

## Spreading the Season's Joy with My Schoolbag

CapitaMalls Asia gets underprivileged children in Singapore and China ready for school

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Hurray! A new schoolbag filled with goodies for the new school year!

Ho ho ho! CapitaMalls Asia Limited (CMA) played Santa with its donation of S\$320,000 to more than 11,000 underprivileged children in Singapore and China under its signature annual "My Schoolbag" corporate social responsibility programme this year. Following on the success of CMA's "Back to School" event in Singapore in June last year, the event has been rebranded as "My Schoolbag" to present it from the perspective of the recipients – the underprivileged children.

In Singapore, 1,000 underprivileged children identified by the Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC), MENDAKI and the Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA) were each pampered with a shopping spree at one of the four shopping malls managed by CMA, namely Junction 8, Lot One, Tampines Mall and Plaza Singapura.

CDAC administrator Janet Ng said, "The children have been looking forward to this event. They enjoyed themselves thoroughly. Their parents will be so surprised when they see the amount of goodies their children took home! To receive the school bag, shoes, stationery and snacks – is truly a financial relief for the family."

Each fun-filled day started with a 15-minute educational and interactive skit that was specially-customised by The Players' Theatre, a children's theatre company. The children were thoroughly tickled by the amusing characters on stage.



Children learnt about accepting differences in friendship through the educational skit

### **On Your Mark, Get Set, Shop!**

The shopping spree began thereafter. Some 300 CMA and CapitaLand staff volunteered to accompany the children to purchase S\$110 worth of school and daily necessities each, using CapitaVouchers purchased with funds donated by CapitaLand Hope Foundation (CHF), the philanthropic arm of CapitaLand.

“Some of them commented that it’s the first time they’ve seen a voucher!” said staff volunteer Janet Yeo, who is an Administrative Assistant from the Finance Department at CapitaLand Limited. “Though they complained that their goodie bags were very heavy, they were very happy deep down inside their hearts. I nearly cried when one of the kids commented that his father had never bought Milo for them in their lives. You really feel fortunate and appreciative of what you have.”

Eileen Lee, Investor Relations Senior Executive of CapitaLand Limited, who volunteered for both years, shared her sentiments. “It was a very meaningful event and it really touched my heart to see them smile with joy when they received all these things to get ready for school,” she said.



Staff volunteers Janet Yeo (left picture, extreme right) and Eileen Lee (right picture, third from left) enjoyed a fulfilling time making a difference to the children’s lives

Laden with goodies, a new schoolbag and a new pair of school shoes for the coming school year, children looked overwhelmed with the rare indulgence and excitedly rummaged through their windfall.

“I love the new shoes and the biscuits,” exclaimed Sharmaine Goh from Geylang Methodist School. Primary three student Khadijah from Woodlands Primary School beamed brightly as she showed off her new colour pencils. “I am very happy and excited today because I’m all ready for the new school year.” Needless to say, children were all smiles, too, when they were treated to a sumptuous lunch after the shopping.





From shoes to snacks, it's time to shop with CapitaVouchers!

Vignes Rangarajoo, an Executive from SINDA was all praise for the event. "It was very systematic and well-organised. The shopping was a very good experience for the children as they get to choose what they want. It definitely made a difference to their lives," she said.

One parent, who declined to be named, was present at the event and visibly grateful for CMA's generous gesture at a timely juncture. "For a single-income family like mine, this has come in very handy especially at the end of the year when there are so many bills to pay. This means a lot for the children; they get everything they need from nutrition to school bag to hygiene care. I salute the organisers and hope they will keep on organising this event," she shared.

On top of the shopping spree, CMA sponsored an additional S\$20,000 worth of CapitaVouchers for the children to take home for their future shopping needs, making a total donation of S\$130,000 in Singapore. Christmas has certainly come early for these children and their families!

### Touching Lives through Giving

For the first time, "My Schoolbag" programme was held in China from September 1 to 13 2010, which signified the start of the country's new school year. Across 129 schools in 18 cities, more than 10,000 underprivileged first-year primary school pupils received new schoolbags containing stationery. This was made possible with CMA's donation of S\$190,000, in partnership with the China Children and Teenagers' Fund.



Children in China could hardly contain their excitement when they received the bags full of love and warmth

The programmes in Singapore and China were made possible with funding of S\$300,000 in total from CHF.

"CapitaMalls Asia is pleased to expand our My Schoolbag corporate social responsibility programme this year, to benefit more than 11,000 underprivileged children in Singapore and China. As the leading shopping mall developer, owner and manager in Asia with 89 malls in 49 cities in Singapore, China, Malaysia, Japan and India, our staffs are happy to support an initiative that touches the people in the communities that they serve, as our shopping malls are an integral part of those communities. My

Schoolbag is part of our commitment to contribute back to society, and we aim to roll it out in all the markets that we operate in and run the programme on an annual basis,” Mr Lim Beng Chee, CEO of CapitaMalls Asia said.

“My Schoolbag” has certainly brought more than just goodies to the children; it touched their lives and let them experienced first-hand, the true warmth of the season of giving.