



For immediate release

Trail-blazing book on charity sector now available in Braille

Singapore, (4 September 2009) – The Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH) has transcribed a Braille version of the book *Doing Good Well: What does (and does not) make sense in the nonprofit world*, written by Willie Cheng and published by John Wiley & Sons (Asia) Pte Ltd, for the local blind community to be better informed about the social service sector in Singapore.

The Braille product comes in five volumes. One full set is available in SAVH library, which has a collection of other reference materials in Braille. Clients of SAVH may purchase the Braille version at S\$135.60 per set.

The book was first published in October 2008 against the backdrop of regulatory reforms for charities and the introduction of new and innovative social models. The book covers these and a spectrum of other issues of the non-profit world through provocative lens a la *The Undercover Economist*. In the words of Charity Council chairman Fang Ai Lian, the book would change the way charities think, work and live.

Author Willie Cheng has worked with many non-profit organisations at different levels, as a volunteer, governor and advisor. With the book, he applied his management consulting background to share uncommon insights to what works and does not work in the charity space. In the spirit of the book where all royalties go to charity, he and the publisher have granted SAVH the rights to produce the Braille version.

SAVH's executive director Judy Lim, who initiated the idea of the book being published in Braille, described *Doing Good Well* as "the first and only good book I know that describes charity issues and with local case examples." She said that she believed that the visually-impaired would also benefit from reading it because it is "very well-written, informative, relevant and honest in its assessment of the issues."

Ms Lim observed that the social service sector has evolved over the years. "Indeed, today we really have to do good well, and not just simply do good," she noted. She found the sections on governance and best practices to be educational.

SAVH president Tan Guan Heng thought that the book was probably the first by a local author to cover the social sector comprehensively. "As our mission is to help the visually-impaired to help themselves, this book has many ideas and pointers to learn from," he shared.

Mr Tan, who is blind himself and has benefited from reading the Braille version of the book, hoped that with this Braille book release, more people would also be more aware of the need for Braille materials for the Blind. Braille books, in his view, "allow visually-impaired persons to spend time reading, enjoying and reflecting on the content, which was otherwise not possible in the audio format." On governance and best practices discussed in the book, Mr Tan said these were prerequisites before stakeholders could have confidence in a non-profit organisation like SAVH. He noted that the book

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had highlighted some of the mistakes made by voluntary welfare organisations. “These are really good learning points for all of us in this sector,” he commented.

He found the chapter on the National Kidney Foundation to be the most relevant. “The transparency about the whole matter, in the local context, is an indication that we, in this sector, are willing to face up to our challenges, and to make the changes that will make a difference to people with disabilities,” he explained.

About the Author:

Willie Cheng is a former partner of Accenture, a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing firm. Since his retirement in 2003, he has been involved with the business and information communications community. However, he spends the larger part of his time working with non-profit organisations at the board and volunteer levels. He is chairman of the Lien Centre for Social Innovation and Caritas Singapore Community Council. He was chairman of the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre where he started applying his management consulting experience to non-profit work.

About Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped

The Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH), formerly known as the Singapore Association for the Blind, is a voluntary welfare organisation founded in 1951. The association is affiliated to the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) and is an approved Institution of a Public Character.

SAVH aims to promote the welfare of the visually impaired locally, and facilitates and encourages their greater participation in society. It is also working towards the abolition of barriers to total integration and equal treatment of the visually-impaired. The association currently has more than 3,000 clients. It has published Braille versions of many other books, including *The Singapore Story: Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew* (eight volumes) and *From Third World To First, The Singapore Story: 1965-2000* (nine volumes).

For more information about the Braille book and SAVH, please contact:

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