



For immediate release

Shape Our Future: *WeCan!* - Project *WeCan* Career Exploration Day
A Mega Educational and Career Expo co-organised by Government, Corporates, Schools and NGO
Benefitting 5,000 students and 50 schools and paving way for their brighter future

November 28, 2015, Hong Kong — In Hong Kong, 80% of students graduating from their secondary schools study are not able to get into local subsidised universities, and half of these students come from the so-called band 3 schools. These students are talented but their opportunities and exposure may have been contained due to lack of resources and guidance. Thus, life planning advocated by government and our society is of utmost importance to these students.

Project *WeCan* aims to support secondary school students who are disadvantaged in learning. This year, Project *WeCan* has partnered with YWCA with the support from Social Welfare Department's Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged, to organize the first ever **Shape Our Future: *WeCan!* - Project *WeCan* Career Exploration Day** for nearly 5,000 Form 4 students from about 50 secondary schools.

The event was kicked off by Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, GBS, JP, Secretary for Labour and Welfare; Mr Stephen Ng, Chairman of Project *WeCan* Committee; Ms Lai Sau Ling, Deputy Chief Executive of YWCA; and Ms Karmen Yeung, President of the Taxation Institute of Hong Kong, one of the partner organisations of Project *WeCan*.

Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, GBS, JP, Secretary for Labour and Welfare said, "Not only is Project *WeCan* a pioneer in demonstrating collaboration among business sector, government, schools and NGOs, it is also a solid partner of the government. Volunteers in the Project are certainly making a difference to the young people in the project. The project's vision of inspiring the next generation for a brighter future echoes government's one of the priorities for young people."

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Mr Matthew Cheung continued, “The HKSAR government injected an additional HK\$400 million to the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged, in which half of the funding is designated to support primary and secondary students from needy families to obtain after-school learning and activities programmes. Such concept is incepted with inspiration by Project *WeCan*. ”

Mr Stephen Ng, Chairman of Project *WeCan* Committee said, “The business sector is one of the largest employers in Hong Kong, guided by our Business-in-Community principle, we reach out to the community directly to offer help so that schools, teachers and students will be more informed of the actual requirements and expectations in the workplace, and therefore narrowing the expectation gaps with each other. Business sector’s active supports for the youngsters today will benefit corporates themselves in future employment. Under Project *WeCan*, other life planning activities are also offered such as a 3-week job shadowing at corporates during summer holidays, company visits, mock interviews and so on. ”

Mr Stephen Ng continued, “We are very pleased to join hands with the schools, government and NGOs, to help the disadvantaged, with an ultimate aim of supporting youth’s growth and infuse the ‘We Can’ spirit for their future.”

The Shape Our Future: *WeCan!* event will be organized in two waves offering a host of activities ranging from career-orientation assessment, individual consultation, job tasting and demonstration, teachers and parents’ workshops, star talks, career planning, mock interview and resume writing etc, along with more than 30 study and career orientation workshops. The first round held in Caritas Fanling Chan Chun Ha Secondary School today covers 19 secondary schools and nearly 2,000 students.

The first life planning activities are personalized for each student based on survey conducted with students by YWCA to assess their personalities, strengths and career aspirations, matched with different job tasters and demonstration, teachers and parents’ workshops, star talks, mock interviews and resume writing conducted by professionals. Students will gain a more comprehensive understanding of themselves and find the way forward. They will also receive an assessment report for their future planning.

Ms Lai Sau Ling, Deputy Chief Executive of YWCA said, “We are pleased to see business sector’s proactive support for students’ life planning. The breadth and depth of this event is unprecedented. We would also like to thank the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged for their support. In the past, life planning activities focus on Form 5 and 6 students, the initiative to start the effort from Form 4 students is encouraging as it helps widen students’ horizons and understand different options available for them and address their weaknesses at an earlier stage. We hope that all these will

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inspire them to pursue their goals and not to confine themselves to front-line and labour-oriented work.”

A student once thought that he could only live on CSSA following his parents’ path. Caritas Fanling Chan Chun Ha Secondary School Principal Ho Ying Hon said, “The biggest barrier in running life planning programme for students are that many students do not have a clear objective or concept about their future or what they wanted to do, while their parents who may be working long hours and lack of understanding about the latest job market. They tend to be conservative and find it difficult to coach their children. With government, corporates and NGOs joining hands to support life planning makes a great difference to them.”

The second round of the Shape Our Future: *WeCan!* Event will be held in June next year, which will cover 30 secondary schools and nearly 3,000 students.

About Project *WeCan*

Project *WeCan*, a Business-in-Community initiative, aims to provide secondary school students who are disadvantaged in learning with additional resources and care to empower them for pursuing higher education and future careers. The Project currently has 50 schools participated, benefitting about 42,000 students.

Please visit www.projectwecan.com or Facebook page www.facebook.com/projectwecanhk for more details.

About Hong Kong Young Women’s Christian Association

Established in 1920, Hong Kong Young Women’s Christian Association (HKYWCA), as a women’s organization with the longest history, has evolved into a leading social service organization with a wide spectrum of services catering to the needs of people from all walks of life. The services offered focus on women and family, youth development, elderly and education. Currently, it has over 80 service units strategically located in Hong Kong and the service attendance at HKYWCA exceeds 3 million annually. For more information about HKYWCA, please go to www.ywca.org.hk.

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