



Jan 26, 2014 13:03 +08

Changi Airport Group and Singapore Sports Council partner to kick-start football programme for underprivileged youths in Central district

Saturday evenings may mean a night of parties and amusement for many, but for a dedicated group of youths, it means spending hours honing their football skills under the close mentorship of coaches from Singapore and the RealMadridFoundation. No, these are not youths from the national football squad but a special group of teens, from less privileged backgrounds, who have been given the opportunity to participate in a programme designed to

develop their character and instill positive values despite the challenging circumstances they face in life.

Changi Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Changi Airport Group (CAG), is sponsoring the launch of Saturday Night Lights (SNL) in the Central district of Singapore, in partnership with SportCares, a foundation and movement created under the Vision 2030 masterplan for sport, launched by Singapore Sports Council (SSC) and Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (formally known as Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports). Under the CAG-SNL Central programme, youths from NorthLight School and Marine Parade Group Representation Constituency (GRC) come together for football training, personal skills development and relationship building.

The CAG-SNL Central programme was officially launched today at ITE College Central, which saw Mr Lee Seow Hiang, Chief Executive Officer of CAG and youths from NorthLight School taking on Mr Tan Chuan Jin, Acting Minister for Manpower and Member of Parliament for Marina Parade GRC, and youths from his constituency in a friendly game of football. Targeted at disadvantaged youths aged 12 to 20, the programme's 80 players look forward to an environment of quality coaching, supportive volunteers and team camaraderie every Saturday night.

As sports can be a means to social and character development, the SNL programme uses the popular sport of football to reinforce positive values such as respect for team work, leadership and discipline both mentally and physically, as well as commitment to a greater purpose. Coupled with workshops such as first-aid, nutrition and job interview skills and motivational talks by sports celebrities, the programme has become a powerful platform to engage these youths in a community environment – one surrounded with good role models, educational support and mentoring.

Mr Lee Seow Hiang, CEO of CAG said: “Our partnership was first conceived to make a difference to the lives of the youths, and we are elated to learn that many of them have demonstrated commitment, improved discipline and confidence through this programme. Our CAG staff volunteers have also benefitted from the opportunity to train with and mentor these youths.

Partnering SportCares on this initiative has been extremely fruitful for our beneficiary, NorthLight School, and I encourage like-minded organisations to grow the SNL programme with us. CAG's long-term goal is to encourage

more Singapore organisations to join us in our community outreach programmes to help more youths in need, and to start a football league for youths across Singapore once we have a sufficient number of teams.”

At the launch event this evening, 10 youths were also given recognition for being the Most Valued Players and Most Improved Players. These youths, who have participated in the programme since September 2013, have displayed a positive attitude on and off the pitch and shown great improvement in areas such as character development.

Leveraging sport to seed hope and change lives

Mr Lim Teck Yin, Chief Executive Officer of SSC said “SportCares was conceived to leverage sport as a force for social good. CAG’s involvement as our first principal supporter from the corporate sector for the SNL programme has been a strong vote of confidence in the power of sport to seed hope and change lives. This SNL partnership is also a wonderful demonstration that people from all walks of life can come together to help each other live better through sports. We hope to see many pro-social sports programmes across Singapore, with other corporation partners playing leading roles in the SportCares Movement.”

Mr Martin Tan, Principal of NorthLight School said, “SNL is very much in line with the experiential teaching approach we adopt in the school, where emphasis is given to nurturing the students’ socio-emotional development. The programme has not only kept the youths off the street, but also through football, they learn about their own potential, recognise their own achievements and encourage peer support. On behalf of the school and students, I would like to thank Changi Foundation and SportCares for making this possible.”

In addition to guidance by professional coaches certified by the Football Association of Singapore, the RealMadrid Foundation Technical Academy Singapore is also doing its part for the community. Every Saturday, RealMadrid Foundation coaches train and provide soccer tips to the youths on a voluntary basis.

Mr Sergio Cervantes Martinez, Project Director, RealMadrid Foundation Technical Academy Singapore said, “The RealMadrid Foundation Technical Academy Singapore is very proud to be a committed partner of SNL. In

accordance with the spirit and values of the Real Madrid Foundation, we believe in sharing with SNL players the emotion that comes from training with our Real Madrid Foundation coaches, who have come from the most successful club in world football. These coaches are committed to sharing their experience and knowledge every week with young football players in Singapore, in order to motivate and influence them to not only become better footballers but also upstanding individuals.”

About Changi Airport Group

Changi Airport Group (Singapore) Pte Ltd (CAG) (www.changiairportgroup.com) was formed on 16 June 2009 and the corporatisation of Singapore Changi Airport (IATA: SIN, ICAO: WSSS) followed on 1 July 2009. As the company managing Changi Airport, CAG undertakes key functions focusing on airport operations and management, air hub development, commercial activities and airport emergency services. CAG also manages Seletar Airport (IATA: XSP, ICAO: WSSL) and through its subsidiary Changi Airports International, invests in and manages foreign airports.

Changi Airport (www.changiairport.com) is the world's most awarded airport with more than 450 accolades received since it opened in 1981. To serve passengers and visitors from the world over, there are over 350 retail stores and 120 F&B outlets across the airport's three terminals. Changi handled more than 51 million passenger movements in 2012, an annual record. Today, it serves more than 100 airlines flying to 275 cities in about 60 countries and territories worldwide. A flight takes off or lands at Changi roughly once every 90 seconds.