



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **SENIOR VOLUNTEER ORGANISATION ORGANISES A DAY OF CELEBRATION FOR SENIORS TO GIVE THANKS TO LOVED ONES**

*Singapore, 1 October 2017* – To encourage more seniors to give thanks to their loved ones, RSVP Singapore, a senior volunteer organisation has spearheaded the International Day of Older Person celebration for this year.

International Day of Older Person, or IDOP, was first launched in Singapore in 2014 and is an initiative coordinated by National Council of Social Service (NCSS). As part of the celebrations, NCSS has also introduced the “Seniors Give Thanks!” campaign, for seniors to give thanks to their loved ones through simple acts of gratitude.

This year, RSVP Singapore, a senior volunteer organisation launched by ESM Goh Chok Tong in 1998, spearheaded the celebration. Participants at the event at Lifelong Learning Institute included seniors from various senior activity centres across the island, and senior volunteers from RSVP Singapore.

One of the participants at the event was Annie, 69, who thanked her husband David, 73, for taking care of her and her children since they were married in 1966. “We have been married for 50 years, but he has never raised his voice in that time. It has always been like that,” she said.

Also present were Phillip, 65, a wheelchair-bound senior who suffered a stroke 10 years ago, and his friend Patrick. “He is an angel. He has done everything for me – medical, shopping, groceries. He is a very good man I say,” Phillip noted.

“We have heard of so many senior related initiatives where we give thanks to our seniors. For example, there is the Pioneer Generation Package. But perhaps now is the time for seniors to give thanks to those who have been there for them,” said Koh Juay Meng, President of RSVP Singapore.

More than 25,000 “Thank You” cards were distributed to 68 agencies for seniors to pen their gratitude and present to their loved ones. Agencies include social service organisations, Sports Singapore, the Agency for Integrated Care, and Singapore University of Social Sciences. It is also the first time that multiple social service organisations are gathered at a single venue to celebrate the day as a sector.

Senior Minister of State for Ministry of Environment and Water Resources & Ministry of Health Dr Amy Khor was present at the event to lend her support.

The IDOP was established on 14 December 1990 by the United Nations General Assembly. It is observed every year on 1 October.

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**About RSVP Singapore**

RSVP Singapore – The Organisation of Senior Volunteers is a non-profit organisation and an Institution of Public Character that was started in 1998. Since its inception, RSVP Singapore has been actively engaging seniors in purpose-driven volunteerism. Through impactful community service programmes, we serve more than 150,000 beneficiaries each year. These include the mentally disadvantaged, at-risk children from low income families and socially isolated seniors. Our programmes are designed to support and empower our members to embody our core values of lifelong learning, active ageing, integrity, sharing experience and service.

**About International Day of Older Person 2017**

IDOP Singapore was launched in 2014 by the National Council of Social Service (NCSS). From six partners in 2014, it has grown to 14 partners in 2015 and 40 partners in 2016. Since 2014, NCSS had also laid the foundation for social service organisations to adopt IDOP and celebrate it in their own capacity in October.