

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Dyslexia Association of Singapore's new Executive Committee for 2010-2011 will oversee the Association's 20th anniversary celebrations. While we look back in gratification of our achievements and drive forward to meet the needs of even more dyslexic children, we must also ensure that the Association is prepared for the challenges ahead. The annual turnover of the Association was over \$8 million in Financial Year 2009-2010 and we will cross the \$10 million mark in the current financial year. The DAS will be classified as a Large Institution of Public Character very soon and will be subject to not just greater government regulatory requirements, but also the increased expectation of the public which we serve. It is with this in mind that the current Executive Committee has recommended an Extraordinary General Meeting in early 2011 to propose changes to the DAS Constitution. The proposed changes will include :

- The widening of our emphasis from dyslexia to specific learning differences. This is to reflect the true needs of dyslexics who often have comorbidities such as ADHD, dyspraxia and dyscalculia.
- Changing the term Executive Committee to Board of Directors to better reflect the roles of the Board and a professional management team that is required to oversee the expanded operations of the Association.
- New terms of office and criteria for election as Executive Committee Office Bearers. This is to encourage the infusion of new blood, prevent a hostile takeover and to provide continuity.
- The addition of various sub-committees including an Audit Sub-committee to strengthen corporate governance and to be in line with government guidelines.

I look forward to seeing all members at the EGM.

There are many people I must thank for without their support, it would be impossible for the DAS to have come this far. First of all, there are the members of the Rotary Club of Raffles City who have been responsible for transforming the Club's 1989 Community Project into a thriving Association. Several members have also provided continuity by serving on the present Executive Committee of the DAS. The Club has also raised much funds for the DAS and most recently on 13 August 2010, a sum of \$100,000 was raised at the Club's 30th anniversary celebrations.

Sir Jackie Stewart, the legendary Formula 1 racing driver and President of Dyslexia Scotland had said in 2007 when he visited that the DAS "could lead the world in this". His support has been instrumental for the DAS and it was through his encouragement that the DAS commenced our project with the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports to support young offenders at the Singapore Boys Home in January 2010. Sir Jackie was in Singapore recently and on

23 September, six DAS students were invited for a special educational tour of the AT&T Williams Team Garage at the F1 Pit Building, in conjunction with the 2010 Formula 1 Singapore Grand Prix. Sir Jackie was present to guide the students around the garage and they were delighted to have contributed to a special photo montage that the Royal Bank of Scotland put together to celebrate the F1 event.

A special 'thank you' is also in order for the generous contributions which were received throughout the year, especially :

- The President's Challenge 2010 has confirmed DAS as one of the beneficiaries although the amount to be donated is still to be announced.
- Singapore Tote Board has confirmed the sponsorship of \$120,000 over two years for DAS students to receive speech and language therapy services.
- The NCSS VWO Capability Fund has approved \$90,000 in funding for DAS staff to attend various training courses
- The Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple has donated \$50,000 towards the operations of the DAS.
- Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has donated \$10,000
- The Grace Shu and Jacob Ballas Charitable Trust has donated \$10,000
- The SICCC May Day Charity Golf Tournament has also donated \$10,000.

I would like to thank Ms Ho Peng, Director-General of Education, MOE, for gracing us as our Guest of Honour for our Student Graduation Ceremony on 5 June 2010. Ms Ho has also kindly agreed to be the Guest of Honour at the DAS Seminar Week in November 2010. The Ministry of Education has continued its staunch support of the DAS and the annual MOE Grant in support of students attending educational therapy at DAS centres crossed \$3 million in FY2009-2010.

Most of all, I would like to thank our beloved patron, Mrs Goh Chok Tong, for her unwavering guidance and support of the DAS throughout our development.

Finally, I would like to commend the CEO Mr Robin Moseley and DAS staff for their wonderful work towards our mission – helping dyslexic people achieve ! I look forward to their continued support and another successful year for the DAS !

Dr Jimmy Daruwalla

President

25 September 2010