

A LOOK BACK AT 2019

CCT tenants share their highlights for the year and what they look forward to in 2020

DEC
2019

STAFF VOLUNTEERISM

Why it pays to encourage employees to give back

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QUARTERLY FOR CAPITALAND COMMERCIAL TRUST TENANTS



Spark Joy

CCT Gifts of Joy brought fun and laughter to young ones at Rainbow Centre and spread the spirit of goodwill among tenants

W

hen Rhea Pestana's colleagues at **GIC**, Capital Tower, asked her to participate in the annual CCT Gifts of Joy, she didn't hesitate. "I wanted to be able to do something that would help kids with special needs."

For the mother of two, this event, which provides an opportunity for **CapitaLand Commercial Trust (CCT)** tenants to contribute to special needs children at Rainbow Centre Singapore, was especially important. Her 11-year-old son, Yvan, is a student at Rainbow Centre Yishun Park, having been diagnosed with autism at a young age. She explained, "Yvan knows he would get something from this event at the year-end, so he has been expecting it. I know if my child is happy, I would be happy." ▶

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Continued from cover

Earlier, the students at Rainbow Centre's schools in Yishun and Margaret Drive had given their wishes, which ranged from clothing, necessities, shoes, schoolbags to toys. For example, a six-year-old student wanted a new pair of shoes, while another decided on a cause-and-effect toy. CCT tenants were invited to "adopt" all 781 wishes by fulfilling them, dropping their gifts at collection points set up across CCT properties.

Buying gifts was just one part of CCT's Gifts of Joy. Tenants were also invited to volunteer their time to help wrap and distribute gifts to the beneficiaries and/or take the students on a fun day out at the Children's Biennale art exhibition at the National Gallery.

Ms Pestana and her colleagues were among the tenants who volunteered to wrap and distribute gifts at Rainbow Centre Yishun Park on 4 November. It was all hands on deck as they worked together to transport the gifts collected from Capital Tower, Raffles City Tower and Six Battery Road into a conference room at the school. It was a happy chaos here — the snips of gift papers, the ripping of sticky tapes, the folding of wrapping papers, and the excited chatter of volunteers as they methodically worked the morning away, getting the gifts ready before surprising the students with them later.

First-time volunteer Phay Kia Meau, who works at GIC, found the experience meaningful. She enthused, "It's nice to see that a day's work can brighten (the children's) day."

As for Yvan, he got his gift personally from his mum, Rhea.

A day out to remember

Additionally, over 200 CCT tenants volunteered their time by chaperoning

SPREADING JOY AROUND

Held annually, CCT Gifts of Joy aims to bring the tenant community together and spread the spirit of giving to the underprivileged. For the third consecutive year, CCT worked with Rainbow Centre, which serves children with special needs. For every wish that tenants fulfilled, CapitaLand Hope Foundation, the philanthropic arm of CapitaLand, donated \$10 to Rainbow Centre. Through CCT's Live It Up! and Gifts of Joy, a total of \$28,120 was raised for the school's Empowerment, Development and Innovation (EDI) Fund, which supports new initiatives to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.



Volunteers gave their time by helping to wrap gifts for beneficiaries and taking them on a visit to the Children's Biennale at the National Gallery

Rainbow Centre's 150 students to the Children's Biennale on 8 and 11 November. Ms Preeti Razdan of **Diageo**, One George Street, who volunteered with four of her colleagues, witnessed how the teachers coped with managing students with special needs. She was thankful to be able to participate and said, "You count your blessings even more and appreciate all the help you can get; it gives you solace in your heart to do something for these kids."

Similarly, Mr Edwin Lee and Ms Yang Wai Wai of the **Singapore Institute of Directors**, Capital Tower, said they found the activity meaningful, as it allowed them to bond with their co-workers and make new friends. Said Ms Yang, "We were unsure how things would turn out at first, but it's been a joy seeing everyone stepping out to help in the end. We've learnt a lot about one another."

But more than that, the volunteers also found new purpose in their interaction with the students. Mr Lee remarked, "I've learnt that there is much more we need to know to

"CCT Gifts of Joy gave me the opportunity to do my part in making a difference to those who are in need and lack necessities like school shoes and diapers."

- Sarah Han, **Linklaters**, One George Street

"CCT Gifts of Joy is a wonderful effort and has helped busy office folk like myself contribute to the community in a convenient way."

- Sandra Cheah, **Nikko AM**, Asia Square Tower 2

understand how to interact with children with special needs, and I appreciate how centres like Rainbow Centre help us with this."

GIC's Ms Pestana said the sacrifice of getting up early and the time spent volunteering was nothing compared to the reward of being part of something meaningful. She shared that through CCT Gifts of Joy, many volunteers realised that they had taken things like speech and mobility for granted.

She added, "This event showed us the importance of having an inclusive society — one that doesn't neglect children with special needs." ■

Why invest in staff Volunteerism

The most valuable part of a company is its people, and providing them with rewarding experiences such as volunteering has its perks — not just for employees but for the company as a whole

An active employee volunteer programme is not only a good way to give back to the community — it can also provide returns to the company. Volunteering in Singapore is on the rise, too. According to the 2018 Individual Giving Survey conducted by the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre, volunteerism in Singapore has grown from one in 10 individuals (9 per cent) in 2000 to one in three (35 per cent) in 2016. The study also gave an insight to Singaporeans' positive attitude towards giving — seven in 10 showed willingness to volunteer.

Here are five reasons why employee volunteerism is a smart investment.

1. Boosts company culture

Company volunteer events provide a great opportunity for co-workers to engage and interact with one another outside of work. It allows them to develop and nurture positive relationships that go beyond the usual day-to-day work-related interactions. Volunteering together can give them a chance to connect further to forge deeper and more meaningful work relationships, which can encourage better communication in the workplace and lead to an enhanced company culture and increased employee morale.

2. Improved brand perception

Companies that engage in volunteering opportunities also have greater public exposure and visibility, and they often get positive associations from the general public when they are seen giving back or doing good for the community.

It is not just good for the company's image — its employees will get positive associations as well. Companies regularly seen engaging in volunteer events are also perceived to have a better working environment than those that do not.

3. Greater workplace happiness and satisfaction

Numerous studies show that happy people are more productive at work. There are many ways to boost happiness, and the act of helping others is one of them. Providing employees with rewarding and fulfilling experiences such as volunteering can give them greater happiness and satisfaction at work and, in turn, improve their productivity.

4. Attracts top talent

At the core of every great company is its human capital, and retaining good talent requires as much effort as acquiring them. For example, millennials — which will make up almost a third of the global workforce by 2020 — value more than just salary when searching for a new job. They cite opportunities for growth and development as key factors when considering positions. One way companies can attract and retain talent is to engage them with opportunities for professional and personal growth — and that is where having an active employee volunteer programme can help.

5. Good for employee skills development

Company volunteer events can also be a great opportunity for employees to hone their skills outside of their daily work routine. Volunteer events can help employees improve their leadership, communication, problem-solving and, more importantly, their people and teamwork skills.

We speak to two CCT tenants to find



Chubb Singapore organised an excursion to a hydroponics farm for the students of Canossaville Children and Community Services (CCCS) last year



out how they encourage their employees to volunteer.

Investing in local communities

Global offshore law firm **Harneys**, CapitaGreen, believes in investing in local communities,

whether it's through time, money or expertise.

Harneys' corporate social responsibility activities primarily consist of four focus areas: helping the most vulnerable in their local communities, preserving the environment, promoting arts and culture and investing in young people. These core values guide Harneys' efforts and assessments.

The firm encourages its employees by sourcing volunteer opportunities at a local level and making it known to staff locally. For instance, the company volunteered its time and financial resources to local rebuilding efforts after hurricanes Irma and Maria hit the British Virgin Islands, and contributed to the fundraising for the rebuilding of one of the local schools there.

Meeting the needs of others

Chubb Insurance, CapitaGreen, believes in the long-lasting impact of volunteering and engages in a number of volunteer activities throughout the year. This year, the company



Employees at Harneys volunteered their time by wrapping gifts during CCT Gifts of Joy last month

“Providing employees with rewarding and fulfilling experiences such as volunteering can give them greater happiness and satisfaction at work

received the 2019 AmCham CARES Award for its strong corporate social responsibility programmes in Singapore.

Annually, Chubb organises a Regional Day of Service across its Asia-Pacific offices. Close to 1,000 employees in 12 markets participate in community projects that focus on increasing educational opportunities for underprivileged children. Employees join forces in their collective outreach efforts, which are centred on the theme “Education@Heart”, to meet the needs of local communities where they live and work.

“In 2018, the Singapore branch, together with our Asia-Pacific office, organised a learning journey excursion to a hydroponics farm for the students of Canossaville Children and Community Services (CCCS), a charity we have supported since 2016,” said Mr Scott Simpson, Country President for Chubb in Singapore.

“Last November, we also organised a science workshop for the students of CCCS to bring interactive, experimental and educational learning concepts right to their doorstep,” he added.

That's not all — employees at Chubb

Singapore also launched their own staff-led initiative, #ChubbSGGivesBack, partnering various organisations to do more good for the community. Past beneficiaries include Ronald McDonald House Charities, A Packet of Rice, **CapitaLand Commercial Trust** (CCT), the Singapore Children’s Society and the Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS).

Choose a cause... or don't

So, what can companies do to promote staff volunteerism?

Broadly, there are two ways to go about this. The first is to champion a cause that speaks to your company’s shared values and purpose, whether it’s to benefit underprivileged local communities or promoting clean oceans. Alternatively, take a leaf from Harneys and Chubb and encourage staff to source their own volunteer projects or launch their own initiatives. Doing so gives your staff more room to discover their own areas of interest when it comes to volunteering — and they are also more likely to invest deeply in a cause when projects are led by them. ■

Verbatim

“What makes going to work exciting for me is that there is no typical day.”

Jean-Pierre Michalowski, Senior Country Officer for Singapore at **Crédit Agricole Corporate & Investment Bank**, tells us his guiding beliefs as a leader and what drives him at work.



1. I have an open-door policy, which means that all my staff are free to come to me about anything. I encourage them to bring not only opportunities they see, but also issues they may be facing, and I try my best to help them through wherever I can.

2. Every day, I am driven by the challenge that as Senior Country Officer, I have to define the path we want to take to grow our business and not get distracted by the details. This means ensuring that we all share the same business mission and vision, so that we can work together as a cohesive team to execute strategies and roll out plans quickly.

3. I strongly believe in our group's guiding philosophy of “working every day in the interest of our customers and society”. We believe in taking the time to understand our clients' needs to provide them with quality services, while ensuring that we have a positive impact on society.

4. We are committed to making the world just a little bit greener, so we have participated in initiatives like Livelihoods, a carbon-offset investment fund that gives back to rural communities around the world. I believe we should grow into the future not only profitably, but also sustainably, and initiatives like this make me proud to be part of the Crédit Agricole Group.

FEATURE

Reflections

CCT tenants tell us how 2019 went for them and their hopes for the new year



GUAN YEOW KWANG

Singapore Branch CEO, **Mizuho Bank**, Asia Square Tower 2

"It has been a hectic, yet productive year. We've expanded our brand portfolio and created unique dining experiences for our customers, added two new brands and will open nine new outlets by the end of the year, bringing our entire group portfolio to a total of 22 outlets — which we are very proud of."

Managing Director, **En Sakaba**, Capital Tower



RAYMOND NG



AJAY KAUSHIK

General Manager of Compliance,
Vena Energy, One George Street

"This year, I'm proud to have been able to help some of my friends cope better with work-related and other stress by introducing and guiding them through techniques like meditation. I was also able to volunteer for the first time in CCT Gifts of Joy, which was rewarding as I got to witness the happiness and joy on the faces of Rainbow Centre's children when they received their gifts."



SHANE LEE

Co-founder and Director,
6oz Espresso Bar, CapitaGreen

"My advice for 2020: Chase the vision, not the money. And always go with the choice that scares you most, because that's the one that is going to help you grow."



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Mastering business strategy with the Art of War

It's sometimes used as a business manual, but how exactly does Sun Tzu's *Art of War* apply today?

To find out, 82 CCT tenants attended "Think Wits Win", a talk by author and business leader Soo Kok Leng, who spoke about key concepts in his book, *Think Wits Win: How to Use Sun Zi's Art of War for Success*. Mr Soo shared personal anecdotes from his experiences during the different phases of his career, tying them in with the ideas in his book, which illustrates Sun Tzu's dialectical thinking and ambidextrous leadership and how these approaches can help build and sustain a winning business in a fast and ever-changing marketplace.

The talk, held on 25 October at the Big Picture theatre, was followed by a Q&A session moderated by Ms Pauline Goh, Chairman of Southeast Asia at CBRE,

where Mr Soo dived deeper into the power behind Sun Tzu's written word and how it can help formulate winning business approaches.

"Think Wits Win" was organised as part of the CCT Leadership Series, which brings informative talks to the CCT community. ■



From left: Mr Kevin Chee, CEO, CCT; Ms Pauline Goh, moderator and Chairman of Southeast Asia, CBRE; Mr Soo Kok Leng, author and business leader

CAPITALAND NEWS UPDATE

GREEN TIP

Christmas is often a season of consumption and waste. In this season of giving, contribute to the environment by opting for LED Christmas lights, which consume less energy, and turning them off when no one is home.



Whisky 101

Edrington makes some of the world's best-loved Scotch whiskies, including The Macallan. We speak with Randall Tan, The Macallan's Southeast Asia Brand Ambassador, to learn how best to consume whisky this Christmas

1. What's one thing someone new to whisky should know to appreciate it?

Keep an open mind. When going into the wonderful world of whiskies, you have to expect to be surprised at every sip. Each whisky will give you a totally different experience.

2. What's the best way to enjoy drinking whisky?

There is only one way to enjoy drinking whisky, and that would be how you like to enjoy your whisky. There is no right or wrong way. The time of day and where you are may play a part. For example, if you are sitting by the pool in the middle of the day, you can enjoy a whisky highball; before dinner, you could maybe enjoy a nice whisky on the rocks; after dinner, a perfect dram of whisky neat. So, it really depends on what your preference is — though I do highly recommend having The Macallan over an ice ball.



3. What are some current trends in whisky?

There are several right now, like the appearance of a few new micro-distilleries, more maturation experiments and a growing appreciation of whisky cocktails. These are all great for introducing whisky to someone who has not tried it, and help ease them into the world of whiskies.

4. What's your personal favourite whisky, and why?

My all-time favourite would be The Macallan Rare Cask, as it is complex and multi-layered, with many different flavours and aromas that are reminiscent of Christmas for me, with notes of ginger, vanilla, raisins, orange, nutmeg and cinnamon. This is a whisky that has a lot of character and showcases our exceptional oak casks.

5. What are some tips you have for pairing the different types of whisky with a festive meal?

Look at the flavours that you are showcasing in your meal and pair accordingly. You don't want the whisky or food overpowering each other. For instance, if you are serving a dish that is lighter in texture and flavour, you might want to look at pairing it with a whisky that has a lighter profile. ■

CapitaLand

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