

Press Release

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Six active Singapore seniors honoured in 2009 Active Agers Awards

Winners, picked from a record 465 nominations, excel in areas from mastery of digital technology and sports to active volunteering

Singapore, 11 October 2009 - They may all be in their 60s and 70s, but slowing down is not on the cards for the winners of this year's Active Agers Awards, which recognises seniors over 60 who embody the notion of active ageing in various aspects of their lives.

This year's awards are divided into two categories: the Active Ager of the Year award and the Active Agers – Infocomm Champion Award, which is presented by Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore. Organised by Council for Third Age, an independent organisation that promotes active ageing in Singapore, the Active Agers Awards is now into its third year.

The Active Ager of the Year 2009 awards go to: Mr Chhua Bak Siang (61), Mdm Rajam Sadanandan (62), Mrs Ruby R Ng-Ong (72), Mr Sabapathy Gopalakrishnan (74) and Ms Zaibun Siraj (62). Mr Sam Liu, 72, bags the Infocomm Champion Award.

The winners were revealed at a ceremony held at Marina Barrage this evening. They received their awards from Minister for Manpower and Guest-of-Honour Mr Gan Kim Yong.

Speaking at the Awards ceremony, Mr Gerard Ee, Chairman of the Council for Third Age, noted the remarkable stories of this year's winners, like Mdm Rajam, who, at 62, is pursuing a degree through UniSIM's General Studies Programme and Mr Gopalakrishnan, who started exercise classes in his neighbourhood to get fellow seniors fit after his retirement. Mr Liu is a volunteer trainer who conducts classes in computer and IT skills to seniors to help them bridge the digital divide.

"This is a group of remarkable seniors – active agers who truly live with zest and passion. We need people like them to convince others that you're not over the hill just because you've hit 50, or 60, or 70. Right now, Singaporeans can on average live till about 80 years old, and if, like our winners, they take care of their physical, mental and emotional health, are financially secure and socially engaged, they can expect much of their senior years to be good ones," added Mr Ee.

The six were chosen from a record 465 entries. Nominations opened in June 2009 and closed in August 2009.

The winners at a glance:

Active Ager of the Year 2009 award

Mr Chhua Bak Siang, 61

- Loved at home, respected in the community. An avid learner who combines a love for the past with an eye to the future

Mdm Rajam Sadanandan, 62

- Dedicated wife and mother, valued mentor and colleague. She lives with optimism and purpose, and a dream in her heart

Mrs Ruby R Ng-Ong, 72

- Spirited, gung-ho, fun-loving. She touches family, friends and the community with her infectious enthusiasm and energy.

Mr Sabapathy Gopalakrishnan, 74

- Dedicated family man. Selfless community leader. Sport enthusiast who helps to keep his neighbours healthy. Truly an active ager.

Ms Zaibun Siraj, 62

- Bubbly, gregarious and irrepressibly energetic. She stands the conventional notion of ageing its head.

Active Agers - Infocomm Champion Award 2009

Mr Sam Liu, 72

- An outstanding 21st century cyber citizen who passionately strives to induct others into the cyberworld.

Please see attached bios of winners for additional information.

The Active Agers Awards are one of the highlights of the Active Ageing Festival, which runs from June to November this year. The Award winners will act as active ageing ambassadors, inspiring other seniors with their stories.

For more information on the Active Ageing Festival and its other activities, log on to www.activeageingfestival.com.sg

ORGANISER

Council for Third Age (C3A)

Set up in May 2007, Council for Third Age is an independent body that promotes active ageing, so that seniors can achieve a better quality of life in all the six dimensions of wellness – social, intellectual, physical, vocational, emotional and spiritual. The Council plays a leadership role in driving the thrust towards creating an active ageing culture in Singapore, and partners businesses and community organisations to develop products and services that fulfil the aspirations and interests of seniors.

One of the key events in the Council's annual calendar is the Active Ageing Festival, of which the Active Ageing Awards are a part. The Festival, which runs from June to November this year, also includes the ongoing Active Ageing Road shows – which brings the message of active ageing into the heartlands – and the annual Grandparents' Day celebrations, to be held on 22 November 2009.

SUPPORTING ORGANISATION

Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore

The Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) is committed to growing Singapore into a dynamic global infocomm hub. IDA uses an integrated approach to developing info-communications in Singapore. This involves nurturing a competitive telecoms market as well as a conducive business environment with programmes and schemes for both local and international companies. For more news and information, visit www.ida.gov.sg.

For more information on the Active Agers Awards 2009 and winners, please contact: -

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