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Universal Studios rides and more for 700 at Children for Children event

🕒 WED, NOV 18, 2015 - 5:50 AM

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CHIJ Kellock performers with (from left) Magdalene Chin, principal of CHIJ Kellock; guest-of-honour Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth Baey Yam Keng; and Alvin Tay, editor of The Business Times. PHOTO: LAURA NG

Singapore

CHILDREN'S Day might have fallen on Oct 9 this year, but for the kids taking part in the Children for Children initiative, the real celebration took place on Nov 17. Cylin Wai from Innova Primary School was one of more than 700 children who were eager to experience Universal Studios Singapore, and she couldn't have been more excited. She said: "I can't wait to go on all the roller coasters!"

Jointly organised by CHIJ (Kellock), The Business Times, The Rice Company Limited, and Resorts World Sentosa, Children for Children is an annual fund-raising and charity event started in 2008.

Along with the adrenalin-pumping rides at Universal Studios, the outing involved a performance by more than 250 students of CHIJ (Kellock). Head of Department for English at CHIJ (Kellock) Jean Toh said: "Each year, the theme is slightly different. Because this year is SG50, we took deliberate efforts to link it to the history of Singapore."

Ms Toh, who has been involved in the initiative for seven years now, revealed that it took about six months to put together this year's event. When it had to be postponed because of the haze, there was some apprehension that the event might not happen at all. She said: "Everyone was disappointed when it got postponed because the students trained really hard for it. We did manage to find another platform for them to perform for their parents just in case this didn't go through, but we're so glad it did. Our school's mission is about making a difference in someone else's life, and being involved in something like this helps the girls see the importance of it."

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The concert included ballet and tap dance performances as well as the SG50 production.

Athena Manhin, 12, was one of the lead characters in the production. She played a beggar during the Japanese Occupation searching for food to feed her family.

Athena said: "It's important to realise that not many people have the same privileges we do, and I really hope the children loved the performance and have a wonderful time at the Universal Studios."

This is Preesha Magandharan's second year of participation. She played an older Indian woman who'd just moved from a kampong to an HDB flat, and needed to find a way to hang out her clothes to dry. She said: "I wanted to take part again because I like sharing my gift with others. It lets them know there's somebody caring for them, and that they're not alone."

For 10-year-old Cylina, the message was well received. She said: "I really liked the concert because it was meaningful and it makes you think about what you want to do in the future. I'd love to come next year, too!"

Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth Baey Yam Keng was the guest-of-honour at Children for Children 2015, where a total of S\$150,000 was raised.

With a contribution of S\$15,000, CA Technologies was one of the top donors this year. President and general manager, Asia Pacific & Japan, Ken Arredondo said: "CA Technologies believes in giving back to the communities where we work and live. We are extremely honoured to once again support The Business Times' Children for Children programme because it helps children appreciate the value of community service, and to care for and help the less fortunate. We hope to make a positive impact and help build a better, more giving society for the future."

Other large donations were made by CWT Limited and Osim International.

Excluding the day's expenditure, the rest of the funds will go to the Sing50 Fund, a private sector initiative supported by The Straits Times and The Business Times, with a mission to preserve and celebrate Singapore's musical heritage.

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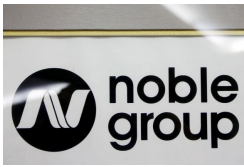
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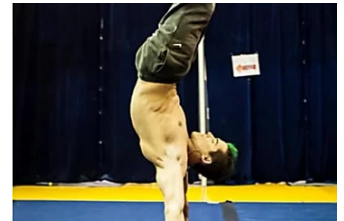
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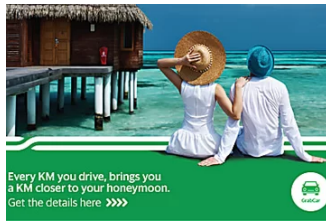
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