

Active Ageing Consortium Asia Pacific



Bulletin

February - March 2015

Celebrating the 10th Anniversary...

From the President of ACAP



Prof. Kathryn Braun,
Hawaii University

Welcome to this edition of the ACAP Bulletin, full of stories from our members from the Asia-Pacific Region.

This month, I am happy to announce that the University of Hawaii has joined the Healthy Eating and Lifestyle Study (HEALS). This study was started by Saitama Prefectural University (SPU) in 2004 for the purpose of comparing diet and lifestyle in different communities.

Data were first collected from communities in Japan, including Saitama (a prefecture outside of Tokyo), Okinawa, Nagano, and Aomori. Okinawa was chosen because this prefecture has the longest life expectancy in Japan for women. Nagano was chosen because it has the longest life expectancy in Japan for men. Aomori was chosen because life expectancy in this prefecture is among the lowest in Japan.

The same questionnaire also has been used to collect data from communities in China, Taiwan, and Korea. Now, starting in 2015, data will be collected in Hawaii. Hawaii is happy to join with Asia-Pacific gerontologists and health scholars in this important research. The photo below is from a meeting at Saitama Prefectural University in January, 2015.

This is an example of how "working together is better than working alone." This is something that all ACAP members understand.

The ACAP Bulletin is another good example of our collaboration. Please continue to support it by sharing your news!



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Mr. Rama's interview on contributing to society through vocational commitment

Mr Kathirithamby Ramakrishnan (Rama, in short), 65, volunteers regularly at four different voluntary welfare organisations. He believes that life is about creating. Rama strongly believes that creating joyful experiences for ourselves and others makes life more meaningful and fulfilling. Besides volunteering, Rama founded his own consultancy firm in 1987 and provides soft skills training programmes for corporate clients. Contributing to society through vocational commitment is Rama's ongoing passion, as it leads him to personal growth and builds a better world that binds people together.

C3A: What motivates you to do volunteer work?

Mr Rama: Volunteering boosts overall happiness. It fills my heart with warmth and joy that I could not get anywhere else. You would be amazed at how a gentle pat on one's shoulder could have such a dramatic impact on a person's mind.

I like to see the heartfelt smiles from the beneficiaries. Smiles make a better world for everybody. I design Deepavali greeting cards every year since 2005 for everyone I know, and post it to their residential addresses even though there are more than 700 cards to prepare and over 2,500 to be sent online. People are very busy these days and they tend to be over-stressed. It is important to remind them to enjoy the festivities. It reminds them that they are not alone in their journey and in their lives. Being from a distance, I still pray hard for my overseas friends for their success in life.

C3A: How is your normal day?

Mr Rama: Every Monday, I spend four hours doing voluntary work

as a Changi Service Ambassador (CSA) in one of our airport terminals to provide help and guidance for visitors. It is for my own benefit too. I volunteer for this programme because it entails four hours of walking with a break of half an hour. As a diabetic, continuous walking is good for me. Furthermore, I get to be familiar with all the gardens and parks in the three transit terminals of our airport. Talking to people keeps my mind sharp and active, as I need to provide useful information to the visitors.

I also volunteer as a Tele-Care Ambassador for HPB, thrice a month. I make phone calls to remind patients, encouraging them to consult doctors and do regular health check-up as some of them may have forgotten their appointment. Come 2015, I am planning to volunteer for SEA Games 2015!

C3A: What does vocational wellness mean to you?

Mr Rama: Vocational wellness is having a passion to work on whatever you like and having a commitment to see it through. Take myself as an example. I am still working and at the same time contributing to society through volunteerism. One needs to continue to contribute to society through the various available channels. This makes one feel energised and eager to move on in life without feeling depressed and lonely. Mental health can also be improved considerably too.

C3A: Do you enjoy learning new things?

Mr Rama: I strongly feel that lifelong learning is a habit and a routine. I enjoy learning new things. I took part in the Intergenerational Learning Programme (ILP), an initiative of C3A. I learnt how to upload videos and photos taught by students. As of today, I have more than 2,600 friends on Facebook and know how to communicate with them via social media platforms.

Sometimes, I teach my friends to create Facebook accounts and expand their social network. With more friends, seniors can lead a happy and lively life. Recently, I was nominated and awarded the Silver Infocomm Wellness Ambassador (SIWA)! This is indeed an encouragement and a positive acknowledgement for me that motivates me to do more for our society.

C3A: Do you meet up with your friends who are on Facebook regularly in real life?

Mr Rama: Yes, I organise a reading club and meet up with some of them once a month to discuss a short story we have just read. We will also discuss on how the story relates to real life issues. It is a good form of mental exercise and one can learn a lot as people share their experiences and knowledge.

*Reproduced with permission from **Council for Third Age (C3A)**.

Singapore - Council for Third Age (C3A) is an agency that promotes active ageing in Singapore through public education, outreach and partnership. The Council aims to create a vibrant pro-age Singapore where seniors can participate as integral members according to their interests and abilities.

Prof. Adachi Kiyoshi
Kyushu University, Japan



Prof. Adachi with students in a lecture room

Research projects on youth's perspectives on aging

I am happy to hear that ACAP is celebrating its 10th anniversary. Congratulations. I will introduce my two current research projects. For the first project, I wondered what younger people were thinking about the older people in an aging society, so I began an 'action research' project with a group of young people.

Because of statistics on the aging, newspaper and television reports, etc., young people have begun to consider the problem of living in an aging society, though I do not think these reports are so much from the 'young person's perspective' per se, or that they even reflect their perspective so much as the perspective of the government and administrations. In actuality, I believe that young people today do not really understand the lives and problems of the aging.

So, I have begun a collaborative research project with Gokase high school students in a small mountain village in Kyushu's Miyazaki prefecture, that concerns the topic of aging in the local area. With students from Kyushu University, I went to Gokase High, where we proposed to conduct a research project called the "One Mile Project," which is similar to the one that was conducted with the students of Hawaii's Iolani high school.

As of this time, we have begun the research process. Through the perspective of younger people, specifically high school students in a Japanese mountain village, I am researching youth perspectives on aging. In September of this year, we hope to visit Hawaii with the results

of this project along with the high school students and students from Kyushu University. By working with the younger generation and examining the topic of aging locally in Kyushu and in Hawaii, we can think of a plan for handling the aged society in the future with the help of action research.

For the second project, together with Professor Ogawa and others, we are surveying the managing directors of Fukuoka's nursing homes on the future of elderly care and nursing homes. We are using the Delphi Method on nursing home proprietors to predict the future of elderly care in the nursing establishment. This isn't to investigate the facts of today's elderly care, but the perspective of the management. In Japan, as aging progresses, the population has begun to decline, and there is widespread anxiety about this. What does the administration of Nursing homes think about the future of elderly care? How will they continue to operate? What do they predict will happen in the future and what kind of influence to they feel they have on it? I am still in the process of data collection, but intend to report the results as they unfold.



2014年(平成26年)9月13日 土曜日 24

宮崎県南九州ワイド

あすのごよみ 14日
 月曜 8月15日
 火曜 8月16日
 水曜 8月17日
 木曜 8月18日
 金曜 8月19日
 土曜 8月20日
 日曜 8月21日

【読者サービス】
 月謝 2,100円
 送料 200円
 代金引当 2,300円
 休刊 1,000円
 一冊 1,000円

地元の課題とともに考えよう

五ヶ瀬中等教育学校生
 九大生らとの共同研究始める

五ヶ瀬中等教育学校の4年生

五ヶ瀬中等教育学校の4年生は、九州大学との共同研究が始まる。...

五ヶ瀬中等教育学校の4年生は、九州大学との共同研究が始まる。...

Changing the view of ageing through Broadcasting in Busan, South Korea



Dr. Dong Hee Han,
Director, Research Institute
of Science for the Better
Living of the Elderly,
Busan, Korea

I have had lots of frustration regarding ageing issues in mass media in Korea. There have been too many negative images of ageing in our society. Most old people have been made to feel guilty about getting older in their communities. However, this year there has been a little breakthrough in Busan via Korea Broadcasting Service (KBS) which aired programs on ageing recently. I would like to share two significant programs with our ACAP friends. I hope this will challenge us.

One of the special issues was referred to as “A city not getting older and older” and consisted of three sessions. The first part was about general ageing issues and ageing in Korea. Though KBS Busan is a local TV station it covered domestic situation.

The second part dealt with “silver money.” I think this is the first time the term was used on the TV as the media tried to portray seniors not as burden but a resource in the society. Moreover, older persons are an important part of consumer market that buys quality products for their late life. Therefore, companies should develop technologies, ideas and products suitable for senior consumers. Growth of age-friendly industry and ageing business will help to address challenges in the ageing society.

KBS Busan reporter, Ms Kyeae Kim, visited Japan, Denmark, USA to find evidences of cities with better environment, well developed, and advanced technology for the aged. The program encouraged the society to change its “Image of Ageing” because if people think ageing is just the end of life then there is no inspiration to be active.

Encouragingly, our ACAP members were actively involved in the TV program. In this regard, I wish to express my warm thanks to Kathryn, Cullen, Roy and Tony and other ACAP friends in Hawaii, and Takeo in Japan.



The last portion of the broadcast was about “Age Friendly Community”. Another TV reporter, Mr. Kong, put together many scenes of age friendly society in the program. At present, we can see age friendly models in New York, USA and Manchester, UK. Busan is also trying to face new challenges of developing better environment for old people.

Made by local broadcasters, KBS Busan dealt with an important domestic and global issue. Many gerontologists watched the programs and I was excited when some of them contacted me. They highly commented on the programs as heading to the right direction on ageing. The progress may be slow but we are indeed moving toward an active ageing society.

Another special issue in the program was the “Miracle House”. In Korea we have community for the aged facility or “Kyunrodang” which is community house for older olds. Most seniors there are over 70year old. They meet together to have lunch and play Whatu(a Korean card game) and chat among themselves. Most facilities were built over 50 years ago, so they are getting old like the older persons themselves. Busan KBS applied for government funding and finally remodeled 3 such homes last year. In this program the broadcaster showed what happen in the miracle houses and how to re-design community houses for old persons. The team met consultants and expert groups to assist with the programs. Finally after 1 year, there are 3 Miracle Houses in Busan! They showed all courses, how and what they have done, including many interviews of old persons who were very happy with Miracle Houses.

The TV aired ageing related programs, challenges, possible solutions, and opinions from older persons. New concepts of Kyunrodang for more active and social inclusiveness for the elderly were also discussed one hour for each segment on TV. Moreover the programs were aired on prime time.

A more active ageing society is emerging but we still have a big gap. Without a positive image of old persons, ours will remain an exclusive ageing society. Our gerontologists should co-work with the media and other professions to enhance active and age-friendly cities.



“Young at Heart” : active intergenerational engagements and learning to take selfie!



By Leng Leng THANG,
National University
of Singapore

Among the programs promoting active aging in Singapore, learning how to use the mobile phones beyond just calling is increasingly deemed necessary among the seniors eagle to keep up with the new techno-lifestyle.

In August 2014, a group of students at the College of Alice and Peter Tan, National University of Singapore, initiated a successful Capstone project they named 'Young at Heart' precisely to impart the knowledge of using mobile phones and apps to community-dwelling seniors. The project idea surfaced when the students who were volunteering to teach English to the seniors received increasing requests from them on how to use the mobile phones in more ways than for calling. This triggered the students' interest to design a project with the intention to promote active aging among the seniors, not only through learning how to use the mobile phones, but also to interact with the young in the learning process.

The project consisted of four sessions of learning under the intergenerational learning program framework. In every two-hour session held over four weekends at the university, the students began engaging with seniors first through fun warming up activities. Then the 40 seniors are divided into 3 to 4 groups with about 3 students in each group who will teach them how to use phone apps such as how to take photos, editing, sending, and how to use facebook and other apps, depending on the level of initial knowledge and interest of the seniors in each group. In one of the sessions, the seniors had a mini 'excursion' with the students around the university campus to take pictures, including trying out the latest fad on how to take selfie!

At the conclusion of the project, the seniors were thankful to the young people for their patience in teaching them to acquire new knowledge on mobile phones, one said, "I asked my grandchild to teach me but they always said wait, wait." The grandmother was glad that she was able to finally learn

from the students how to take pictures with the mobile phone. While the seniors learnt new skills to connect with their loved ones and gained more information on what's around them through accessing to the social media on their mobile, the young people had also benefited greatly. The intergenerational engagements have changed their perspective on seniors whom they now realized are as equally eagle about learning and are fun-loving people who are young at heart. The experience also taught them the need for flexibility in designing programs for seniors, who came with diverse levels of prior skills and capabilities. Most of all, they marveled at how easy it is to break down the barriers of age with mutual interest to learn and

The project was spearheaded by Andrew Tjoa, Li Wei, William Ho and Yin Zili with the support of Uncle Johnny, who helped invited the seniors from Clementi area to join the program.



Introducing SeniorNet to ACAP

We are introducing SeniorNet and its programs to all our ACAP members. The Chairperson, Leslie M. Smith, is interested in ACAP activities and discussing future collaboration.

SeniorNet (www.seniornet.org) is the nation's premier and most respected nonprofit organization specializing in computer and Internet education for adults over 50 and those in need. Since 1986, SeniorNet has empowered more than two million Boomers, Seniors, Veterans, and those that have computer skill needs by providing encouragement, lifelong learning opportunities and new worlds to explore via the Internet.

Based in Fort Myers, Florida, SeniorNet has approximately 4,000 members, is staffed by more than 1,500 volunteers and have 36 Learning Centers in the United States, including Indian Reservations and underserved areas.

SeniorNet was founded in 1986 in California. Que/Pearson Publications (the world's leading learning company in publications) partnered with SeniorNet to support its mission with on-going grants of books being sent to SeniorNet Centers around the country and 40% to 50% discounts year round.

Also, Microsoft, IBM and Adobe has been SeniorNet's sponsor of software and hardware grants for the last 20 plus years.

A delegation of Chinese dignitaries who focus on education for seniors went to the United States to visit SeniorNet – they wanted to understand why/how the nonprofit organization continued to be successful after nearly 29 years. They concluded that it would be beneficial for them to duplicate SeniorNet's business model in China. In addition SeniorNet's recent partnership with SAAR Nepal received world-wide attention.

Many companies understand and appreciate what SeniorNet does including Google, Senior Planning Services and Manpower, Inc.

For more information about SeniorNet please visit:

<http://www.seniornet.org/> <http://seniornet.org/newsletter.html>



ACAP Updates



50plus EXPO 2015' March 2015

Hosted by C3A, Singapore's largest expo for seniors - 50plus EXPO 2015 will be held from 27 to 29 March 2015 at Suntec Singapore, Hall 401 – 404, 11am to 9pm. Visit the expo to learn a host of health and wellness tips; attend educational forum talks and workshops; pick up new interests; enjoy latest technology trends; win exciting prizes and more.

Admission is FREE.

For more info.: <http://www.50plussingapore.com/>



Let's meet in Chiangmai for
IAGG 2015

and celebrate **ACAP's 10th Anniversary!**

KINDLY NOTE

**Deadline for submitting articles
for April-May issue is
March 20th, 2015**

Our email address: activeaging2005@gmail.com

Facebook: [Active Aging Consortium Asia Pacific](#)

Have you submitted your abstract?

Take an active role in sharing your knowledge, research and experience with colleagues and peers by submitting abstract to IAGG Asia/Oceania 2015. With the timely congress theme of 'Healthy Aging Beyond Frontiers,' we look forward your contribution on the clinical sciences, biological sciences, behavioral and social sciences, or policy, planning and practice, as they affect the development of gerontology and geriatrics regionally.

To submit abstract or register please contact: **AGG 2015 Congress Secretariat, Tel: +662 7487881 Fax: +662 7487880, Email: info@iaggchiangmai2015.com**