

2024 OEP Award Presentation Ceremony held today to celebrate National Day with elders (with photos)

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (November 13) held the 2024 Award Presentation Ceremony of the Opportunities for the Elderly Project (OEP), in which elders across the territory were invited to share the joy of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Through presenting awards to outstanding projects, the ceremony encouraged elderly persons to extend their efforts in developing their talents and making contributions to society.

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, Mr Silas Poon, the ceremony presented 39 awards to outstanding OEP projects, including a total of 11 Special OEP Awards for one-year projects in 2023-24 and two-year projects in 2022-24, 22 District Best OEP Awards, and six Hong Kong Best OEP Awards. A variety of games and exciting performances were also arranged to bring joy and laughter for both the elders at the ceremony and an elderly audience of about 5 000 who participated in the event online via live broadcast.

Miss Lee said that the ceremony this year, themed "Embracing the Past, Forging a Bright Future", is a reflection of the old Hong Kong and a showcase of the significant contributions made by the elders in driving social development and nurturing the younger generations. She commended retired elders for practising the spirit of positive ageing, which has contributed to their fruitful and rewarding retirement life.

Miss Lee added that, to show care and respect for the elderly, the SWD has organised a joint concession programme on Senior Citizens Day this Sunday, where over 400 organisations and merchants with more than 1 800 restaurants, retail shops and service merchants throughout the 18 districts will offer special discounts and concessions to Senior Citizen Card holders. While expressing gratitude to the enthusiastic support from the merchants to the programme, she encouraged elders to enjoy the discounts and privileges on Senior Citizens Day.

At the ceremony, Dr Li also encouraged elderly persons to continue learning, pursue new hobbies and play an active role in society. The Elder Academy Scheme, jointly launched by the Labour and Welfare Bureau and the Elderly Commission, provides elders with a lifelong learning platform which will help them enjoy a healthy and active retirement life.

Caritas District Elderly Centre – Yuen Long was awarded the Championship of the Hong Kong Best OEP Award for one-year projects for its programme which promotes continuous learning, cross-generational integration and the spirit of serving the community. Upon learning the skills of hairstyling, soft-meal

making and home organising from hairdressers, chefs and life organisers respectively, the participating elders have partnered with secondary students to provide volunteer service to elderly singletons. The Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association Wan Wah Care and Attention Home for the Elderly was awarded the Championship of the Hong Kong Best OEP Award for two-year projects. The award-winning project, which promotes active ageing, encourages elderly persons to develop their potential by learning how to make puppets and volunteering for performing in puppet theatres for elderly persons living in residential homes.

Implemented by the SWD, the OEP subsidises different organisations to hold a wide range of activities for elders to assist them to lead a fulfilling retirement life. More than 7 200 district programmes have been held so far for more than 2.5 million elderly participants.

Starting from 2020, the first Thursday of November has been selected as the OEP Day by the SWD. The OEP Ambassadors held exercise sessions at the District Elderly Community Centres and the Neighbourhood Elderly Centres in various districts on the OEP Day on November 7. The OEP exercises this year carried the elements of bonding across generations to show the energetic side of the elders and promote positive ageing. A relevant video has been uploaded to the SWD's YouTube Channel (www.youtube.com/@SocialWelfareDepartment).

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



