

YELLOW RIBBON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

MAY EDITION



Yellow Ribbon PROJECT

We Are Each Other's Second Chances

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DEAR SCHOOL LEADERS,

As we welcome the month of May, we invite you to continue championing the goals of the Yellow Ribbon Project (YRP), an initiative focused on fostering second chances and supporting the reintegration of ex-offenders into society.

Since the start of 2025, many schools have worked with us to host school assembly talks, organise visits to the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) Heritage Gallery, encourage student-led initiatives, and participate in the Yellow Ribbon Art Competition 2025, which concludes this month.

We deeply appreciate your contributions to the YRP efforts, inspiring empathy and inclusivity within your students. Your support plays a vital role in shaping a compassionate generation, and we look forward to continuing this meaningful journey with you.

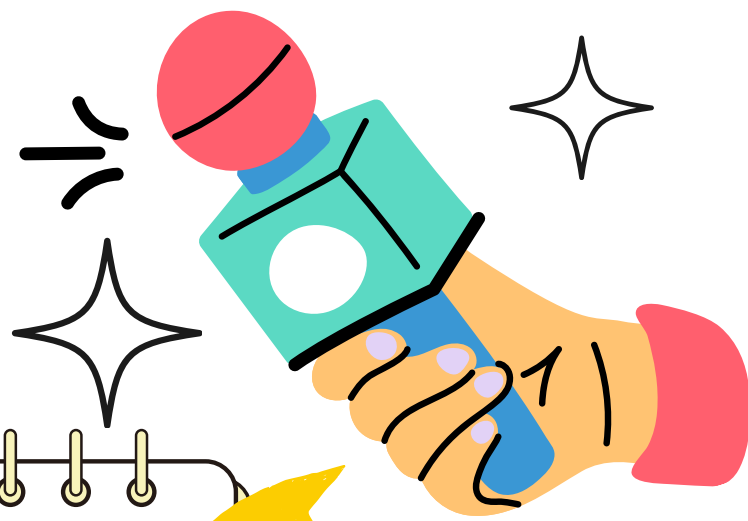


WHAT'S NEW?

HUMAN STORIES PROJECT DEFTEROS

01/06

HUMAN STORIES



In this edition of our newsletter, we highlight the profound impact of second chances through personal stories shared at Singapore Management University (SMU) on 12 March 2025. ISCOS Titan Mr Mohamad Fairizal Bin Jaffar, an inspiring ex-offender and active desistor, delivered a powerful and candid account of his journey, motivating students to embrace the cause. Adding to this, Adjunct Lecturer Ms Wang Yean Sung and student Tan Ye Kai, Dexter shared their reflections, discussing how these engagements deepened their understanding of YRP's mission and inspired meaningful contributions. Together, their voices illustrate the transformative power of open dialogue in fostering reintegration, second chances, and community support.



Mr Mohamad Fairizal Bin Jaffar

ISCOS TITAN

The Industrial and Services Co-operative Society Limited (ISCOS) has long supported ex-offenders and their families, with the ISCOS Titans Programme empowering desistors to share their personal stories of transformation.

At a recent engagement at SMU on 12 March 2025, ISCOS Titan Mohamad Fairizal Bin Jaffar spoke candidly about his journey, addressing students on the challenges of reintegration and the importance of resilience.

"This isn't just about awareness," Fairizal emphasised. "It's about opening minds to the reality of our day-to-day struggles, and why support is everything for people like me." His message to others on their reintegration journey remains simple yet powerful: "Find what drives you and keep moving. Even if it's tough – especially when it's tough – push yourself forward."

Ms Wang Yean Sung

ADJUNCT LECTURER, SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY (SMU)

To Adjunct Lecturer Ms Wang Yean Sung, giving second chances is not just about charity – they are about recognising potential and shared humanity. Ms Wang believes Singapore’s highly competitive nature can make society less forgiving, but sees promise in the government’s efforts to uplift and support ex-offenders. **“If we leave people behind, what’s the point of being in front?”** she reflected.

Her most memorable moment from the school outreach engagement was Mr Fairizal’s personal story of struggle. She believes that her students in their youth are at a vulnerable stage where the right message can make a lasting difference – not through fear, but through hope and purpose. “Gangs offer a sense of belonging. But so can opportunity, mentorship and care,” she said. Yean Sung urges more adults, retirees, and companies to step up. “There does not have to be grand gestures, just small, meaningful acts,” Yean Sung said. “We don’t always know how to give back, but it starts with caring. Everyone deserves a fair shot.”



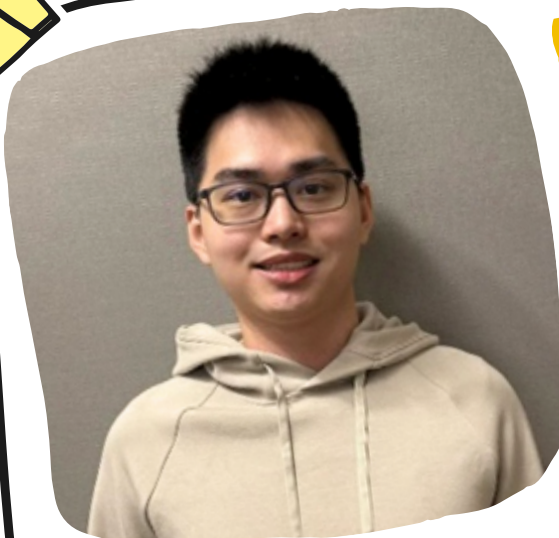
Tan Ye Kai, Dexter

STUDENT @ SMU

For student Tan Ye Kai, Dexter, the sharing session proved to be an eye-opening experience. Listening to Mr Fairizal’s powerful personal account, he gained a deeper understanding of the emotional and psychological barriers ex-offenders continue to face after release.

Dexter was struck by how stigma forces ex-offenders to invest substantial effort in regaining trust—often at the cost of opportunities to demonstrate their true abilities. “If we show a bit more empathy, it really can go a long way in helping ex-offenders reintegrate,” Dexter reflected. **“Greater societal acceptance could lower recidivism and create a healthier community.”**

His view of YRP was once limited to its partnerships with organisations such as Ninja Van and 18 Chefs. However, the engagement broadened his perspective, reinforcing the idea that everyone has a role in shifting societal perceptions—whether through active involvement in outreach, encouraging peers to participate in future discussions, or offering a simple gesture of kindness to someone who may feel excluded.



PROJECT DEFTEROS

FEATURES

from Raffles Institution

Project Defteros, a dynamic youth group from Raffles Institution, is making waves in advocating for second chances and supporting families of the incarcerated! At the recent SPS-YRSG Corporate Advance 2025, the group showcased their innovative approach towards YRP's 3As objectives through an interactive game - 'Knock Down Barriers'. Participants engaged in a meaningful activity where they physically knocked down cans representing misconceptions about ex-offenders, whilst learning about the importance of breaking stereotypes.

The event also featured a photo booth where attendees could capture moments and write down messages of encouragement for ex-offenders to show their support for second chances. As one team member, Reuben, powerfully expressed, "No human is born perfect, and we should not judge someone based on their past. **Someone's past does not represent their future.**" Through their creative engagement, Project Defteros continues to challenge societal prejudices and champion the cause of rehabilitation and reintegration.

KNOCK DOWN BARRIERS



SUPPORT



HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR SCHOOL SHARINGS IN 2025!



Fuhua Secondary School
15 Jan 2025



CHIJ St Theresa Convent
16 Jan 2025



St Joseph's Institution (International)
22 Jan 2025



School of the Arts
4 Feb 2025

THANK
YOU
😊



CHIJ Katong Convent
6 Mar 2025



Singapore Management University
10 & 12 Mar 2025



Ngee Ann Polytechnic
13 Mar 2025



Victoria Junior College
2 Apr 2025



SPS HERITAGE GALLERY TOUR



26 Feb 2025



St Joseph's Institute

THANK YOU!

12 Mar 2025

These sessions provide meaningful perspectives on the obstacles ex-offenders encounter and the profound impact of acceptance in their reintegration journey.

Take this chance to cultivate empathy, dismantle misconceptions, and empower your students with the understanding needed to drive positive change. Register your school's interest and be part of the movement towards a more compassionate and inclusive Singapore!

**WE ARE EACH OTHER'S STORIES,
WE ARE EACH OTHER'S SECOND CHANCES.**

BE AN ADVOCATE FOR SECOND CHANCES

- **Awareness Talks:** Host Yellow Ribbon staff and ex-offenders to share the meaningful stories of rehabilitation
- **Heritage Gallery Tours:** Learn about the evolution of Singapore's correctional model and gain a deeper understanding of its rehabilitation efforts
- **Student-Led Projects:** Have an idea for collaboration in mind? Chat with us!



Join us in making a difference.

Don't just wear a yellow ribbon. Be one.

Register your school's interest:



www.go.gov.sg/yrce