Making History in the Pacific
with Jess Richardson

PLUS...

Inspiring volunteer stories from throughout the Asia-Pacific region:
Singapore, Myanmar, Australia, China, China/Hong Kong, China/Taiwan, South Korea, Bangladesh
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INTRODUCTION

BY KYLIE BATES, IAVE WORLD PRESIDENT

We are excited to present the second edition of IAVE’s Volunteering Together quarterly magazine.

The focus of this edition is the Asia-Pacific Region. As the world’s largest population region and IAVE’s strongest membership region, the Asia-Pacific has a highly diverse volunteering culture that arguably represents, within a single region, volunteering ‘in all the many ways it happens throughout the world’.

As you will see, volunteering in Asia-Pacific takes place in both highly formalised ways with relatively well-supported infrastructure and more informal contexts that are heavily reliant on individuals or small groups of individuals within local communities to mobilise others without having access to dedicated or established support structures or resources. Despite this diversity of traditions and practices, IAVE members within the Asia-Pacific region have always had a voracious appetite for learning from, and sharing with, each other and a desire to tap into learning opportunities at the global level.

Evidence of this is that the Asia Pacific region has been host to 15 IAVE regional conferences and seven world conferences. As well, the region has always been well-represented at both IAVE World Conferences and IAVE regional conferences held in other regions. Members within the region also regularly identify opportunities for study tours or cross-border training between neighbouring countries or those with similar interests or stages of volunteering infrastructure development.

Recognising the inequality that exists within countries and across the region, IAVE members within the region have embraced the significance of the Sustainable Developments Goals and are working to promote them, align their work to them and highlight the role that volunteers within the region are playing in working to achieve them.

I am privileged to have first had the opportunity to serve IAVE as Asia Pacific Regional Representative before following in the footsteps of Dr Kang-Hyun Lee and Margaret Bell both former World Presidents who also call the Asia-Pacific region home. I am therefore delighted to invite you to visit our region through the pages of this magazine and learn about just some of the examples of the vital contribution that volunteers and their leaders are making to their communities, their countries and their region.
THE MESSAGE OF KINDNESS

By China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA), China

The opportunity of meeting Sue Sueyue’s family had begun in a very bizarre way. In March last year, I arrived in Myanmar to begin a year of volunteering with the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation. On my daily walk, I would pass by an old railroad with few passersby. On both sides of the railroad, there were farmlands with a plethora of vegetables, plants and flowers. At the end of each day, I would stroll along the railroad, captivated by the green scenery, unwinding after a full day of work. It was really the most enjoyable part of my day.

The regular sight of a foreigner walking around in this foreign land quickly attracted the attention of the farmers on both sides of the track. To my surprise, locals began greeting me. One of the most compassionate families was Sue Sueyue’s family. To my delight they would cordially invite me into their house and treat me with refreshing tea, fresh fruits or Myanmar snacks.

Sue Sueyue is a young girl who knows a bit of English and was preparing for her high school exams. Experiencing such warmhearted compassion and attention from her family, made me a little embar-
rasse. Naturally, I began providing tuition for Sue Sueyue’s English whenever I was invited to her home.

On a particular day near the end of April, I suddenly saw an extra baby in Sue Sueyue’s family. It was really strange. Later, I found out that it was her aunt’s niece who had brought the baby from the hospital. The baby’s father was killed in a motorcycle accident prior to his birth, while his mother bled profusely after giving birth to him. She succumbed to severe postnatal complications and passed away within 5 days. After hearing the baby’s plight from her niece, who was then working at the hospital, Sue Sueyue’s aunt allowed her to bring the baby to live with their family.

Although Sue Sueyue’s family is not wealthy, the five children in her family have already grown up to become outstanding young adults. Her aunt is only in her 50s. The youngest, Sue Sueyue, is also preparing for college and is still single. During power failures, candles are purchased by the stick. However, regardless of their financial situation, they would still buy formula for the baby. Her aunt said that they would try to bring up the baby to the best of their abilities. Whatever they are consuming, they would also provide the same for the baby, not to mention a proper education for the child when he comes of age.

On the day I was leaving, I ran to Sue Sueyue’s home and handed a red envelope with money to her aunt, hoping to make a contribution. However, her aunt shook her head. She explained, “Thank you very much. Just like you have come to Myanmar to volunteer, we want to do the same by helping others with our kindness. This is our greatest honor and I hope that you can instead give your money to those who need it more than us.”

In many situations, as there was an language barrier, I had relied on my body language, expressions and my heart to communicate with Sue Sueyue’s family. But we could always feel the care and affection from one another. I would never forget the time when I was running late to her home. I was still walking along when the sun began to set. The aunt watched me from a far distance to ensure my absolute safety and waited until I had left the railroad, towards the main road.

As much as you would say that the baby is unlucky, he is also very fortunate that he had encountered such a loving and kind family. In this environment full of love and care, I believe he would grow up happily and will also convey the same message of love that was bestowed to him by the whole family.

“Thank you very much. Just like you have come to Myanmar to volunteer, we want to do the same by helping others with our kindness. This is our greatest honor…”

Sue Sueyue’s Aunt, Myanmar
MAKING HISTORY
IN THE PACIFIC

An Australian volunteer’s story from Vanuatu

By Jess Richardson, Volunteer with the Australian Volunteers Program, Australia
In April 2017 I naively and excitedly moved to Vanuatu to begin my journey as an Australian volunteer. I had never been to the Pacific before, and found myself moving to one of the most natural disaster-prone nations on earth. The proof? A cyclone in the first two weeks! I had also never lived in a developing country for an extended period. I was excited, because I had landed the dream job. I was finally getting the chance to work in the sport for development sector. I had studied extensively and been engaged with competitive sport for over 10 years, and had always been passionate about sport as a driver for positive change in the community. I hadn’t found a way to bring these passions together, until I looked into the Australian Volunteers Program and found a position as a Disability Inclusion Officer at the Vanuatu Association of Sports And National Olympic Committee (VASANOC).

When you receive your assignment brief you start to visualise what that might look like on the ground. I imagined developing inclusive sports programs with communities around Vanuatu’s capital, Port Vila, that encouraged participation of people living with disabilities. This has definitely been part of my assignment, but I never imagined the role would involve managing the national para-athletes team at the 2017 Pacific Mini Games in Vanuatu and the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in my home country Australia – an event I had grown up watching and dreaming about being a part of.

On arrival I built a partnership with the Vanuatu Paralympic Committee who were keen to build a strong and sustainable para-sports program in Vanuatu. We were supported by international organisations like the Agitos Foundation and the Oceania Paralympic Committee to reach our goals. Initially we were focused on fielding a table tennis and athletics team for the Pacific Mini Games. While on the island of Santo in the Northern Province running talent identification initiatives and training, we found some talented athletes, including Friana Kwevira. Shortly after we were encouraged to submit applications to compete at the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Getting entries together proved challenging as few people had up-to-date identification paperwork. The labour and time involved in getting paperwork completed meant there were moments when we thought we weren’t going to make it there. We ended up submitting two male and three female applications for consideration. The three female applicants were successful, and so began our journey to the prestigious, and indeed historic Commonwealth Games.

Taking the three para-athletics athletes to the Commonwealth Games remains one of the highlights of my volunteer assignment. Sharing the journey with them, going through the challenges and really getting a feel for what it meant to the young women was an incredible experience. We knew prior to the games that Friana was in a good position to be competitive in the Javelin, but we were not ex-
pecting a podium result. I remember sitting in the crowd and her first two throws didn’t stick. I was so nervous, sitting on the edge of my seat and hoping that her next throw would stick. Out of nowhere Friana makes her third and best throw, putting her into the bronze medal position. The final scores were beamed up and she had secured a bronze medal. Friana made history, winning the first Commonwealth Games medal in any sports discipline ever for Vanuatu. It was a first for people living with disabilities, a first for women and a first for mothers—all the things Friana proudly is. It was incredible working with Team Vanuatu, and they were supportive every step of the way.

People living with disabilities are not widely celebrated in Vanuatu, rather they are often deemed shameful or burdensome so remain isolated to their homes. Seeing the community’s perceptions around disability change through these sporting achievements, and their enthusiasm about everyone being able to contribute to society has been wonderful. It’s a slow change and there is still a lot of work to do to advocate for the rights of people living with disabilities in Vanuatu. It is positive to see respect and inclusion spread.

I continue to work with VASANOC as an Equity and Inclusion Officer to increase the participation of girls, women and people living with disabilities in sport across Vanuatu, and am proud to continue doing so as an Australian volunteer.

The Australian Volunteers Program is an Australian Government initiative. Each year, the program sends hundreds of volunteers to 26 countries across the Indo-Pacific region, to work on projects led and driven by local people.
Australian volunteer Jess Richardson trains para-athlete Friana Kwevira. Jess also managed Friana and the para-athletes team when they travelled to Australia to compete in the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast. [Photo by Harjono Dyobojsino]

“Seeing the community’s perceptions around disability change through these sporting achievements, and their enthusiasm about everyone being able to contribute to society has been wonderful. It’s a slow change and there is still a lot of work to do to advocate for the rights of people living with disabilities in Vanuatu. It is positive to see respect and inclusion spread.”

Jess Richardson, Australian Volunteers Program
SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH THEIR EYES

By Jessica Chai Pei Shan, Lead Communications & Media Relations, National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC), Singapore
I grew up shy and afraid to speak. As an adult, public speaking didn’t get any easier. I spent my first job dodging meetings that would potentially require me to make presentations. Six years ago, my life took an unexpected turn.

I started volunteering at a Toastmasters club in Singapore, part of an international non-profit organization that promotes public speaking. Gradually, I grew in confidence and it improved my relationships with friends and co-workers. I became passionate about raising awareness about speaking confidently and found my calling in motivating others.

As Mother Teresa said, “Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.”

Recently, Special Olympics Asia Pacific invited me to conduct a media training and public speaking workshop for a group of athlete leaders with intellectual disabilities from across the region.

Special Olympics Asia-Pacific conducted a training to empower athletes with intellectual disabilities to become advocates for inclusive health.

The organization’s cause for social inclusion and inclusive health resonated with me and prompted me to volunteer at Special Olympics Asia-Pacific’s Athlete Leaders as Health Messengers Training workshop, held in Singapore.

Initially, I was apprehensive and uncertain about how the athlete leaders would respond to my workshop, and whether I would be able to adapt my training style effectively.

My worries were unfounded. They were warm and open to what I had to share. My experience interacting with them completely inspired me.

REFLECTIONS: LIVE A LIMITLESS LIFE!

As a volunteer trainer, I aimed to deliver a bespoke workshop to encourage the athlete leaders to speak with confidence and without fear.

During the session, I was moved by their personal stories of change and growth, and how they overcame the toughest of hurdles to become champions both on and off the sporting field.

The energy and spirit of perseverance shown by the 20 athlete leaders and their mentors from 7 countries across the Asia-Pacific region was nothing short of amazing.

No words can express how gratified and humbled I felt after the experience.

As the Harvard Business School Research has shown—happier people give more and giving makes people happier.

Truly, giving is receiving. I found joy during my interaction with the athlete leaders who exemplified resilience, and inspired me to live life without limits. I believe that the confidence one can gain from speaking can overflow to other arenas such as sports, to build resilience, strength and tenacity.

It has truly been my privilege to serve. I’m honoured to have been a part of their journey to go on and inspire other athletes with intellectual disabilities to lead full, healthy and active lives.
HOW SPECIAL OLYMPICS HAS TRANSFORMED OUR LIVES

Philippines’ athlete leader, Marlon T. Tindoc represented in 4 sports (soccer, bocce, athletics, bowling)! Another athlete leader from Brunei, Mohd Fuad, shared his motivation to encourage his best friend to join the program and inspire others together.

Vietnam’s athlete leader, Nguyen Ngoc Ban Tran travelled for the first time to Los Angeles for the World Games. She was a proud athlete representing Vietnam in bocce. Tran’s story is about how a father’s dedication helped her get over a crippling fear, overcoming the odds and allowing her to soar. Now, Tran advocates for people with intellectual disabilities beyond her shores. She hopes to become a coach, a mentor and an inspiration to other athletes.

Malaysia’s athlete leader, Nazir Akmal, summed up his experience, “I want to inspire other people with intellectual disabilities to lead a full and healthy life, and to let the world know that we all deserve the right to quality healthcare.”

On the last day of the workshop, these athlete leaders received professional media training from sports TV veteran, John Dykes of Fox Sports Asia and presented confidently as guest speakers on the show. It made me smile to see their transformation!

“Truly, giving is receiving. I found joy during my interaction with the athlete leaders who exemplified resilience, and inspired me to live life without limits. I believe that the confidence one can gain from speaking can overflow to other arenas such as sports, to build resilience, strength and tenacity.”

Jessica Shan, NVPC
Since the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, Chinese volunteers have been widely recognized across the world and many Chinese youth volunteers began to participate in various large-scale international games and events. In fact, a large number of volunteers in China today are devoted to daily community service. More interestingly, older adults over the age of 60 account for 30% of registered volunteers in Beijing. As retirees, those older volunteers continue to make contributions to their local communities with their professional experience and skills.

Mr. Ruling Ye is a 78-year-old Beijing volunteer. When he was a physician, the hospital appointed him to the Tibet Autonomous Region of China for providing local medical treatments and public healthcare for 31 years. After retiring in 2000, Mr. Ye returned to Beijing and found that seeing a doctor was inconvenient for the elderly in the community. As a result, he came up with an idea – to establish a free clinic for local residents. Mr.
Ye not only used his personal telephone line as a 24-hour call center, but also led healthcare informational sessions to spread awareness to the senior community. A van was donated by the Beijing Red Cross Society after they heard about his volunteer effort. Mr. Ye upgraded the van to become the “Charity Mobile Clinic”.

The Charity Mobile Clinic has gradually become an indispensable part of community. Hypertension, diabetes and Alzheimer’s are common to in the elderly. Mr. Ye makes sure to diagnose their conditions and provide consultation as soon as patients calls. The mobile clinic even played a significant role in sickness prevention in Beijing during the SARS outbreak in 2003. After seeing his effort, an increasing number of community residents drew motivation from his volunteer work and established other self-initiated organizations that are partnered with one other to help strengthen residents’ sense of ownership and community resilience.

Mr. Ye has been a volunteer in the community for 18 years. His love, sincerity, patience and actions exemplify the spirit of volunteering. Through his services, he has made new friends while gaining happiness and a healthy attitude. “If everyone can make small, practical contributions, won’t the society become more harmonious? I will continue to volunteer for the rest of my life, making more friends with the elderly and providing professional healthcare service to them.”

“If everyone can make small, practical contributions, won’t the society become more harmonious? I will continue to volunteer for the rest of my life, making more friends with the elderly and providing professional healthcare service to them.”

Dr. Ruling Ye, The Charity Mobile Clinic
By Flora Chung, CEO, Agency for Volunteer Service (AVS), China/Hong Kong

Today, volunteering in Hong Kong is highly diversified. It covers various aspects of people’s lives. Volunteers offer themselves to address critical issues affecting human and social needs, as well as community building and environmental issues. In recent years, volunteer action in food recycling to alleviate poverty has become widespread in the community.

According to the Environmental Protection Department of HKSAR (EPD), about 3,640 tons of food is wasted every day in Hong Kong. Most of them come from households, and the remaining are from the commercial and industrial sectors. Reduction of food waste has become a hot topic in Hong Kong. To protect the environment, many NGOs concerned with the issue emerged with hundreds of thousands of volunteers to join this campaign.

Food Grace, one of the earliest food recycling organizations in Hong Kong, was established in 2009. Its objective was to reduce food waste via food recycling, to promote low carbon living and to donate surplus food to the needy. It was followed by a number of similar organizations such as Foodlink Foundation, Food Angel, Cherish Food, Food for Good, etc. They attracted volunteers from all walks of life who are passionate about the mission of food recycling and environmental conservation. Given proper training, volunteers take up different tasks like delivering educational programs to schools and the general public, collecting edible food for upcycling and learning practical cooking skills and style to turn food waste into delicious meals and sending them to the under-privileged families and the needy elderly. They are working on the field at the community level to assist low-income groups with basic needs, keeping in mind the United Nations’ global agenda of SDGs of ending poverty and...
hunger, while also ensuring responsible and sustainable consumption and production.

Volunteers certainly play a vital role in tackling global issues. Witnessing the seriousness of the food waste generated daily and the need for community effort to make a change, Mark Leung joined Food Angel’s food assistance program, launched in 2011, and was committed to be a food rescuer since then.

“We collect surplus vegetable and fruit from local markets, as well as bread and packaged food from bakery and stores. We then sort the good ones for upcycling. Volunteers with cooking skills make delicious meals and share them with the elderly and underprivileged in the community centers,” Mark said. He is hoping that the culture of food reduction could be further cultivated in Hong Kong and that food cycling industry will be well-developed to better protect the planet. “There are more and more volunteers joining us to save the environment. They are all willing to contribute their talents and experience to solve different social problems,” he added. With the joint effort of volunteers, Food Angel has upcycled and recycled more than 4,000,000 kg of food waste since 2011.

It is more effective for people to accept new concepts at a young age.” Said So Yuk Ping, volunteer at Ever Green Association, an NGO working to promote waste recycling and environmental protection, and an advocate for the importance of protecting the planet and reducing pollution. She talked about how volunteers could spread the message of cherishing food to members of the public.

“University students who are more knowledgeable and better educated, could be involved to share information about green living by reducing food waste. The seeds of cherishing food can be implanted in children’s mind through interesting interactive games and storytelling. Children will enjoy learning through play,” So said. “By doing that, young people will develop the right mindset and they develop into lifelong volunteers in the future”. The synergetic effort between volunteers and professionals will make a great impact in reducing food waste” So aspired.

Thanks to the tremendous efforts of Mark, So and numerous other volunteers in Hong Kong, the daily percentage of domestic solid waste has decreased from 42.3% in 2011 to 36.4% in 2016, according to the Waste Statistics issued by the EPD. It is a great improve-ment compared to the data from 2015, which indicates that Hong Kong households have greater awareness on food waste reduction. Credit should be given to the organizations and their volunteers who are working hard to promote and educate the public on food waste reduction, and organizing service programs on food recycling.

However, more needs to be done regarding food waste disposal in the commercial and industrial sectors, as it is still on the rise. The government is expected to would make greater effort to institute more effective measures in discouraging food waste and promoting the reduction and recycling of food waste in these sectors. With one heart and one mind, volunteers are the strategic force for partnership between the government and various sectors, in order to address these critical problems and to promote the wellbeing of individuals, the community, the society and the planet.

“There are more and more volunteers joining us to save the environment. They are all willing to contribute their talents and experience to solve different social problems.”

Mark Leung, Food Angel
MINUTES WITH JENNIFER SIMS
SPECIALIZED NURSE IN MYANMAR

By Jennifer Sims, Volunteer Nurse, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), Myanmar

Jennifer Sims is a specialized nurse volunteering in the Pediatric Department of the Pyin Oo Lwin general hospital, in the Mandalay Division.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

Neonatal mortality rate in Myanmar is extremely high. Aspiring to give a valuable contribution towards reaching Sustainable Development Goal 3 – which aims to ensure healthy lives and to promote well-being for all at all ages also by ending preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age – VSO and its partner have given me the opportunity to work in a hospital setting to help improving neonatal nursing care. Neonatal deaths are the highest rates
of deaths in under 5-year-old children.

I am currently working in the neonatal ward of the Pediatric Department of a Government Hospital. Pyin Oo Lwin general hospital is a 300-bed-hospital with 12 wards.

My role is to teach, mentor and coach alongside nurses in the neonatal unit. My daily routine consists of attending the ward, observing care, recognizing improvements and thinking of action plans to face challenges.

I work closely with the nurses and doctors and feel privileged to be part of such a hard-working and enthusiastic team of health professionals.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT YOUR PLACEMENT AND WHAT MAJOR CHALLENGES ARE YOU FACING?

As Myanmar has been closed to the rest of the world for a long time, the project is very innovative and at the very beginning I did not know what to expect. Therefore, I have had to be flexible and adjust to what is required of me since my arrival. VSO prepared me for this and I have loved the challenge.

When I first arrived in Myanmar I was placed in one of the country’s major children hospitals in Mandalay for six weeks to observe best practices of neonatal care. There, I learnt a lot about working in resource-poor settings, the reality of a high mortality rate and the culture of care. I met some inspiring health professionals who are highly driven to save lives in difficult working conditions with very little reward. I have also been reporting back every month to the senior personnel for support, ideas and feedback.

When I began my placement at Pyin Oo Lwin general hospital I was very conscious not to rush into the role with my

“Before I came to Myanmar I never thought I could have achieved what I have with this project. My advice to anyone considering doing a project like this is, do not think twice. It will not leave you empty hearted.”

Jennifer Sims, VSO
western ideas, so I spent some time observing the ward closely and built up relationships with the staff. This enabled me to really understand how and why the health system was working or not. This took a long time, and is a necessary part of my role here. Patience is key when the time comes to address issues on the ward. Being well prepared and having a good understanding of the challenges that I might face when trying to introduce new ideas has been paramount.

Every month I have given a lecture on one specific subject of my choice to over 100 nursing staff and seniors. My presence in the ward has enabled me to put the teaching into practice. The main topics I discussed have been infection control, jaundice, premature care, and respiratory care. The final key topic I plan to focus on will be nursing empowerment. I believe the key to improving patient care is to bring satisfaction to the nursing role and empower them to fulfill their responsibility. Therefore, I will be holding an international nurses’ day event with prizes for nurse champions, to show nurses they are appreciated and they making a difference.

CAN YOU TELL US SOMETHING MORE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE LIVING IN MYANMAR, IN A NON-URBAN CONTEXT?

When I first arrived in Myanmar I did know what to expect. The most prominent feature of this country is the kindness and generosity of its people. I have learnt valuable lessons in terms of respect, mutual helping, generosity and caring without expecting anything in return.

It is not always easy. Being alone, the only foreigner, and having frustrating language and cultural barriers can get you down. It can take a long time to settle in. But thanks to the support of VSO and its partner, I have always had someone to talk to and to encourage me.

Before I came to Myanmar I never thought I could have achieved what I have with this project. My advice to anyone considering doing a project like this is, do not think twice. It will not leave you empty hearted.
SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT WOMEN & THEIR INDEPENDENCE

By Chae-Kyeong Kim, Director of Cooperation Business, Busan Metropolitan City Volunteer Center, South Korea
I wish my daughters, who are married in the unfamiliar land of Korea, will no longer cry from indifference of others and from loneliness. I hope that my daughters will be treated the same as the other native daughter-in-laws in Korea without discrimination. All glory will be given to our daughters and grandchildren.”

These are the words of Kim Ji-tae (65), winner of the grand prize at the 2018 Volunteer Ignite V-Korea Busan Competition, held at Busan Audience Media Center on August 30, while she received her award on stage. She introduces herself as “a mother who married off her thirteen daughters”. In actuality, she herself is unmarried. She has devoted herself as a mother to married immigrant women for more than 20 years.

“In 2002, I had a chance to play piano for an immigrant woman’s wedding. Since then, our relationship remains strong. I still have very close relationships with the 13 women. They are like my children. They plan so many events for me, such as birthday celebrations. Speaking of birthdays, the day of the awards was on my birthday so we had to delay our gathering by one day.”

On this day, Kim Ji-tae gave a touching speech to the audience about her 20 years of work as a mother to married immigrant women and serving multicultural families under the theme “a little attention will bring big love to others”. She spoke about the reality of domestic marriages of immigrant women, but she did not give any details that could identify the individuals. “I am here to ask for your warm hearts towards our daughters, so that they can settle down in a stable environment. Their human rights should not be violated whatsoever by exposing their identities”.

Kim Jitae studied linguistic and literacy courses for social welfare and Korean language education to help these women. “It was a great help while I worked as a Korean Red Cross volunteer since 2000. Thanks to such efforts, I have 16 daughters from 7 countries, including Vietnamese daughters who lost their loved ones and husbands, Filipina daughters who sought asylum from the violence of their husbands, and daughters who went through divorces. They laughed and laughed together and learned the Korean language, held joint weddings and honeymoons, and visited their homelands.

In addition to helping married immigrant women and volunteering at the Korean Red Cross, Kim Jitae is the vice chairman of the Social Security Council in Geoje, Yeonje-gu. She is also a professional volunteer who works as a social worker and psychologist for elderly people.
BAKKEN INVITATION REWARDS VOLUNTEERS IN CHINA

By Audrey Guibat Demont, Program Manager, Medtronic, Switzerland

“...I encourage every single individual to rebuild the confidence to fight with all kinds of disease; a wonderful life deserves to those who try very hard to help themselves.”

Hui Li, Bakken Invitation honoree, Medtronic

Backed by the Medtronic Foundation, the Bakken Invitation is in its fifth year of recognizing people who have overcome health challenges with the help of medical technology and are giving back to their communities through charitable service and volunteerism.

Since its inception in 2013, the Bakken Invitation has recognized nearly 60 individuals from around the world amongst which three outstanding people from China who have been selected for their achievements through charitable service and volunteerism. Their work contributes to achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals #3 – Good Health and Well-Being.

In 2015, Qi Zhang joined the Bakken Invitation from Beijing. Qi was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when she was only seven years old. Since then, she has struggled to live a normal life, but she has never given up. Now, Qi works as a pediatric technician and volunteers with the Beijing Diabetes Prevention and Control Association. She established the China Type 1 Diabetes Caring Foundation, a first-of-its-kind educational organization.

Wang Xinjie from Beijing was selected as a Bakken invitation Honoree in 2016. Wang has lived with diabetes for more than 31 years. He volunteers at the Beijing Diabetes Prevention and Control Association, advocating for diabetes awareness and patient education in China. He was the first diabetes patient selected to present at the Annual Symposium on Diabetes Education and Management and the first to host an educational diabetes segment on China Central Television (CCTV).

Amongst the 2017 Bakken Invitation honorees, Hui Li travelled to the event from China, and started volunteering his time with Bethune Charitable Foundation after he had started sharing his journey as a heart patient to feel more positive and hopeful.

In 2009, Li was diagnosed with coronary artery disease and was treated with three stents. As he took stock of his transformation from athletic man to heart patient, his mental health suffered. He began cycling to improve his mental health. As a poet and a member of the China Writer’s Association, Hui knew he had the ability to publicize his efforts and inspire others as well. He wrote a book summarizing his journey.
In addition to sharing his story, Li volunteered his time with Bethune Charitable Foundation, which expands access to medical and health care services in the primary markets of China. Working with Bethune enabled Hui to share his story with millions of people through his book, television appearances, and public speeches.

Medtronic Foundation President Jacob Gayle said “Through the Bakken Invitation we recognize the work of outstanding patient volunteers, build their capabilities so that they can affect social change, transform healthcare and inspire others to take similar action.”

ABOUT THE BAKKEN INVITATION

The Bakken Invitation furthers the community-minded vision of Medtronic co-founder Earl Bakken. Bakken has a pacemaker, insulin pump and several heart stents, which he says have given him years of “extra life” to continue his community involvement. He regularly asks medical technology recipients he meets, “What are you doing with your extra life?”

During the five-day event, honorees participate in community service projects and learn how to inspire others to “live on, give on.”
Volunteering 2.0 has been the core value that Volunteering Taiwan advocates to popularize volunteering in Taiwan. We intend to establish a win-win platform for stakeholders to develop their social engagement strategies, gaining the reciprocal results for both volunteers and societies. Volunteering 2.0 is defined as an advanced and active way to help the society and volunteers as well as to achieve mutual values through designated strategies. These strategies include socially oriented business plans, specific volunteer curriculums, and skills-based community service.

We would like to promote a realistic volunteer lifestyle to sustain interest and engage with potential volunteers from different backgrounds and expertise. The volunteering often happens via project-based international events, emergent disaster relief, or long-term social enterprise process at remote indigenous tribes and communities. Through their experience, volunteers will receive valuable tangible and intangible benefits. We now witness young volunteers who are willing to return to their hometowns to launch new operational models to improve the livelihood of the villagers and themselves.

Since 2011, Volunteering Taiwan has engaged in volunteer programs specifically designed for young people. The project “Journey of Dreams” aims to provide opportunities for youth to volunteer and discover their skillsets that they can use in their future. For the past years we have involved thousands of young people in a variety of new volunteer programs. Some youth volunteers went to Doi Pha Som in Chiang Mai to work with young farmers and in turn learned about Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. Another group of students from Mainland China and Taiwan worked together to help sell agricultural products in areas damaged by the typhoon, which allowed them to practice their marketing skills. The students from Hong Kong and Macau volunteered together during a special indigenous tribal holiday and were able to experience a new lifestyle and culture.
young people explored their interests, reexamined their capacity, and formed effective teams for problem solving. They were able to reflect on the skills they would need for their future careers.

This summer, to foster positive interaction and empower youth volunteers with multicultural exposure, we organized overseas programs in the Philippines, Scotland, Spain, and Germany. Collaborating with Mark Molloy, IAVE European Representative, youth volunteers from Scotland and Taiwan worked together at the Beatz Music Festival in Dumfries to create a memorable cross cultural learning experience. The program in Bohol, Philippines was another example of a mutually volunteer experience for the youth volunteers. They practiced teaching in elementary schools, the center for the mentally disabled and social enterprise units in rural villages. With the assistance of Holy Name University, the youth volunteers delivered their services bilingually. They taught Mandarin and helped out at the multicultural coffee shop to attract more business.

The Hakka International Affairs Mission was designed for Hakka youth, ages 16-18, to share their ethnic art and culture with immigrants, the elderly, and the disabled in Europe. The youth, with their various talents such as martial arts, folk singing and dancing, participated in this volunteer program to promote Hakka culture. Supported by Lluc Marti, Coordinator at Fundació Catalunya Voluntària (FCV) and Wolfgang Krell, Managing Director at Volunteer Center Augsburg, 12 youth volunteers completed their service at nursing homes and community centers. This volunteering experience elevated the vision and performance of these young people through volunteering. At the same time, our friends in Europe were introduced to this unique Chinese culture.

As a faithful actor in promoting youth volunteering, we also asked the IAVE for permission to translate the “Youth Volunteering as Pathway to Employment” handbook into traditional Chinese and publicized the e-version in Taiwan. We thank Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages and Cheng Shiu University for their support in this endeavor. Thanks to the teachers and students who participated in this taskforce we were able to produce a high quality finished product. We believe the handbook will serve as a reminder and a tool for our youth to build up their own “volunteer portfolio” and make the connection between volunteering and employment.
Back in 2011, a small group of recently retired blokes decided to put the skills they'd learnt over a life time to good use and they formed the Dural Men’s Shed.

Dural is semi-rural suburb on the North West fringe of metropolitan Sydney.

Seven years on – the Dural Men’s Shed has more than 100 members and they devote their time to mentoring and developing skills for young people who need a helping hand.

One of the founding member Chris Thomas said the members get as much out as they put in when they volunteered for the Men’s Shed.

“Our members enjoy helping each other and other people who can benefit or learn from their skills and knowledge,” Chris said.

“By volunteering together, they also create their own community and a sense of camaraderie and friendship, giving extra support for each other particularly members with health issues.”

The members of the Dural Men’s Shed are encouraged to volunteer about one-third of their time at the shed helping other organisations.

They share skills across areas such as welding, automotive, carpentry, laser cutting, computing, metal work and pyrography. The centre has even just invested in a 3D printer.

They partner with other organisations such as Whitelion who support at-risk young people.
and the Warrah Special School who help students with disabilities. They are also helping students from Galston High School strip down and rebuild an old Mini Minor car. Under supervision, the students will learn about panel beating, mechanics and finally spray painting as they give the car a new life.

It’s hoped the new skills they learn from the Dural Men’s Shed volunteers will become a bridge to a new apprenticeship or trade.

The Dural Men’s Shed was a finalist in last year’s NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards.

The awards are run by the New South Wales based Centre for Volunteering to recognise the outstanding work of volunteers in every region across NSW.

Twenty one award ceremonies are held across NSW each year where nominees are recognised with certificates and winners announced. Regional winners are entered into the overall State Volunteer of the Year Award.

The awards are now in their 12th year and have grown to become the biggest event recognising volunteering across Australia – with more than 112,000 nominations received across the state.

You can contact The Dural Men’s Shed at duralmensshed@gmail.com
VOLUNTEERING TRENDS IN CHINA

By Horizon Corporate Volunteer Consultancy (HCVC), China

BACKGROUND

With the economic development of China, Chinese volunteering is also growing vigorously. Since the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Chinese government, corporations and other private sectors are now paying attention to volunteering. Currently, there are 67 million registered volunteers in China.

According to the “Charity Law” implemented in 2016 and the “Volunteer Service Regulations” implemented in 2017, it is now legally required that profile of volunteers, service details, time of service, training, rewards, evaluation and certificates are recorded in information systems appointed by the Civil Administration Department. China’s President Xi required institutionalization of volunteering in the 19th National Congress. Every volunteer should now be insured to secure their benefits because volunteer service has been an indispensable part of China’s national strategies. China will have 184 million volunteers by 2020, which means one in seven Chinese people will be a volunteer. Therefore, it is an imperative that corporations utilize volunteering as part of their CSR programs. We believe more policies will support volunteer service and its practice amongst corporations will be supported by technology.

TRENDS

• Standardization of corporate volunteer management
• Normalization, localization and communization of corporate volunteering events
• Internationalization of corporate volunteer management
• Growing demand for pro bono work
• Self-management of corporate volunteer teams
• Precise records of volunteering time
• Promotion of employees paid-leave for volunteering
• Diversity and refinement of volunteering projects
• Evaluation of the effect of volunteering
• Stakeholders’ diversity of corporate volunteering
CORPORATE VOLUNTEER SERVICE

HCVC provides volunteer service consultation, evaluation and execution for companies. It also facilitates communication with the government and NPOs and plans CSR proposals for all stakeholders. Through our experience and big data, companies not only gain brand reputation, but also significantly improve their employees’ loyalty, leadership, work efficiency, creativity, cooperation and dedication. As a result, they have increased their business profits. For example, Alibaba.com, with its 70,000 employees, have implemented the “3-hours of charity work per person per year” rule into employees’ KPI system.

For example, Volvo Group’s “Sailing for Love” program, planned by HCVC, brought together employee volunteers from Volvo and students from Yunnan and Hubei Hope Primary Schools, for a two-day trip. Volunteers gained so much from this experience.

“At the beginning, we were strangers. After pairing up with our student counterparts, I asked my partner to take care of me. He stayed close to me and was always looking out for me. Even though he was young, he truly took care of those around him. I felt his sense of responsibility. I am glad I participated in this event. It’s part of Volvo’s culture to assume responsibility of our society and to others.”

Tom, Corporate Volunteer, Volvo

“I was very happy to spend time with my 8-year-old partner. It was a good opportunity to get to know with youth from different backgrounds. It was a pleasure to find some time to attend a volunteering event, not only for the children, but for ourselves and the whole society. It’s a good thing” shared Amanda Li, from Volvo.

“I heard a kid say to another volunteer on the bus ride back, “We may not be able to come to Guangzhou again for a while, but it’s possible when we grow up!” Her words touched me.”Hope primary schools are always filled with hope, HCVC prides ourselves in our originality in promoting the development of corporate volunteer service in China” said Alex Chen from HCVC.

Horizon Corporate Volunteer Consultancy (HCVC) is the leading volunteer service and consultancy organization in China. We believe that a “volunteering spirit” is one of the most precious valuable for the Chinese society. We are dedicated to maximizing the efficiency of volunteer service resources and establishing
the industry chain and ecosystem of volunteer service by building the resource platform for governments, corporations, foundations, communities, social organizations and volunteer service organizations.

HCVC has successfully provided consulting service and operate the management for over 10 provincial government departments and over 1,000 enterprises and foundations in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. HCVC has supported nearly 10,000 NGOs and volunteering projects. The amount of funds integrated exceeds 100 million yuans.

Approximately 300,000 volunteers have participated in over 1,000 volunteering service projects, supported by HCVC each year. Approximately 1 million people have directly benefited from the projects while indirectly 10 million other people have indirectly benefited. Through HCVC, volunteers have contributed approximately 2 million volunteering hours and have created over 50 million RMB in social value.

HCVC has affluent resources. We are able to provide a longstanding connection between all parties, address all needs, and adjust project designs to ensure successful implementation.


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Alex Chen, HCVC
VOLUNTEERING BLOOMS IN GUANGDONG

By Flora Chung, CEO, Agency for Volunteer Service (AVS), China/Hong Kong
Guangzhou is the capital city of Guangdong province, located in the South China Sea coast. It is one of the earliest cities in Mainland China that started to promote volunteering. Their first volunteer project “Secondary School Students Hotline Service” was established in 1987. Over the past three decades, volunteering has been thriving, particularly in the youth, nonprofit, government and corporate sectors. The success of the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou has increased public awareness and inspired greater enthusiasm in volunteering. It is worthy to mention that, after the Games, Community Volunteer Service Depot became one of the special features of volunteering in Guangzhou. 150 depots with 40,000+ registered volunteers have been set up for volunteer services for its citizens and visitors, organizing necessary service projects for the underprivileged.

According to the 2015 Research Report of Guangzhou Volunteer Service Development conducted by Guangzhou Volunteers’ Union, 37% of the volunteers in Guangzhou were students, 60% of the volunteers attained university education and 62% was female. Mobile phone was the most popular means of receiving volunteer service information (44%) and 33% of the respondents wanted to receive more training on service skills and volunteering concepts. The report also found that 60% of the respondents favored serving in mass events such as sports game, arts festival and exhibitions. Similar to other countries, respondents chose “No time/ Scheduling conflict” (69%) as a major challenge to volunteering. The research report recommended that volunteer safety and insurance could be a focus for development in the future.
Due to our close proximity, the Agency for Volunteer Service (AVS) in Hong Kong has established a long-standing partnership with organizations in Guangdong Province, notably the Guangdong Civil Affairs Bureau, Guangzhou Civil Affairs Department, Guangzhou Communist Youth League and Guangzhou Volunteers’ Union. To support their development of volunteering, AVS provided them consultancy and training on volunteer service management, received study tours and co-organized seminars and exchange programs with different regions and cities in their province. In the past 3 years, a total of 15 organizations and around 2,000 volunteer leaders from Zhongshan, Dongguan, Taishan, Jiangmen, Foshan, Shenzhen and Guangzhou have attended AVS’s training sessions. Since its inception, the Hong Kong Volunteer Awardees Society, under AVS, has conducted service visits annually to the poor and underprivileged in Dongguan, Zhongshan, Shaoguan, Foshan, Jiangmen and many others. In November 2017, Guangzhou Volunteers Union organized a group of volunteer leaders to attend the Cross Strait, Macau and Hong Kong Youth Volunteering Forum hosted by AVS in Hong Kong. Recently, AVS has participated and gave a presentation at the Youth Exchange Seminar in Nansha.

Leveraging the power of volunteering in pursuit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can engage people to become change-makers. The exchange and partnership between Hong Kong and Guangdong are surely instrumental to elevate mutual development of volunteering for both regions and to build bridges with the global volunteer community in realizing the global agenda that “No one will be Left Behind”!
Volunteering is not simply an auxiliary device of social welfare service but an active and inherent power that can solve social problems in itself. The committee for the 2016–2018 Korean Year of Volunteering (hereafter, Korean Year of Volunteering) placed core emphasis on “resolving social problems through volunteering,” and selected the top 10 items on the agenda for Korean society to be solved through volunteering, including social safety and crime prevention, the prevention and eradication of poverty, a rapidly aging society, etc. At the same time, it focused on the planning, operation, and performance of volunteer programs to solve the items on the agenda. In particular, field experts and academia worked together to develop the top five index of volunteer performance indicators to change the paradigm for volunteer activities to enhance social impact as opposed to the existing performance indicators that concentrate solely on results that can be quantified.

The first step toward developing the index of performance was to question the current method of measuring volunteer activity performance, which consistently focused on simple quantitative factors such as the “number of volunteer participants” or “hours of volunteer activity.” With such quantitative index alone, it is difficult to assess how much social impact volunteer work has brought about or how much it contributed to social changes. As a result of reviewing the key factors that can encompass a social impact-oriented paradigm while staying true to the essence of volunteering, the initiative of volunteer participation, the cooperation of stakeholders in the implementation process, and the innovation of new ideas or approaches have been found to be an important factor in causing social influence through volunteering (Research on Social Problem Resolution Performance Indicator, Korean Year of Volunteering).
It was also shown that the change and diffusion shown in the volunteer program results were closely related to the core performance of “social impact”. These results were indexed and reflected in the performance indicators, enabling visual analysis of the “impact” of the volunteer program.

**THE FIELD APPLICATION OF VOLUNTEER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Korean Year of Volunteering Committee suggested applying the developed performance indicators to the screening criteria for various volunteer projects organized by civic groups and public organizations. The National Program Contest for Volunteer Centers, the Youth Program Contest by the Korea Youth Work Agency, the Life-Love Project by the Gyeonggi Volunteer Center, and the award for the Best Program by the Seeds of Hope Volunteer Group for University Students hosted by the Export-Import Bank of Korea are cases where the new performance indicators have been applied. The result of applying this achievement index to 34 outstanding volunteer programs selected by the Korean Year of Volunteering Committee is interesting. Program analysis indicates that there were many programs with high initiative and diffusion, while there were relatively fewer programs with innovation and social change. This seems to support the argument that the qualitative performance of volunteer work needs to be improved by strengthening factors of innovation and change from the program planning stage.

The new performance indicators are also be-
ing used as the screening criteria for the 2018 Grand Award for Volunteering hosted by the Ministry of the Interior and Safety. The criteria for selecting the winner in the past were usually concerned with volunteer efforts that overcame difficult circumstances to help others or long-term volunteer work that spanned more than twenty to thirty years.

However, the social impact paradigm was reflected in the evaluation of the Ministry of the Interior and Safety’s 2018 Grand Award for Volunteering to meet the changing needs of volunteering.

THE UTILIZATION AND DIFFUSION OF VOLUNTEER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The development and application of new volunteer performance indicators show that volunteering in Korea is now entering a new phase. Despite the individual’s good will for volunteering, the existing quantitative indicator-driven evaluation system has been constantly criticized for hurting the dynamic inherent in volunteering by pinning it to the number of hours or volunteers.

With the increasing amplitude of social change, everyone agrees that a paradigm shift in volunteer work can no longer be delayed. The new performance indicators are the first step toward meeting these expectations. Above all, it is necessary for field volunteer managers and leaders to reorganize existing volunteer activities by applying these new performance indicators to reevaluate each program or project. In the end, the long journey toward the grand paradigm shift starts with a single step in the right direction.
HELPING ROHINGYA CHILDREN GET THEIR CHILDHOODS BACK

By Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), Bangladesh

About half a million children are living in refugee camps in Bangladesh. By working together, we're doing something to help them.

Over 671,000 Rohingya people have fled their homes in Myanmar to the refugee camps of Bangladesh. More than half of those who have made this terrifying journey are children.

Since August last year, huge numbers of people from the Rohingya ethnic group began crossing the Myanmar border into Bangladesh. When they arrived they spoke of violence and persecution, villages set alight and friends and family killed.

We have heard less from their children, many of whom arrived in a state of post-traumatic shock and barely spoke. Through no fault of their own, half a million of them have been wrenched away from everything familiar. They have witnessed things no child should see.

They're safe from persecution in the Cox's Bazar refugee camps, but now they face another, more insidious threat – losing out on vital education and development.
HELPING RECLAIM CHILDHOODS

“Early childhood is the formative time when brain development is taking place. If children can’t participate in some good quality early childhood education, neurons in the brain will not grow and develop, and the children will not be in the best position to learn later on,” says VSO volunteer education specialist Fiona Kirby. Every day away from education and emotional support risks compounding the unimaginable trauma Rohingya children have already experienced.

VSO researchers on the ground found a severe lack of opportunities for children, especially younger ones, to learn and play in a safe environment.

This is where we can make a huge difference.
**VOLUNTEERS BRINGING NEW HOPE**

Fiona Kirby is an early childhood education expert who is volunteering with VSO in Bangladesh, to support our work with Rohingya refugees. She’s preparing to train three Bangladeshi volunteers in the theory and practical skills to educate young children.

These volunteers will roll out a home-based education programme. Children living in a refugee camp have the same right to education but can’t access normal schools or teachers – so VSO is training their mothers to deliver quality lessons to little ones with storybooks, songs and games to fire their imaginations, all in the security of their tents.

By doing so, these Rohingya women will have the skills to educate others in their community through play-based learning. We’re starting by training 50, and hope to do more.

**ROOM FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN AND PLAY**

There are lots of hazards in the refugee camps. Bored children with little to do are playing close to dirty stagnant water and dangerous waste.

VSO has laid the foundations for six special spaces where children ages 6–14 will be able to play and learn in a safe environment.

> “Early childhood is the formative time when brain development is taking place. If children can’t participate in some good quality early childhood education, neurons in the brain will not grow and develop, and the children will not be in the best position to learn later on.”

Fiona Kirby, volunteer education specialist, VSO
Pictured above & below: Fiona Kirby, volunteer education specialist with VSO. VSO volunteers from the UK and Bangladesh are now working in the camps to improve education for young out-of-school children.