the **Yellow Ribbon Prison Run**, a flagship event of the Yellow Ribbon Project aimed at raising awareness and support for the reintegration of ex-offenders into society. Delegates from around the world laced up their running shoes, joining local participants in a display of solidarity and commitment to breaking down reintegration barriers for ex-offenders. The presence of international correctional professionals added a global dimension to the event, reinforcing the shared mission of supporting successful reintegration and fostering a more inclusive society.





ICPA delegates engaged in insightful discussions and were introduced to the latest innovations in corrections.



The First Day Of The Conference

The conference opened with a sense of anticipation with the presentation of the flags by the Singapore Prisons Emergency Action Response officers.

The annual gathering of corrections professionals, policymakers, academics and industry leaders served as a platform for sharing knowledge, best practices and innovative approaches to advance the field of corrections and prison management.

Participants engaged in various events including keynote speeches, plenary sessions and thematic workshop sessions. The diverse array of speakers from various jurisdictions provided a global perspective on shared challenges in reducing recidivism, promoting desistance and ensuring safer societies across the globe.

Exhibition booths were also set up around the conference venue to showcase latest innovations such as advanced body scanners and self-service medical dispensaries.

Host Welcome Reception

The day ended with a Host Welcome Reception at the ArtScience Museum. Attendees from across the globe had plenty of opportunities to engage in discussions about shared challenges and innovations in the field of corrections. Guests were also entertained by a dazzling LED drums performance as well as magic tricks from the roving magician, welcoming them to the sunny island of Singapore.



Guests were treated to a memorable evening with an exhilarating LED drums performance and a dazzling performance by the enigmatic roving magician!

ICPA Correctional Excellence Awards

Among the highlights of the week was the **ICPA Correctional Excellence Awards** which celebrated the outstanding progress and achievements that advanced humanitarian approaches and professional corrections. It was a proud and exciting moment for all when it was announced that the Yellow Ribbon Project (YRP) had received **The President's Award** in recognition of its exceptional contribution towards advancing corrections!



Chief Executive Officer of Yellow Ribbon Singapore Mr Sunny Lee and Commissioner of Prisons Ms Shie Yong Lee received The President's Award.

Yellow Ribbon Community Day

Day 4 of ICPA featured the Yellow Ribbon Community Day, where participants gathered to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the YRP. The event also saw the launch of the second volume of the commemorative e-publication, titled **Celebrating Second Chances**.

The e-publication showcases the inspiring life journeys of ex-offenders who have successfully broken free from the cycle of reoffending and the experiences of various support groups including employers, religious organisations and peer supporters that play a crucial role in transforming lives. The publication also illustrates how the movement gained traction beyond the shores of Singapore, gaining international recognition and being replicated in various forms across the globe!



ICPA delegates held up 'Yellow Ribbons' to commemorate the 20th year anniversary of the Yellow Ribbon Project!



Check out the QR codes on page 24 to access all 3 volumes of the commemorative e-publication!

Presentations by CARE Network partners and foreign regional counterparts

Our CARE Network partners and foreign regional counterparts also played an integral role in the celebration through sharing insights into their reintegration approaches, initiatives and best practices that have helped build a supportive environment for ex-offenders.



CARE Network partners, desistors and SPS's foreign regional counterparts from Thailand, The Philippines and Macao (China) shared experiences and best practices to support ex-offenders in their rehabilitation journey!

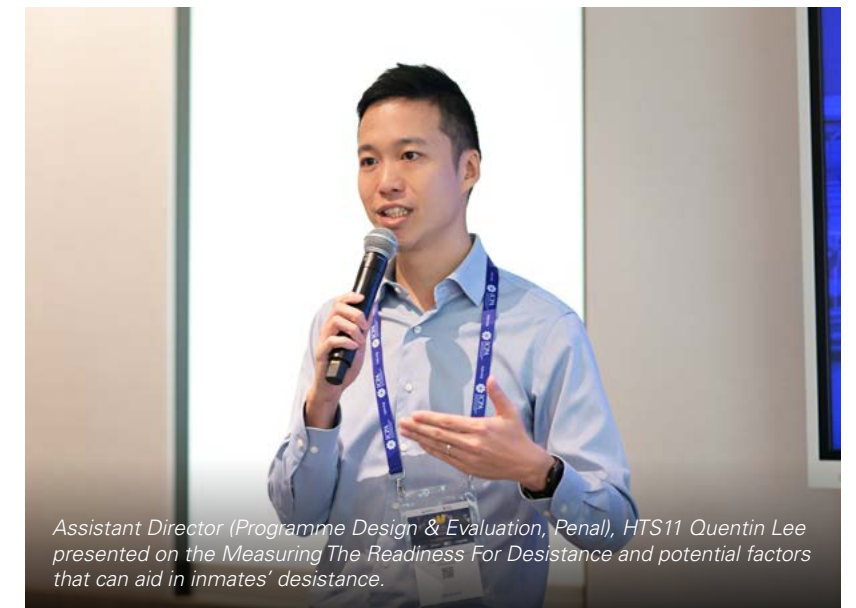
Presentations by SPS Officers

SPS officers also shared insights about their work with the audience, highlighting innovative strategies and initiatives that enabled SPS to achieve its mission in enforcing secure custody of offenders and rehabilitating them for a safer Singapore. SPS presented a total of 13 presentations including topics like the throughcare approach, data strategy, organisational culture, ground up rehabilitation initiatives and collaborations with community partners.

The exchange of ideas allowed SPS to share best practices and foster learning with the international community.



Officer-in-charge Correctional Unit, SUPT1 Goh Chee Sheng shared about the Learning Hub that provides opportunities for inmates to pursue pro-social activities to de-stress and for personal growth.



Assistant Director (Programme Design & Evaluation, Penal), HTS11 Quentin Lee presented on the Measuring The Readiness For Desistance and potential factors that can aid in inmates' desistance.



Assistant Director (Desistor Network), SUPT1 Louis Woo presented on Building Pro-Social Support Networks and the important role of desistors in aiding the successful reintegration of ex-offenders.



Director (Community Corrections Command), SAC Caroline Lim shared about the Singapore Correctional Model during a plenary session.

Facility Visits

The conference concluded on 6 September 2024 with visits to various Institutions in Clusters A, B and C, the Selarang Park Community Supervision Centre and Halfway Houses. Delegates saw firsthand how technology, rehabilitation, and community support were integrated to promote the successful reintegration of offenders.

The ICPA Annual Conference 2024 was a success, bringing together professionals from across the globe to engage in discussions, share innovative practices, and forge meaningful connections. The Yellow Ribbon Prison Run, keynote speaker plenaries, workshop sessions and facility visits left attendees inspired. As the conference ended, the overwhelming positive response from delegates highlighted the outstanding effort by all who were involved in the planning and execution of the event.



Delegates were given the rare opportunity to visit various facilities such as the prison institutions.

Dr Frank Porporino

Corrections and Criminal Justice Consultant, International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology (IACFP) and International Corrections & Prisons Association (ICPA)

The Yellow Ribbon Project is one of the most unique and important initiatives worldwide that shows if you put your mind to it, and really work at it, you can get the community engaged and support the work that we do.



Ms Mariana Martin

Deputy Commissioner General, Namibian Correctional Service

Singapore is one of the leaders in the practice of correctional services and we are really excited to learn about the innovations, the interventions and the practices.



We would like to extend our appreciation to all involved in contributing towards the organisation of the ICPA Annual Conference 2024. Thank you for going the extra mile to ensure that the delegates had the best possible experience in Singapore!



Shoutout to the ICPA Committee members and supporting staff for the excellent work done!

The ICPA provided SPS officers with the opportunity to share more about our work on an international stage. Let us take you through two ground up initiatives that aim to empower inmates, enhance their bonds with their families and contribute to a more conducive environment for rehabilitation!



Reported by MX12 Azhari Tay Bin Akber

Peer Supporter Academy (PSA)

Developing the PSA Training Programme

The PSA was built upon the success of the Empathy programme at Institution B1. Empathy is a wordplay between “empathy” and “therapy”, encouraging inmates to reflect on the impacts of their actions, develop empathy towards others and foster stronger interpersonal skills. Co-developed and co-delivered with Institution B1 officers, Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists and the pioneering group of Empathy Peer Supporters (ETPS), the PSA trains suitable inmates to be peer supporters in prison. The programme aims to motivate inmates to take personal ownership of their rehabilitation and to increase their employability potential through skills and education.



Senior Correctional Unit Officer RO2 Chua Yong An conducted an enlightening sharing about the use of Empathy in Institution B1.



Officers continue to support full-fledged peer supporters in facilitating circles.

To date, SPS has a total of 262 trained peer supporters across various institutions. Peer supporters are inmates who have a positive attitude, able to build a good rapport with others and are keen to learn how to support other inmates in their rehabilitation journey. They undergo two weeks of training, which includes character building topics and hands-on practice facilitating restorative circles. Upon graduation, these full-fledged peer supporters are empowered to facilitate circles and serve as role models to other inmates, thereby contributing to improving the overall culture of the Correctional Unit.

Positive Impact and Improvements to the Programme

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the PSA showed that inmates perceived the training content to be beneficial in training peer supporters and were able to apply aspects of the training beyond peer supporting, hence fostering their own intrapersonal growth. Specifically, inmates reported significant improvements in their communication skills, and better relationships with Correctional Unit Officers (CUOs) and their family. The inmates also valued the exemplary teamwork between the CUOs and inmate trainers who co-facilitated the training sessions. These findings highlighted transformative changes in peer supporters and their community of peers and stands as a testament to the potential of peer support in empowering inmates to construct a new, pro-social narrative identity, kickstarting their process of desistance from within the prison.

Capitalising on the success of the programme, the team has improved the programme through including in-depth training for peer supporters and offering specialisation through being a group facilitator or one-to-one peer supporter. Learning seminars by staff or external partners like the Facilitators Network Singapore have also been introduced to increase the quality of support.



Circles foster a sense of community which encourages participants share their experiences candidly.



Co-Executive Director of Lutheran Community Care Services Ms Kek Seow Ling shared the in-depth findings of Project Rekindle at ICPA.

Project Rekindle

Birth Of Project Rekindle

Project Rekindle is the brainchild of ASP2 Viknesswari Nadarajan. ASP2 Viknesswari currently holds the position of Team Leader Correctional Unit, overseeing the operational activities and supporting the rehabilitation of inmates in Institution A3. During this stint, she discovered that there were inmates who lacked family support and desired to rebuild the estranged relationships with their family. Spurred by her belief that family plays a pivotal role in providing strong pro-social support for these individuals in their rehabilitation journey, ASP2 Viknesswari spearheaded the creation of Project Rekindle.

Goal Of Project Rekindle

Relationships with family members and loved ones could be strained due to multiple incarcerations, or prolonged incarceration. Based on

Restorative Practice (RP) principles, Project Rekindle aims to rebuild the relationship between the inmate and his/her family members.

By tapping on the strengths of our community partners, Institution A3 collaborated with Lutheran Community Care Services (LCCS) to help repair estranged familial relationships and restore connections with family members.

Project Rekindle In Action

To kickstart the project, Institution A3 identified inmates who have strained relationships with their families and would like to rebuild their familial ties.

There are four components under Project Rekindle: (1) individual engagement, (2) family engagements, (3) groupwork session, and (4) facilitated family circles.

During family engagement component, social workers from LCCS would engage the inmate's family members to better understand their concerns, the changes they hoped to see in the inmate and how they can support the intended changes. The social workers would also use the engagement session to prepare family members for the family circles.

Once the inmate and his or her family are ready for the facilitated family circles, the family would be invited to the institution to attend the circle, facilitated by a Correctional Unit Officer (CUO) and social worker. The facilitated family circle served as a platform for the inmate and his or her family to talk through matters of concern, process the impact of the inmate's incarceration and identify expectations for change.



ASP2 Viknesswari Nadarajan delivered a powerful presentation about Project Rekindle at ICPA.



The groupwork sessions provided a safe space for inmates to understand themselves better, be mindful of their body and feelings, manage their emotions and develop prosocial skills.



LCCS social workers and ASP2 Viknesswari used a Restorative Practice-based approach to support inmates in rekindling relationships with their family members.

Positive Outcomes and Future Plans

The 15 inmates who have taken part in the Project Rekindle pilot have rebuilt the relationships with their families, and have been writing e-letters and receiving visits regularly since then.

Project Rekindle would be expanded to other prison institutions.



Although it was early, participants waited enthusiastically for the run to commence!

Yellow Ribbon Prison Run 2024: A Nation Beyond Second Chances



Reported by RO2 Vincent Lian

Let us bring you through the key highlights of the Yellow Ribbon Prison Run (YRPR) 2024 through the lens of the organising committee, our community partners and participants!

Themed **A Nation Beyond Second Chances**, this year's YRPR reflected a commitment to provide inmates and ex-offenders with transformative and lasting opportunities beyond second chances.

The theme highlighted the goal of creating an inclusive society where reintegration is supported by continuous development and community acceptance, ultimately striving for long-term positive change and empowerment.

Hear from our committee member – RO2 Chua Yee Shan

As the Programme (Carnival) 2IC for the Yellow Ribbon Prison Run 2024, RO2 Chua Yee Shan led her team to conceptualise, plan, and manage the carnival, exhibition zone and stage programme at the run's endpoint.

RO2 Yee Shan recounted that the most memorable and rewarding aspect of this role was seeing the Committee's hard work come to life and watching participants genuinely enjoy what they had created together.

"It was truly heartening to see participants interacting with desistors, hearing their personal stories and engaging in activities together. This direct engagement is one of the most powerful ways to advocate for second chances, as it fosters understanding and empathy between the public and those who have transformed their lives," RO2 Yee Shan shared.

"As I reflect on my first involvement in a major departmental committee, I am deeply grateful for the support and guidance from various committee members, whose contributions were instrumental in the overall success of the event. To my IC, ASP2 Muhammad Ayub, it has been a pleasure working alongside you on this journey. The experience has been incredibly fulfilling and enriching, and I am truly thankful for the great partnership!"



RO2 Yee Shan (left) and ASP2 Ayub (right) ensuring that YRPR 2024 ran smoothly!

Highlights of YRPR 2024

A Flurry of Activities at the Endpoint!

The carnival, stage performance and interactive exhibition zone at the run end point contributed to the lively atmosphere!

Carnival

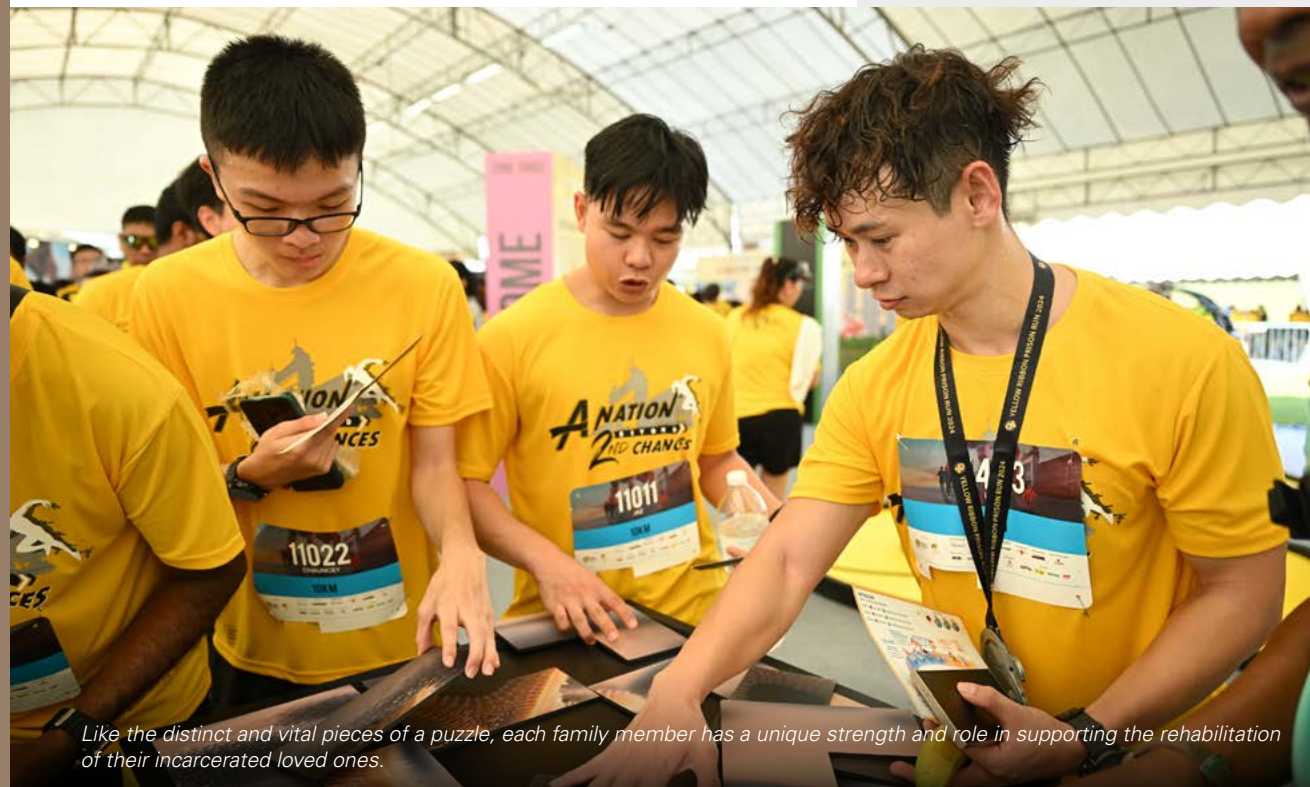
The carnival consisted of various booths and activities catered to participants of all ages!



This exciting game of snakes and ladders aimed to highlight the complexities of change, and the importance of comprehensive support systems and individual determination in the journey of desistance.



Participants pedaled hard for the Break The Cycle initiative - a community-inspired initiative that seeks to leverage cycling to disrupt the cycle of re-offending in Singapore!



Like the distinct and vital pieces of a puzzle, each family member has a unique strength and role in supporting the rehabilitation of their incarcerated loved ones.



The PAC band hyped up the crowd with a lively performance!

Stage Performances

Inmates from the Institution A5 Performing Arts Centre (PAC) Band and students from the LASALLE College of the Arts showed their support for the Yellow Ribbon Project's (YRP) cause through engaging musical performances!



Children sprinted with their best efforts!



Participants queued up to contribute to the structure and show their support towards the YRP!



Senior Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong presented the \$557,370 raised to the CARE Network!

Interactive Exhibition Zone

This year's exhibition focused on each participant's journey as an 'Agent of Change', emphasising their efforts to overcome doubt, build belief, and inspire hope for inmates, ex-offenders, and their families. Desistors who were stationed at the various booths engaged with participants, shared their success stories, and collaborated with them to complete the activities.

Kids Dash

This year's YRPR featured the inaugural 700m Kids Dash, which aimed to inspire the younger generation to learn about and support the cause of the YRP. The air bubbled with excitement as children as young as 6 years old dashed for second chances!

"Run for a Nation Beyond 2nd Chances" Challenge

Over 2,200 inmates and supervisees collectively ran a distance of 38,500 kilometres for the "Run for a Nation Beyond 2nd Chances" challenge! Corporate donors pledged \$5 for every kilometre completed to demonstrate their support for offenders' commitment to second chances.

The funds raised from the challenge and a joint fundraising effort by the Singapore After-Care Association, Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association, NeuGen and Yellow Ribbon Fund amounted to a total donation of \$557,370 to the CARE Network. The funds will be used to continue supporting rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for ex-offenders and their families!

Hear from our Community Partner - Angela!

Angela is a Committee Member of Community Outreach at the Foundation of Rotary Clubs (Singapore) Ltd (FRCS). Her role includes planning and executing outreach programmes at Institution S2.

Participating in YRPR this year held a special meaning for her as it marked a significant shift from her past roles as runner to member of the outreach committee and enabled her to contribute to the YRP's 20th Anniversary celebrations. Angela was deeply honoured and grateful to FRCS Board of Director, Ms Henny Goh Hwee Hoon, for tasking her to lead the Pastel Nagomi Art booth as it has enabled Angela to serve the community in a new way and empowered Institution S2 supervisees to lead art projects.

Angela extended her heartfelt appreciation to FRCS's community partners, especially the Pastel Nagomi Art instructors for their unwavering support and dedication. Together, FRCS and its partners came together to piece a beautiful life full of meaning and purpose, reflecting the spirit of the Yellow Ribbon Project (YRP) and a shared commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.



Angela poses in front of the art piece put together by YRPR participants!

I would like to share three key messages to encourage offenders and desistors on their reintegration journey:

1 *There is strength in growth, embrace the journey of self-improvement and remember that each challenge is a chance to grow stronger.*

2 *Gather your inner strength to overcome obstacles and build a positive path forward.*

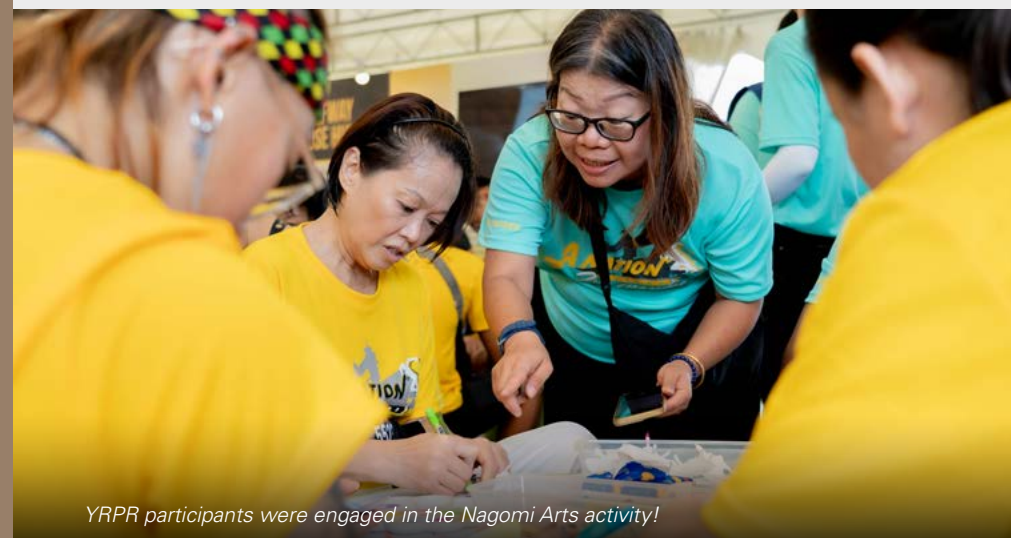
3 *Every Pastel Nagomi Art piece you create is a journey of self-discovery. Celebrate the joy of creating and the calm it brings to your mind and spirit.*

For those on the journey of recovery, my thoughts are this:

Our past does not define us, but what we do from this moment onward will. Let's embrace each day as a new opportunity to grow, to learn and to become the best version of ourselves. Let's surround ourselves with people who uplift us and never be afraid to reach out for help when needed.

Every small step forward is a victory, no matter how insignificant it may seem. Recovery isn't just about staying away from what's bad for us; it's about moving towards what's good, what's fulfilling and what brings us peace.

We're writing a new chapter in our lives and it's up to us to decide what kind of story it will be. Let our own stories serve as a message of hope to others.



YRPR participants were engaged in the Nagomi Arts activity!



"YRPR is more than a run; it's a celebration of community, second chances, and the power of change, reminding us that we don't walk or run alone," Gopal reflected.

Hear from a Desistor – Gopal!

The Desistor Network (DN) helps formerly incarcerated individuals reintegrate into society. DN provides resources and training to empower desistors and foster a supportive community to kickstart ex-offenders' transformation journey.

Gopal is a Senior Counsellor at the Centre for Psychotherapy (C4P). He first joined YRPR after his release from incarceration in 2022, marking a pivotal moment in his life. This year, he participated in YRPR for the third time and eagerly took on the 10km run. Gopal felt that YRPR is a day to remember those still incarcerated and helped Gopal to reflect on his own reintegration journey. Each step in the 10km run symbolized his progress toward restoration, resilience, and redemption. Crossing the finish line reminds him that the journey of self-improvement and transformation is ongoing.

Talking to the participants!

Let us hear what the YRP means to the YRPR participants and some words of encouragement they wish to share to ex-offenders and desistors!



Jielin feeling fulfilled after completing her first YRPR run!

Jielin

“ This is my first time joining YRPR and my first official 10km run! I think it’s pretty interesting to run inside the Prison, and the run is also for a good cause. I have done other races, but doing one for a good cause is something very different.

Life is like a race, no matter how much hills and stones you face, just like the race, you will always get to the end. Don’t give up!”

Favian

“ This is my first time joining YRPR! I picked up running this year, and I wanted to join more running events. I got to know that my friends are running for a good cause in this event, so I thought “Why not?” and decided to participate as well!

Life is about testing your limits to create better opportunities for yourself. Regardless of what others say about you, what truly matters is how you perceive yourself and the value you bring to society.”



Favian was all fueled up for the run!



Minister for Digital Development and Information and Second Minister for Home Affairs Mrs Josephine Teo led the participants in taking a memorable selfie!



Terrence with the COL mascot!

Terrence

“ I have been joining the run for the past 6-7 years. Second chances are very important. Everybody had done something wrong before, be it children or adults.

Don’t be afraid, go out and find whatever you can do.”



Runners posed excitedly with this year’s unique medals after the run!

CARE Network:

Providing Continued Support for Inmates, Ex-Offenders and Their Families

To celebrate the inaugural Yellow Ribbon Community Day and the stellar efforts put in by our community partners to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders, we interviewed staff and volunteers from the CARE Network agencies to shed some light on their daily work and their motivations to build a community that supports second chances!



Reported by HTS12 Wong Shining

Gopalakrishnan Parthasarathy, Incare Coordinator Volunteer, Muneeswaran Community Services (MCS)

Despite a demanding work schedule, Incare Coordinator Volunteer Krishnan dedicates his off days to counselling inmates and supervisees, and befriending inmates towards the end of their sentences - a crucial transition period. Beyond his work with inmates, Krishnan assists MCS with recruiting new volunteers, organising training courses for volunteers and coordinating the distribution of snacks to inmates during festive seasons. His commitment aligns with MCS's mission of empowering the community through social enterprise, partnerships, and building a strong network of volunteers.



Krishnan has volunteered with MCS since 2020.

Krishnan is inspired by his mentor, MCS counsellor Mr Paari S/O Perumal. He believes that not all offenders are born criminals and their circumstances can change them. His friends and family also motivate him, reminding him of the precious opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives.

Driven by empathy, Krishnan aims to address the unique needs of each inmate. "Some inmates are mentally stressed and need extra care, while others seek spiritual upliftment," he explained. His deep, heartfelt conversations aim to provide more than just spiritual guidance but also practical advice to help inmates develop a positive mindset and grow personally. Krishnan's efforts have already shown results. He recalls an inmate who sought guidance on spiritual practices to improve his mental health. "After a few weeks, I noticed a significant change and he seemed more refreshed and relieved," Krishnan shared.



Congratulations to Krishnan for receiving an award during the SPS Volunteer Awards Ceremony 2023!

Krishnan aims to foster long-term positive change by helping inmates shift their mindset, build resilience, and break the cycle of re-offending. Krishnan encourages others to join him in this meaningful work. "Starting can be daunting, but every small step counts," he advised, inviting the community to contribute time, skills, or resources to create a more inclusive society.

Vincent Tang, Volunteer, Care Community Services Society (CCSS)

Since 2016, Vincent has dedicated himself to volunteering with the CCSS Active Ageing Centre (AAC), where he assists with organising activities, befriending the seniors and conducting home visits to check in on the seniors' well-being.

In 2023, Vincent expanded his scope of volunteering work to provide support to incarcerated offenders. Vincent has transformed from an ex-offender to a guiding light of chance, and often shares his personal journey with elderly inmates, hoping to inspire hope and guide them away from re-offending. Due to his past, Vincent is able to empathise with their fears and anxieties surrounding reintegration.

"I acknowledged their difficulties and shared how I managed to overcome mine. I want them to know that they are not alone and change is possible," he said.

Vincent's candidness resonates with the inmates, who are curious about his transformation. "They enjoyed talking to me, asking about my past and how I became who I am now," he says. Vincent emphasised the importance of family acceptance, positive social circles, and employment in reducing recidivism. "If they have these three forms of external support, the likelihood of returning to prison is much lower," he asserted.



Vincent (right) and other volunteers helping to distribute care packages to elderly.



Vincent (top) bringing elderly from the CCSS AAC on excursions.

Vincent also attributed his transformation to his perseverance and faith. "I believe God gave me a second chance," he said. Now, his focus is on paying it forward, ensuring that elderly ex-offenders have the guidance and support they need to rebuild their lives.

Vincent's mission is simple yet profound: "Given my limits, if I can help one or two offenders, that's enough." He hopes that society continues to be more compassionate and offer ex-offenders the chance to reintegrate and thrive.

He invites those passionate about aiding the inmate population to join him, emphasising that anyone can contribute. "As long as you have the heart to help, there are different platforms where you can contribute," he assured.



Kavitha plays a key role in supporting the Prison Reintegration Programme!

Kavitha Selvarasu, Senior Manager, Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA)

Kavitha, a Senior Manager with SINDA, plays a key role in supporting the Prison Reintegration Programme, an programme that was developed in 2020 by SINDA and SPS to uplift and support inmates as well as their families. SINDA recognised that incarcerated individuals and their families are often overlooked and faced barriers due to the stigma surrounding imprisonment.

“I engage inmates during the sessions to build their confidence in reintegrating into society and reassure them that support for their families are available,” Kavitha shared. Families are often left to face the stigma and challenges that come with having a loved one incarcerated, and Kavitha’s dedication to supporting them is clear. “By focusing on this group, I feel like I’m contributing to a mission that truly changes lives,” she explained.

Kavitha is motivated by the positive outcomes that the programme has helped to achieve. “There was a young mother who was incarcerated while she was still a university student,” Kavitha recalled. “Her relationship with her family became strained, and her toddler had to be placed in foster care. But with SINDA’s intervention, her family eventually took over the care of the child. After her release, she was able to reunite with them and continue her education. It was heartwarming to see how our support made a real difference,” she shared.

SINDA had recently launched the Prison TrueCare Re-start Package, which provides newly released Indian inmates with resources to support their reintegration journey. Kavitha believes this initiative will be a crucial step forward in supporting ex-inmates and their families.

“The challenges these individuals face don’t end with their release. But by offering them continued support, we can help them rebuild their lives and reduce the risk of reoffending. It’s about giving them hope and the tools they need for a better future,” Kavitha asserted.

Kavitha’s work extends far beyond the individuals behind bars—it touches the lives of their families and communities, creating a ripple effect that contributes to lasting change. “Incarceration affects more than just the person serving time. Their children, spouses, and parents are often the silent victims,” she concluded. “If we as a community can come together to support them, we can truly make a difference—one life at a time.”



Kavitha providing family members of the incarcerated offenders with the Prison TrueCare Re-start Package.



Inspiring Continuous Growth: CW1 Mohammad Suhaimi

CW1 Mohammad Suhaimi, graduated in October 2024 with a Bachelor's degree in Public Safety and Security with a Minor in Crisis Management from the Singapore University of Social Sciences. Let us take you through his inspirational learning journey!



*Reported by MX12 Azhari
Tay Bin Akber*

CW1 Suhaimi joined SPS in 2012 and served as a Correctional Unit Officer (CUO) and Work Programme Officer in Cluster A. During his university semester breaks, CW1 Suhaimi was attached to the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Division and the Staff Development Division, which provided him with practical experience in managing and implementing initiatives for inmates as well as staff. Today, CW1 Suhaimi is deployed to Institution B1 and his main duties include overseeing case management for inmates, processing their referrals and managing incare programmes like religious counselling and vocational courses. Beyond his core duties as a CUO, he supports efforts in Institution B1 to improve efficiency and ensure consistency across various operational processes. CW1 Suhaimi is also a dedicated member of the

institution's Staff Well-being and Engagement Committee and is committed to fostering a more positive work environment in SPS!

Utilising Opportunities Provided By SPS To Pursue Higher Education

CW1 Suhaimi decided to pursue the Public Safety and Security degree programme as he wanted to learn more about areas related to the field of corrections and further advance his career. This degree programme stood out to him as it covered a broad range of topics that would provide him with the theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to play a more active role in shaping policies and practices within SPS, and contribute more effectively to the safety and security of the correctional environment. CW1 Suhaimi also acknowledged that studying offered networking opportunities that were valuable for his professional growth and career advancement.

To enable himself to focus on his studies without the added pressure of managing financial commitments, CW1 Suhaimi decided to apply for a scholarship under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). CW1 Suhaimi first found out about the scholarship through email broadcasts and word of mouth. CW1 Suhaimi also heard positive feedback from other colleagues, which further motivated him to apply for the scholarship. “The insights and encouragement from my colleagues played a significant role in my decision to pursue this opportunity, as it seemed like a natural step to support my educational and career goals,” CW1 Suhaimi reflected.

CW1 Suhaimi made concerted efforts to prepare for the scholarship interview sessions. The mock interview questions and feedback provided by his colleagues enabled CW1 Suhaimi to gain valuable insight on how to present himself during interviews. The scholarship application process spanned several months, which was adequate for CW1 Suhaimi to carefully prepare and present a strong case as to why he was a suitable candidate.



CW1 Suhaimi and his course mates were all smiles after completing their final exams!

up with the pace and overwhelming volume of coursework. He experimented and developed new learning strategies to suit his lifestyle and cognitive abilities.

“The trial-and-error process made me question my decision to study again, but eventually I was able to adapt,” CW1 Suhaimi reflected. He credits his understanding partner as the strength behind his perseverance.

How His Studies Value Adds To His Work and Next Steps

CW1 Suhaimi’s studies equipped him with a better understanding of the complex issues surrounding public safety, crisis management and security that could be applied to his work in SPS. His minor in Crisis Management enabled him to gain valuable skills related to handling emergencies, risk assessments, and decision-making under pressure. “These skills are crucial in the dynamic and sometimes unpredictable environment of working in SPS, where quick and effective responses to crises are paramount,” CW1 Suhaimi shared.

The degree programme also emphasised the importance of leadership, ethics, and collaboration, which is critical in managing teams, working with diverse stakeholders and fostering a positive work environment. The degree programme has also honed CW1 Suhaimi’s research and analytical abilities, enabling him to evaluate current practices, identify areas for improvement and implement evidence-based solutions within SPS.

With the new knowledge that he has gained from the degree programme, CW1 Suhaimi looks forward to developing and implementing more innovative rehabilitation programmes and lead projects that enhance operational efficiency and staff development.

Challenges Faced and The Importance of Strong Support

One of the key challenges CW1 Suhaimi faced in school was adjusting to the changes in learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He had to use online platforms for his studies, which was a steep learning curve due to his need to familiarise himself with digital tools, manage virtual classes and navigate online resources effectively. The use of remote learning also meant that there were less face-to-face interactions with classmates and instructors, making him feel isolated at times and finding it challenging for him to seek immediate help. Fortunately, CW1 Suhaimi was always able to reach out to have a group of classmates from SPS when he needed to discuss the assignments.

The academic rigour required for this studies posed as another key challenge. It took time for CW1 Suhaimi to rebuild the discipline and study habits needed to keep



CW1 Suhaimi and his course mates attended a culture sharing in Australia, one of the many eye-opening experiences he attained during the course of his study and the available networking opportunities.



CW1 Suhaimi believes he will be a more effective contributor to SPS's mission of maintaining security and rehabilitation within the correctional system.

A Culture of Continuous Learning

As SPS embarks on Corrections 2030, continuous learning and professional development are key to staying ahead of evolving demands and technological advancements. Educational opportunities provide staff with the latest knowledge and skills necessary to enable them to adapt to new roles and responsibilities as the organisation evolves. Building a culture of continuous improvement and innovation supports SPS's mission to provide effective rehabilitation and ensure public safety.

Reflecting on his journey with SPS, CW1 Suhaimi said: "The journey has been nothing short of enriching and transformative. I attribute much of this growth to the positive and supportive environment fostered by the exceptional team of officers I have had the privilege to work alongside. Their dedication, and shared commitment have been instrumental in shaping my professional development and reinforcing my passion for the work we do."

"Staff should consider applying for the scholarship as it represents a valuable opportunity to advance their education and career within SPS, while alleviating financial constraints. SPS is dedicated to investing in the professional growth of employees and enabling them to attain advanced knowledge and skills that are directly relevant to their roles in SPS," CW1 Suhaimi shared.



The Roving Truck was opened for public viewing!

Yellow Ribbon Project Events and Activities

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Yellow Ribbon Project (YRP)! We share more about the exciting campaigns and activities held in the past months to celebrate YRP's 20th anniversary!



Reported by RO2 Joel Ng and RO2 Jolene Ngo

Moving HeARTs in the City

"Moving HeARTs in the City" was a 5-week long roving art truck exhibition held from 1 August 2024 to 1 September 2024. Themed "Our Journey, Our Hope," the exhibition featured 41 creative artworks done by inmates and ex-offenders.

Minister for Transport, Mr Chee Hong Tat, graced the launch event at LASALLE College of the Arts as the Guest-of-Honour on 31 July 2024. For the first time, the Yellow Ribbon Project art exhibition was held in an art truck that roves around Singapore to increase public accessibility to inmates and ex-offenders' artworks. Members of the public also had the opportunity to adopt the art pieces and

contribute to the Yellow Ribbon Fund, the first national charitable fund devoted entirely towards the development and implementation of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for inmates, ex-offenders and their families since 2004.



The truck made its presence at multiple schools, shopping malls and was accompanied by art workshops facilitated by Green Haven Halfway House and Rise Above Halfway House.

The artworks provided insights into the efforts and emotions inmates and ex-offenders experience throughout their rehabilitation journey. Their artworks emphasised the theme of hope as well as their yearning for a second chance in life.



The exhibition would not have been possible without the support from curator Mr Zak Lo (right), and art mentors Mr Barry Yeow (left), Ms Evangeline Ang (center) and Mr Ridhuan Jailer (not pictured).

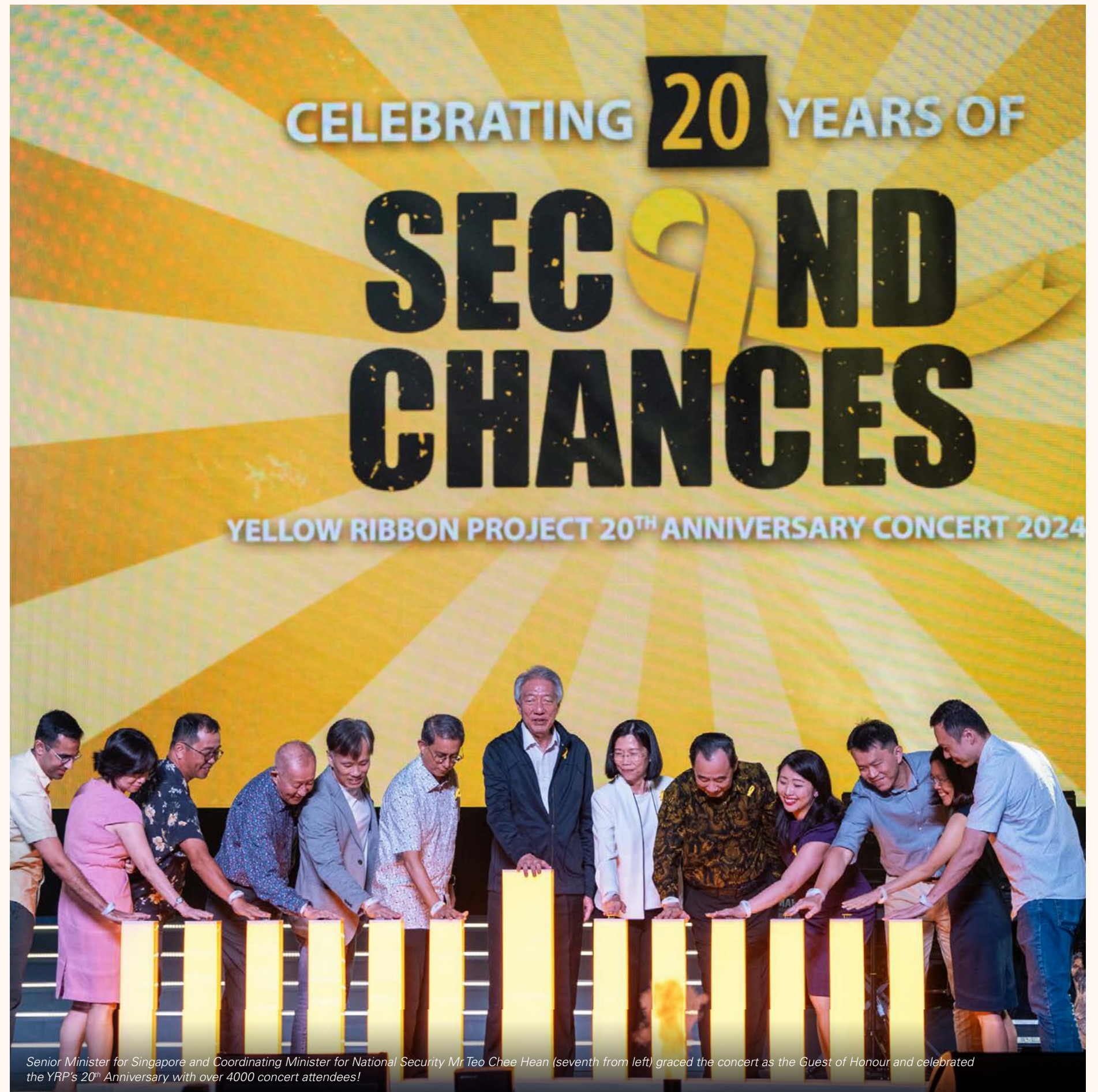
Yellow Ribbon Concert 2024 - Celebrating 20 Years of Second Chances!

The YRP 20th anniversary celebrations concluded with the Celebrating 20 Years of Second Chances concert, held on 17 October 2024 at The Star Performing Arts Theatre. The air was electric with energy as over 4000 attendees joined SPS and YRSG in celebrating hope, resilience and second chances!

Senior Minister for Singapore and Coordinating Minister for National Security Mr Teo Chee Hean graced the event as the Guest of Honour and launched the new YRP tagline: **"We Are Each Other's Second Chances"**. The new tagline emphasised how individuals, organisations, employers and the larger community can help ex-offenders in their reintegration journeys and enable them to become contributing members of society.



Yellow lights lit up the ground floor of the theatre to form a Yellow Ribbon!



Senior Minister for Singapore and Coordinating Minister for National Security Mr Teo Chee Hean (seventh from left) graced the concert as the Guest of Honour and celebrated the YRP's 20th Anniversary with over 4000 concert attendees!

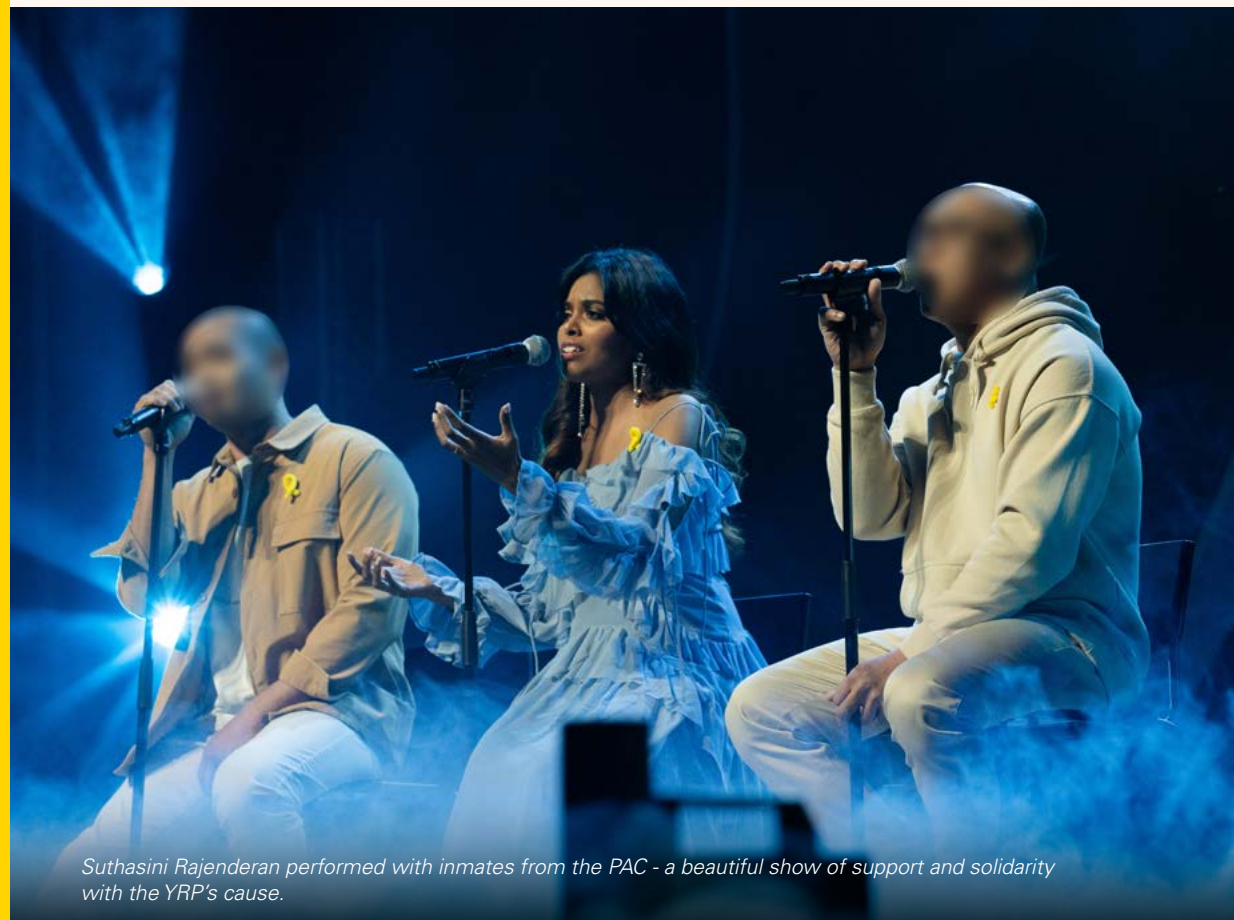


Taufik Batisah (in blue) performed a song titled "Trustfall," whose lyrics resonated deeply with those facing the challenge of rebuilding their lives after incarceration.



The skit performed by local Mediacorp artistes was an extension of the 2005 Singaporean comedy film "One More Chance," which shared the difficulties faced by ex-offenders upon their release.

This year's concert featured a star studded lineup of local singers including Taufik Batisah, Hady Mirza, Tanya Chua and Joanna Dong. The songs performed acknowledged the challenges ex-offenders faced in rebuilding their lives and delivered powerful messages on the importance of resilience, acceptance and love in supporting ex-offenders' reintegration journey. Local singer Suthasini Rajenderan collaborated with inmates from the Performing Arts Centre (PAC) band to perform an original song titled "Love Can Heal". The song was written by an ex-offender and expressed how a simple smile or moment of kindness can transform one's darkest days.



Suthasini Rajenderan performed with inmates from the PAC - a beautiful show of support and solidarity with the YRP's cause.



Dancers from Plus Point collaborated with local singer-songwriter Aisyah Aziz to deliver a heartfelt rendition of "Titanium."

In addition to musical performances, the concert also featured a skit by local artistes Jeremy Chan, Chua Enlai and Mark Lee. Although lighthearted and playful in manner, the skit delivered the message that relapse is not the end and it is okay to ask for help. Plus Point—a dance crew set up for at-risk youth by ex-offender Milah in 2012—accompanied local artistes in delivering a powerful performance to the song “Titanium”, encouraging ex-offenders to rise above challenges and criticisms, and stay resilient through their reintegration journey.

The concert concluded with all performers singing the theme song for the YRP’s 20th anniversary. Titled “You and I”, the song was a powerful anthem of resilience and connection, and emphasised how we are each other’s second chances.

The concert has been recorded and will be hosted online on MeWatch until 2 November 2025. Scan this QR code to check out the concert and relive the key highlights with us!



<https://go.gov.sg/yrcconcertmeWATCH>



It's a wrap! Thank you to all the performers for the exhilarating display of performances!

Commemorative E-publication

To commemorate the YRP’s 20th Anniversary, a three part commemorative e-publication themed **“Yellow Ribbon: Our Journey of Second Chances”** had been released throughout the year. We are delighted to share the third and final volume of the commemorative e-publication with you!

Titled **“We Are Each Other’s Second Chances”**, the final volume showcases the stories of inmates and ex-offenders, their various talents and contributions back to the community. We hope that you have enjoyed reading about the 20th anniversary celebrations and learnt more about the various initiatives and campaigns by the YRP. Let us continue to support YRP to champion second chances, beyond the next 20 years!



Volume 1



Volume 2



Volume 3

Scan the QR codes to check out all 3 volumes of the commemorative e-publication!