

President's Challenge to widen reach to grassroots, other groups

SINGAPORE – To encourage Singaporeans to be involved in community activities that are related to their passions, the President's Challenge 2015 will expand its engagements with various groups, such as grassroots organisations and schools, said President Tony Tan yesterday.

The President's Challenge, which was initiated in 2000 by then President S R Nathan, is an annual series of events by various organisations to raise funds for charities chosen by the President.

One such engagement for this year's Challenge is the Citi-YMCA Youth for Causes, a programme that encourages youth to run their own community projects for a social cause of their choice.

"The youth are supported with seed funding, training and volunteer mentorship," said President Tan in a speech at the President's Challenge 15th Anniversary Commemorative Dinner held at the Istana last evening.

To get more people to take part in sports, the Singapore Sports Hub, as a new partner of the President's Challenge, will be offering the use of selected venues for sporting activities aimed at engaging the public and special groups, he added.

Next month will also see the launch of the "Start Small, Dream Big" programme, which is developed in collaboration with the Early Childhood Development Agency.

The programme will give "our youngest a taste of community citizenship through meaningful activities organised by pre-schools for the children to contribute to their community and help the less fortunate", the President said.

In his speech, Mr Tan noted that



Singapore has come a long way since independence in 1965.

However, he said that a nation "does not exist only on its financial reserves or its strong economic performance".

"A nation is its people and the identity they share ... As our society matures, our individual needs and aspirations may take different paths ... But as we pursue our own interests, we must also continue to care for others who are different from us, especially those who need help," said President Tan.

At the dinner, the President presented the prestigious Pinnacle Award to six recipients, including MediaCorp.

The award is given to organisations

MediaCorp CEO Shaun Seow (left) receiving the Pinnacle Award for MediaCorp yesterday from President Tony Tan at the President's Challenge 15th Anniversary Commemorative Dinner at the Istana.

PHOTO: WEE TECK HIAN

and individuals for their contributions to the President's Challenge since its inception. The other recipients are Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple, the Lee Foundation, Singapore Pools, Dr Stephen Riady and the Tote Board.

Mr Shaun Seow, chief executive officer of MediaCorp, said: "Fundamentally, CSR (corporate social responsibility), for MediaCorp, is a wider commitment to building a better society."

"The President's Star Charity leverages our star power, our media reach and our ability to galvanise the community to do good," he added, referring to the MediaCorp effort in support of the President's Challenge. All the funds raised from the show go directly to the beneficiaries.