

MARCH - APRIL HIGHLIGHTS



SPARKS! SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

The March school holidays are back, and we had 30 children aged 7 – 12 years old join us for our Sparks! holiday programme at The GRIT Project (TGP). TGP is Lakeside's Children and Youth Centre at Jurong West (Nanyang), and serves children and youths in the community, especially those from disadvantaged families.

Sparks! is TGP's holiday programme and through a variety of craft activities, games and small group discussions, the programme teaches children important life skills such as emotion management, dealing with peer pressure and improving one's self-esteem. Through interaction with our facilitators, we hope to instil GRIT values in the next generation of youths, namely Grace, Respect, Integrity, and Tenacity!

Now in its 6th year, Sparks! has gone through multiple iterations and will continue to be organised during each of the four school holidays every year. For those interested to sign up for the next run, please contact David Lim at david-lim@lakeside.org.sg or follow @thegritproject.lakeside on Instagram for updates!

"Sparks! provides meaningful engagement during the school holidays for children to grow their capacity, values, and strengths, especially the underprivileged who may not have an opportunity to go for enrichment classes or vacation overseas unlike some of their peers. Through the Sparks! programme, we hope to reduce this lack of opportunity by organising workshops and experiential activities that can help the children with their socio-emotional development, identity, cognitive and executive functioning."

- JOYCE ESTHER LIM, HEAD OF TGP

CELEBRATING GLOBAL VOLUNTEER MONTH

We're celebrating inspirational stories from our community of volunteers this April as part of Global Volunteer Month. We shine the spotlight on Jia Jun, our long-time volunteer at The GRIT Project (TGP).

Currently a student, Jia Jun's dream job is to be a social worker, having been inspired by the TGP team to give back to the community over the years. Also a Nanyang resident himself, Jia Jun has been serving at TGP since it was set up in 2019! Though he was initially interested in joining as a participant, he was recruited as a volunteer instead due to his age. "I didn't expect I would last for three solid years, but volunteering feels like part of my life now!

Being a skilled badminton player himself who has represented his secondary school, Jia Jun soon became a favourite among the youths at TGP as he started to coach them in badminton as part of the Sports@TGP programme. "I really enjoy teaching the youths badminton. There's always a sense of fulfilment seeing them develop an interest and skill in something, and being able to help them learn to get better at it."

Volunteering gave him the opportunity to meet many children and youths, some of whom face challenges at home and in school. Speaking fondly of one of his mentees, Jia Jun shared how the 17-year-old who was initially shy and unconfident has grown to take the lead in co-organising programmes and games with him after a few years. "In the beginning, communication can be challenging sometimes, but it is important to build trust slowly. I'm also real with them in sharing my personal struggles with studies and with my family. Along the way, we learn from each other and I also learn to better handle situations and problems I face."

Since first volunteering with Sports@TGP, Jia Jun has now also volunteered for other programmes like Sparks! and The GRIT Academy. "I want to encourage anyone out there who is interested to serve the community or give back to society. There are many ways to do it and every small effort matters to someone's life. You never know when your small action may have a big impact on people's lives."



"I'm happy to give back to community, it is a meaningful and interesting experience and I've also learnt a lot from the staff at TGP. I thank them for always letting me try things out, guiding me and giving me advice, pushing me to grow beyond my comfort zone, and trusting me to take up leadership roles. It really gave me courage to open up and be more confident over the years."

TO JOIN US AS A VOLUNTEER, PLEASE CONTACT VOLUNTEER@LAKESIDE.ORG.SG



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