

## HOW COMMUNITY PROJECTS OPEN UP WINDOWS OF LEARNING AND AWARENESS

*Associate Professor Dr Angeline Ranjethamoney Vijayarajoo*

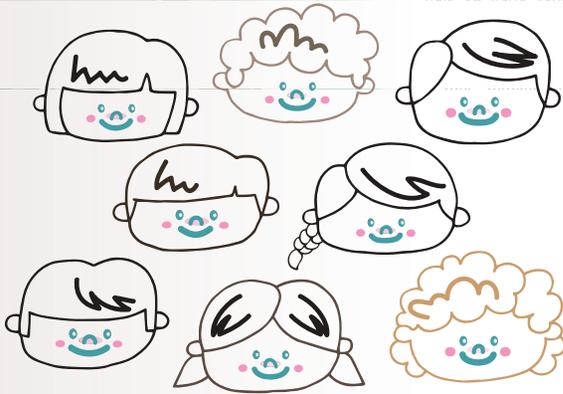
APB SEREMBAN

It was in 2018 that our Coordinator, Encik Mohd Nur Fitri had a casual chat with a few of us. He said that it was time for us to do a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project. He also mentioned that it would be good to think of something different from the past. In the past, we focused on schools and activities associated with school children. We cracked our heads and it came across my mind - in the name of a really wonderful, loving and caring uncle - Uncle Sam Joseph, a good old family friend.

Uncle Sam arranged for us to meet the principal of the Taman Sinar Harapan, Tengku Ampuan Najihah Home, Seremban. The school is under the Welfare Department of the state. This is where the story starts. I would like to state at this point that, without uncle Sam, our connection and plan for the project would not have materialized. Uncle Sam was someone who was into social work like this, tirelessly, day in and day out and he helped facilitate our work with the Home.

This Home houses children with special needs as well as hyperactive children. The Home helps to prepare these children with suitable skills to equip them in coping with life as well as to provide safe spaces for them. The security is tight and the children need not fear anything. The number of children could vary from 60- 100 at any one time.

Our story started with visits to the home and chats with uncle Sam, followed by the principal and staff of the home. Quickly the committee was set up and every single member of the department - Academy of Language Studies, UiTM NS, Seremban campus, were fully involved. A day was fixed for our project with the children. It was not only us - the Academy of Language Studies staff, but also our students, who were involved. Preparations for this one day event began months before the actual day. Our staff and students showed their commitment and dedication to such a worthy cause, in being able to reach out to a group of children we had not met yet.



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The special day came. The event was graced by the presence of the state assembly representative, Director of the Welfare Department, the principal and staff of the school, staff and students of the Academy of language Studies, UiTM Seremban, and not forgetting, uncle Sam.

What we took with us on that one day programme, in terms of the tangible, included book shelves, books, toiletries, Mc Donald food and a whole lot of game equipment to play and have fun with the children. The books and bookshelves were bought using money raised during the APB Language Week Jumble Sale.

What we took with us on that one day programme, in terms of the intangible, included a lot of love, commitment, patience, empathy and care for children, who are not as fortunate as us. It was a matter of reaching out to the children, from every one of us from the campus.

What we brought back from that experience cannot be documented as not every learning experience and awareness can be articulated in concrete terms. In a nutshell, we realized that there is so much to do in life and we need to look for such opportunities to reach out to special groups. We were also reminded to be thankful for what we had. It is a futile exercise to compare ourselves with those who have more, but to be thankful for what we have, and to begin to reach out to more individuals and groups, who have less than us. The happy faces we saw and the experience of sharing with the children will remain a great joy in our hearts. Yes, we are indeed blessed with so much to give and share. We look forward to more similar joys.

We will be sharing our next Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project in the bulletins to come.