

One day

On Sunday, February 4 about 3000 volunteers took part in our Volunteers for Seniors Day. They visited single elderly living in public housing estates and also those in an elderly home. Some of them cleaned homes, others, performed simple assessments to check for early signs of dementia, and others helped some of the elderly to have their wishes come true.

We have organized this outreach day each of the past 22 years. Besides boasting about the number of hours clocked and elderly served, what more can be said about this day's impact? Here are two stories that remind us not to underestimate the power of one day.

There is power in one day of service, when nearly three thousand gathered to serve together.

The Power of One



We celebrated Grandma Ng's 100th birthday at the opening ceremony. We also wished all the elderly people a happy and healthy 2018!

One encounter

Jessica Yuen, her husband and their two young boys signed up to visit the elderly home on this day. To break the ice and add to the festive Chinese New Year air, they brought along ink, brushes, and red paper to write traditional holiday greetings for the residents. At the home they were drawn to one elderly man, who had used to run his own dim sum restaurant. Menus for such restaurants were always written using brush pens, and Jessica knew this man would have beautiful brush pen writing, so she asked him if he would write something for them.





A wonderful moment of joy and laughter at the usually quiet elderly home.

"The old man hesitated for a moment, then with shaky hands picked up the brush. He took a deep breath, placed the brush on the paper and wrote the words 'BLESSING' and 'LUCK' for us. His hesitant look suddenly turned to a satisfied smile.

He then asked for another piece of red paper. This time, he wrote, 'SERVICE TO OTHERS'.

I thanked him repeatedly. Later, I took his masterpiece and showed it off to all the other volunteers.

This was the the most precious gift I received in all my years as a volunteer.



This scroll, which an elderly man wrote for the volunteers, became a most precious gift.

The very next day, we received news from the social worker at the home that the elderly man had gone to the hospital that morning. He passed away a few hours later. When his wife and son came to collect his belongings, they asked the social worker to let the volunteers know they had brought great joy and happiness to their husband and father on his last day on earth.

Upon hearing the news of the elderly man passing away, Jessica reflected, *"When he wrote 'SERVICE TO OTHERS', I felt he was expressing his gratitude more than trying to lecture us. The way he wrote those words, it was as if he was remembering his younger days and all his contribution to his family and children."*

The volunteers made this grandma feel so loved and cared for that she insisted they hold hands for the photo.



Volunteers introduced our dental centre to this grandma. One of the centre's services is to help needy elderly like her get free dental care.



One visit

Ashley Leong and her group visited a seventy-three year-old single elderly woman in one of the public housing estates. In the course of conversation, volunteers learned about some of the difficulties this elderly woman was facing.

"She had dentures fitted at a private dental clinic. However, she told us that they did not fit well. They hurt when she ate. She went back several times to have them adjusted but to no avail.

Finally she took out several thousand dollars from her own savings and went to a another clinic to have a new set fitted. This was a lot of money to shell out for someone on public assistance. But the new dentures gave her problems, too. She was about to lose hope of being able to eat normally again.

We knew that HOPE worldwide recently opened two social enterprise dental centres to serve the community and help someone like her. So we gave her the number and encouraged her to call. She couldn't believe such a place existed and was so excited."

We did in fact receive the call from the elderly woman before Chinese New Year. An appointment has been set up for her to be seen by one of our experienced dental consultants in the near future.

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"Walk the Extra Mile" - a service in which volunteers help the elderly fulfill wishes. This elderly man wanted glasses fitted. A seemingly simple wish fulfilled rekindled his hope of continuing to live independently.



Thanks a Million

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Special Thanks

- Mr Cheung Man-sun, former Assistant Director of Broadcasting, RTHK, Ambassador of HOPE worldwide
- Ms Candy Chea Shuk-mui, Hong Kong radio DJ
- Ms Tsang Wai-chun, Neckerchief Knitter
- Ms To Man-ye, Neckerchief and Hat Knitter

Community Partners

- Caritas Cheng Shing Fung District Elderly Centre (Sham Shui Po)
- Caritas District Elderly Centre - Yuen Long (Tin Chak Centre)
- Carson and Friends
- Christian Family Services Centre Shun On District Elderly Community Centre
- Christian Family Services Centre True Light Villa District Elderly Community Centre
- Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service – Hong Kong Radiance Hub
- Free Methodist Church Bradbury Tak Tin Social Service Centre for the Senior
- HKSAR Leisure and Culture Services Department
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- Hong Kong Buddhist Association Buddhist Ching Hang Neighbourhood Elderly Centre
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- Lai King Estate Residents Association
- Pentecostal Church of Hong Kong Choi Wan Neighbourhood Elderly Centre
- Sik Sik Yuen Ho Kin District Community Centre for Senior Citizens
- St. John Ambulance Association
- The Hong Kong Society for the Aged Chai Wan District Elderly Community Centre
- The Hong Kong Society for the Aged Cheung Shan Developing Horizon
- The Hong Kong Society for the Aged Chan Tseng Hsi Kwai Chung District Elderly Community Centre
- The Hong Kong Society for the Aged Ho Sang Neighbourhood Elderly Centre
- The Hong Kong Society for the Aged Madam Ho Sin Hang Home for the Elderly
- The Hong Kong Society for the Aged Tsuen Kwai Tsing Integrated Home Care Services
- The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council Sham Shui Po District Elderly Community Centre Integrated Home Care Services
- The Salvation Army Tai Po Integrated Services for Senior Citizens
- Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Fong Shu Chuen District Elderly Community Centre
- Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Lim Por Yen Integrated Home Care Service Team
- Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Pong Wing Shiu Neighbourhood Elderly Centre

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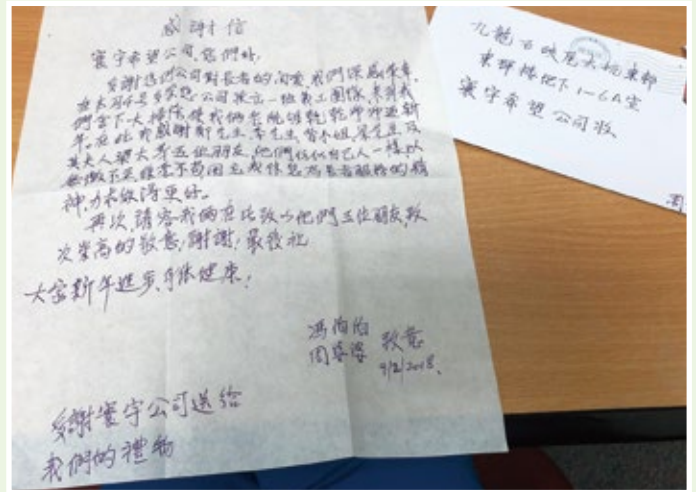
Special thanks to Jason So (Emcee), Jeffrey Chan (Usher-in-charge); Andrew Lee, Camille Chan, Cheung Tik Man, Jade Fan, John Luk, Katy Tang, Mario Hui, Owen Ma, Rex Chapman, Stella Wu, Vincent Cheng (Photographers and Videographers).

This year, we learned great impact can be had even by just one day of service!



The power of one - not to be underestimated

For sure there are other stories of hope from this year's Volunteers for Seniors Day. Few will be as dramatic as Jessica's encounter, but at the very least, on this one day, volunteers gave their time and brought warmth and laughter to hundreds of elderly around Hong Kong. Companies who sponsored the lucky bag goods contributed to their well-being and joy. And the elderly people visited received genuine care and respect, values too often overlooked in our busy city. Let's not underestimate the power of one--one day of service, one chance encounter, one wish, or one visit.



Every year we would receive a letter or two from the elderly served on Volunteers for Seniors Day. This elderly couple thanked the volunteers for cleaning their home for them.

Services of the Elderly Programme

Mission: Help Hong Kong's single elderly people age healthily and with dignity. This is accomplished through the following three services.

Elderly Fall Prevention



Trained volunteers assess fall risk of elderly people

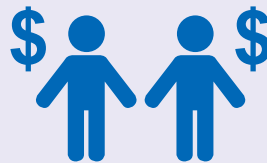
High-risk cases receive follow-up service by a therapist



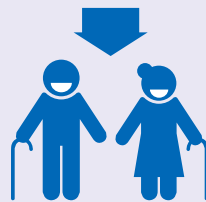
Reduce the number of fall incidents



Dental Centres



Centres provide affordable, quality dental care to the community



Surplus generated can provide free dental care to needy people



VOLUNTEERS FOR SENIORS DAY

長者
希望日

One day of service by over two thousand volunteers for Hong Kong's elderly people. Services include home cleaning and health checks.



Donate and support HOPE worldwide's Elderly Programme. Donate online at www.hopeww.org.hk or send a cheque payable to "HOPE worldwide" to the address below.



Hong Kong Office

✉ 1-6A, G/F, Tung Fai House, Tai Hang Tung Estate, Shek Kip Mei, Kowloon, Hong Kong

☎ Tel : (852) 2588 1291

☎ Fax : (852) 2588 1306

🌐 Website : <http://www.hopeww.org.hk>

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