

# Quickly, The Sharing Begins

By **Naseema Banu Maideen**

The Labour Movement's mega Care and Share drive for the year culminated with a show of Singaporean workers' spirit of resilience and togetherness at the May Day Solidarity Walk and Concert on 23 May 2009, filling up the kitty with \$23.18 million.

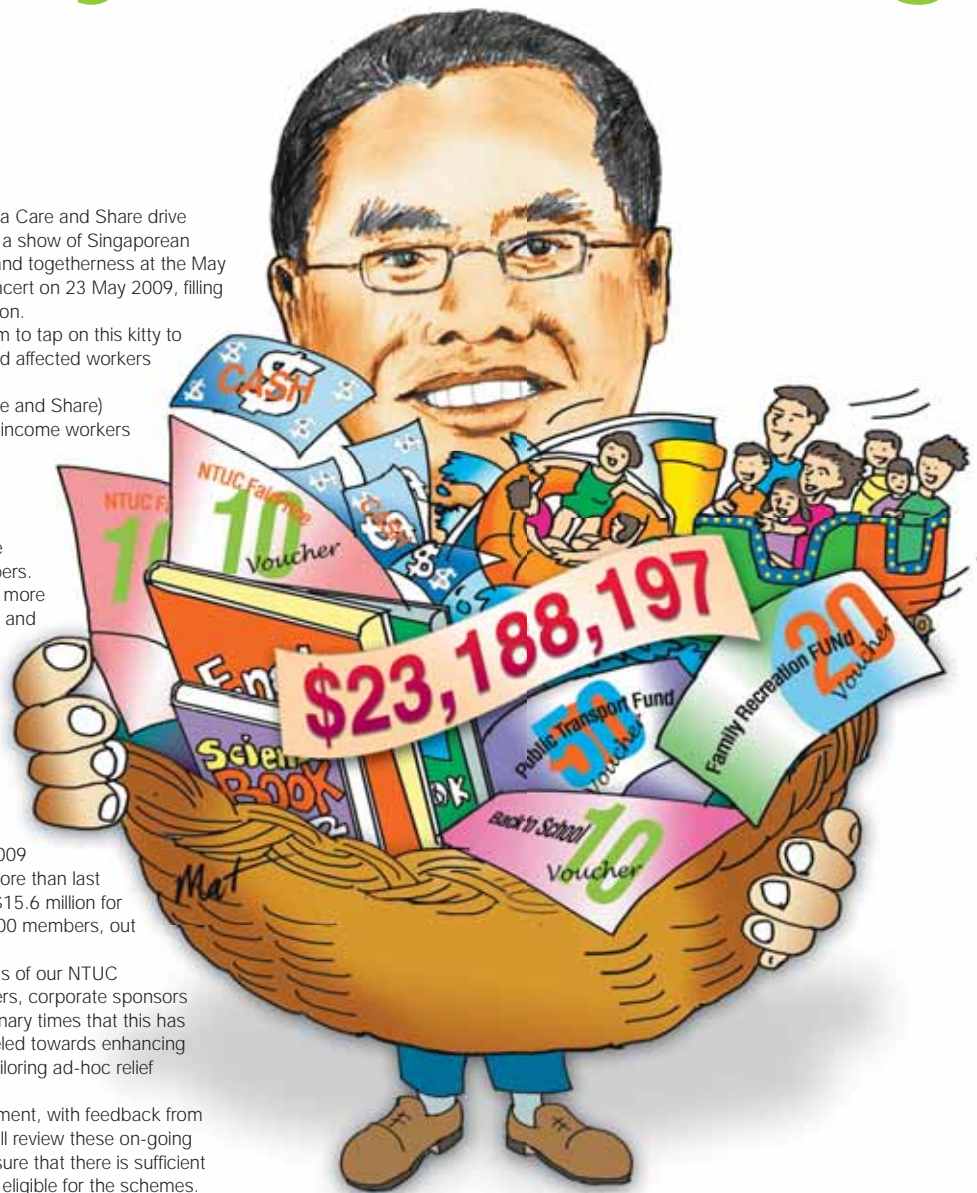
The Labour Movement's momentum to tap on this kitty to provide assistance for lower-income and affected workers has already started rolling.

Said NTUC Alignment Director (Care and Share) Zainudin Nordin: "In a downturn, lower-income workers who are cash strapped by shorter work weeks and retrenchments will require more financial help. As a caring Labour Movement, we are rolling out four programmes first to respond to the immediate needs of our affected members. The amount raised this year represents more than triple the Labour Movement's care and share efforts in a normal year, which is typically about \$7million. As such, \$10.9 million from the U Care Fund in 2009 will go towards enhancing existing assistance programmes or creating ad-hoc relief programmes to benefit targeted groups of members during the downturn."

The Labour Movement plans to assist a total of 194,000 members in 2009 from the U Care Fund, about 82,000 more than last year. The first four programmes worth \$15.6 million for the year will benefit an expected 151,000 members, out of the targeted 194,000 members.

"It is with the generous contributions of our NTUC Social Enterprises, management partners, corporate sponsors and our unions, even in these extraordinary times that this has been possible. This fund will be channeled towards enhancing both existing programmes as well as tailoring ad-hoc relief programmes," said Mr Zainudin.

Looking forward, the Labour Movement, with feedback from its affiliated unions and associations, will review these on-going programmes every three months to ensure that there is sufficient assistance for union members who are eligible for the schemes. The Labour Movement also plans to distribute all \$23.18 million by this end of this year.



## U Care Immediate Assistance (\$6.5m)

This year-long scheme will provide immediate relief to retrenched workers, workers on shorter work weeks, and workers on temporary layoffs facing difficulties. In close partnership with the NTUC affiliated unions and associations, eligible workers will receive immediate assistance ranging from \$100 to \$300, depending on their employment situation.

### What It Means To Members

You can receive immediate relief ranging from \$100 to \$300.

### How To Apply

Eligible union members can approach their respective unions with immediate effect to apply for the scheme.

## Bursary And Scholarship TOP-UP Scheme (\$1.2m)

Traditionally, unions have been giving out scholarships and bursaries awards to their members' children. This new element of the TOP-UP scheme aims to enable unions to increase their support to the children of lower-income union members. Therefore, this scheme will "top-up" the unions' budget in several ways.

### What It Means To Members

More children will be eligible for bursaries and scholarships or receive a higher amount than last year.

### How To Apply

Members should approach their respective unions to enquire about application details as dates and criteria may vary.

## Family Recreation & Fun Carnival (\$1.5m)

The Labour Movement recognises the importance of family support in these trying times. It will therefore increase its funding for the Family Recreation FUNd from \$1 million last year, to \$1.5 million this year. NTUC Club has also decided to increase the frequency of runs from four to six times in a year so that more families can enjoy a family day out, with an all-expenses paid package at Downtown East, NTUC Club. The first run of the carnival will begin on 31 May 2009 for members who have applied previously.

### What It Means To Members

You can receive an all-expense paid family package at Downtown East.

The next round of applications will be announced at a later date.

**In addition, U Care Fund will give about \$7.6m to the Back-to-School programme, NTUC Eldercare Trust and NTUC First Campus Bright Horizons Fund - to benefit at least 43,000 members. These three programmes will be rolled out at a later date.**

Eldercare, NTUC FairPrice, NTUC First Campus, NTUC Foodfare, NTUC Healthcare and NTUC Link.

### What It Means To Members

You can receive a booklet of vouchers worth \$80. Each voucher provides a \$2.50 discount for a minimum of \$5 spent.

### How To Apply

The eligibility criteria are as follows:

- Gross household income of \$1,800 and below OR
- Per capita income of \$500 and below
- Eligible members can approach their respective unions to apply.
- Application is open from 30 May 2009 to 30 June 2009**

## HSEU Branches Give Healthy Boost Of \$15,000 To U Care Fund

Story and Pictures by **Don Loke**  
Industrial Relations Officer, HSEU

In response to the Healthcare Services Employees' Union fundraising efforts, National University Hospital, Changi General Hospital and Tan Tock Seng Hospital have made a contribution of \$5,000 each to the fund. Cheques were presented to HSEU union leaders on 8 May, 14 May and 20 May 2009 respectively at the respective hospitals, who expressed their appreciation for each management's strong support for the Labour Movement.

"We thank our management partners for their generous contributions to the NTUC U Care Fund. Their timely response to our appeal for support demonstrates their strong commitment to the Labour Movement."



Diana Chia, HSEU General Secretary

"I'm glad that the union has engaged a worthwhile cause like the NTUC U Care Fund. We're in a fortunate position in this downturn, as we're employing new staff and expanding our capabilities. Our staff has benefited from past Care & Share efforts, so is only right for us to contribute back to this worthy cause."



TK Udairam, CGH Chief Executive Officer



A Healthy Boost... HSEU union leaders are all smiles with the generous donation from NUH, CGH and TTSH.

"NUH management and the union have always enjoyed an established and strong partnership with a common belief in the welfare of union members. We therefore support NTUC's initiative to assist workers and their families who are affected by the current economic downturn. We hope that this \$5,000 contribution to the U Care Fund can provide some financial assistance to affected workers and their families."

Joe Sim, NUH Chief Executive Officer

"TTSH is very fortunate in this downturn because we have enjoyed increased government support as well as staff support in maintaining cost-effectiveness. We recognise that we are part of a larger community and that our contribution to the NTUC U Care Fund will benefit Singaporeans affected by the downturn. We're also glad that NTUC and HSEU are working together to embark on this meaningful cause."

Dr Eugene Fidelis Soh, TTSH Chief Operating Officer

\$10.9 Million From U Care Fund			
30% goes towards enhancing existing programmes below:		70% goes towards creating ad-hoc relief programmes below in view of the downturn:	
U Stretch Vouchers	Helping 26,000 more members	U Care Immediate Assistance: • for retrenched workers • for shorter work week/temp layoff	Helping 56,000 members
Family Recreation FUNd		Bursary/Scholarship TOP-UP scheme	
Back to School			
NTUC Eldercare Trust/NTUC First Campus Bright Horizons Fund			
Target to help 82,000 more workers in 2009			

## U Stretch Vouchers (\$6.4m)

Last year, \$5 million was set aside for the U Stretch initiative. One of the programmes under this initiative was a booklet of \$50 U Stretch vouchers that entitled a 20 per cent discount off a \$10 purchase from six participating NTUC Social Enterprises.

This year, the Labour Movement will set aside \$6.4 million under the U Stretch initiative in the form of U Stretch vouchers that maximises the union member's expenditure with discounts from the NTUC family. To offer greater value to our workers, each voucher's discount has been increased to 50 per cent off a \$5 purchase. Each booklet of vouchers will be worth \$80, and is expected to benefit 80,000 lower-income union members.

The vouchers which expire on 28 February 2010, and can be used at seven participating NTUC Social Enterprises - NTUC Club, NTUC