

20 projects commended in celebration of 25th anniversary of OEP (with photos)

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (November 1) held the 2023 Award Presentation Ceremony of the Opportunities for the Elderly Project (OEP) themed "Golden Years Journey" to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the OEP and commend 20 outstanding projects. More than 900 participants from across the territory enjoyed a variety of games and exciting performances at the ceremony, while some 2 000 others participated in the event online via live broadcast.

The ceremony was officiated by the Director of Social Welfare, Miss Charmaine Lee; the Chairman of the Elderly Commission, Dr Donald Li; and the Chairman of the OEP Advisory Committee, Professor Diana Lee. Six Special OEP Awards, 11 District Best OEP Awards and the top three of the Hong Kong Best OEP Awards for the 2022-23 one-year projects were presented at the ceremony to commend outstanding participating organisations.

Addressing the ceremony, Miss Lee said that the Government has all along been providing support for elderly persons on various fronts. Apart from allocating extra resources to facilitate ageing in place, it also attaches great importance to the needs of retiring persons. To encourage elderly persons to continue to develop their talents, contribute to society and achieve positive ageing in their retirement life, the Government has enhanced pre-retirement planning services in more than 200 District Elderly Community Centres and Neighbourhood Elderly Centres.

She also commended the remarkable achievements of the OEP, which has subsidised nearly 6 800 district programmes with more than 4.1 million participants, including 2.49 million elderly people, since it was launched 25 years ago.

Dr Li reviewed the development of the OEP over the past 25 years at the ceremony and commended the OEP for its progression with the times. He hoped that elderly persons would continue to join different activities, including the emerging activities organised by the elderly centres, such as darts and floor curling, in order to exercise more, embrace new things and attain physical and mental wellness.

Caritas Elderly Centre – Shatin was awarded the Championship of the Hong Kong Best OEP Award for one-year projects with their programme, which aims to promote cross-generational integration through the production of micro-films and picture books. The award-winning project demonstrates the joyful spirit of the elderly in moving with the times through their participation in project design, planning and implementation.

Starting from 2020, the first Thursday of November has been selected as

the OEP Day by the SWD. The SWD has continued to recruit elderly volunteers to be OEP Ambassadors for promoting activities for four years in a row. The OEP Ambassadors will be holding exercise sessions at the District Elderly Centres and the Neighbourhood Elderly Centres in different districts tomorrow (November 2) to show their energy and promote the OEP Day across the territory.

For details of the OEP and an archive of the ceremony, please visit the OEP Facebook page (www.facebook.com/OpportunitiesForTheElderlyProject/live).

