



Outward Bound  
Singapore

# INSPIRED INDIVIDUALS TRANSFORMED COMMUNITIES

Key Highlights 2012

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## OBS ALUMNI

Bridging inspired individuals  
with the greater community

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## MEASURING IMPACT OF A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

Bringing positive change in  
personal and inter-personal  
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## LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE AWARD

Empowering youths to push  
their boundaries

# director's message



Celebrating Outward Bound Singapore's (OBS) 45th anniversary this year, we look back at a legacy of character-building and leadership development through adventure learning. With a string of accolades, including the Excellence for Singapore award, OBS has certainly come a long way since 1967.



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Youths of today are increasingly growing up in virtual networks and generally showing lower levels of real-life social engagement. This year, in line with the new Ministry of Community, Culture and Youths' (MCCY) priority to have more youths contribute to the society, and the Ministry of Education (MOE) emphasizing on a student-centric and values-driven education – OBS presents its refreshed vision "Inspired Individuals. Transformed Communities." As Singapore strives to build itself a Home with Hope and Heart, I am keen to share with you some of OBS' new initiatives that contribute to the People's Association's (PA) Community 2015 Master Plan to build social capital by empowering youths and community leaders, imbuing them with a sense of belonging and care for others, and in effect help create a great home and caring community.

Our exciting line-up of initiatives includes the OBS In-programme Service for students to realize the difference they can make to others, the Leadership and Service Award that further develops community-centric youths with the 21-Day Classic Challenge, and the OBS Alumni to bridge inspired individuals with the community after their OBS experience. In addition, the specially-designed Community Leaders Programmes have groomed more than 1,000 (and counting) grassroots leaders and Community Emergency and Engagement Committee members.

OBS has accumulated valuable institutional knowledge in learning facilitation and delivery tools for various profiles. In the following pages, you will find insightful study results and features of how youths have found their lives changed after an OBS experience. Having nurtured youths for the past 45 years, we now invite you to join us in bridging them with the greater community!

**Yours sincerely,**

**Nicholas Conceicao**  
Director, Outward Bound Singapore

# increasing youth programmes



*Youths from different institutions enjoying a land trek in a 5-day expedition*

In line with the Ministry of Education's focus on providing a more student-centric and values-driven education, OBS will significantly increase programme places for students from Secondary 3, Junior College, Polytechnics and Universities. By 2014, more than 18,000 youths will benefit from a mentally and physically enriching OBS experience annually.

Character-building is as much about care for others as it is about awareness

of self. Hence, students are not only nudged out of their comfort zone to appreciate the essence of the Outward Bound motto "To serve, to strive and not to yield", but also encouraged to perform service to fellow peers through simple daily routines such as tent-pitching and field-cooking; as well as service to others through service projects such as creating a path in an overgrown trail for the benefit of future campers.

The OBS' proven brand of personal and group facilitations by specially-trained instructors help students relate what they have learnt in the outdoors with their personal lives. Students then commit to concrete action plans to achieve their goals. They are also encouraged to adopt a cause which they identify with in their community, before brainstorming, planning and executing engagement activities that will make a positive difference to their cause of choice. The result is students taking ownership of their community involvement and emerging from their

Outward Bound experience empowered as active citizens inspired to serve their community.



*Participants of an OBS programme doing their part for the environment*

# unleashing youths' potential with the OBS alumni

The notion of service has always been close to OBS' heart as it resonates with an Outward Bound Pillar - a sense of compassion through service. Hence, the OBS Alumni platform was launched this year to provide community engagement opportunities for youths to make a difference to others, and bolster the People's Association's strategic objective of building a more inclusive society.

The OBS Alumni is slowly but surely gaining momentum. Comprising high-spirited and big-hearted youths who morph into community heroes in OBS Alumni shirts, these irrepressible youngsters are unreservedly devoting precious weekends to bringing cheer to the under-privileged. Coming up are just some snippets of how our big-hearted OBS Alumni's positive energy is making waves in our community.



# unleashing youths' potential with the OBS alumni

(cont'd)

Date	Event	
Sept 2012	<p><b>Walk for Rice</b></p> <p>13 OBS Alumni raised 390 bowls of rice, sponsored by NTUC Fairprice, for needy families in the Harvest Care Centre's 'Walk for Rice' event @ East Coast Park on 8<sup>th</sup> Sept.</p>	
Oct 2012	<p><b>Willing Hearts' Soup Kitchen</b></p> <p>10 OBS Alumni sweated it out carrying big bags of rice, endlessly cutting vegetables, packing noodles and scooping dishes into lunch boxes before zooming off in a van to distribute these packets of food to the less-fortunate across Singapore.</p>	
	<p><b>Halloween-themed Dinner with Under-privileged Residents</b></p> <p>14 OBS Alumni brought an evening of much cheer and laughter to under-privileged residents by distributing food and hosting games at a Halloween-themed dinner party organized by the Jurong Green Youth Executive Committee (YEC).</p>	
Nov 2012	<p><b>Befriending under-privileged children in Arts and Crafts workshops</b></p> <p>27 OBS Alumni befriended and delighted under-privileged children from the Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home in a series of creative arts and crafts workshops.</p>	
	<p><b>CapitaMalls Asia – My Schoolbag</b></p> <p>11 OBS Alumni turned companions and brought smiles to under-privileged children who received complimentary schoolbags containing school and daily necessities sponsored and organised by CapitaMalls Asia and the five Community Development Council (CDCs).</p>	

# measuring impact of a life-changing experience

It is often said that an Outward Bound programme develops self-aware, courageous and compassionate leaders. In order to determine how attitudes are changed after an OBS programme, a quantitative survey of about 250 teenage participants of “The 7 Habits of Highly-Effective Teens” was conducted. “7 Habits” is designed to equip young people with a set of proven training tools that boost self-esteem, improve communication skills, resist peer pressure, strengthen relationships and achieve academic and personal goals among others.

The survey found positive differences in the areas of self-responsibility, time management and interpersonal relationships:

Criteria	% Increase/ (Decrease) after Programme	
	“Always”	“Never”
I take responsibility for my moods and actions rather than blame others and circumstances.	9.3	(0.0)
I organize and prepare in a way that reduces having to do last minute work.	8.5	(2.5)
I am disciplined in carrying out plans (avoid wasting time).	6.8	(4.1)
When listening, I try to see things from the other person's point of view.	6.5	(3.3)
When solving conflicts, I will find solutions that benefit all.	6.9	(2.4)
I am sensitive to the feelings of others.	8.1	(0.8)
I know what I want to accomplish in life.	3.2	(2.5)

As a result of the “7 Habits”, more students felt that they took responsibility for their own moods and actions instead of transferring it to other reasons. In the area of time management skills, the programme had evidently not only enabled the students to realize the practical benefits of good planning and follow-through but also helped them do so. The survey results also suggests the programme had helped the students move up in various increments on the EQ rungs towards achieving more effective interpersonal relationships. Interestingly, the results also indicated that after the programme, the students also gained better clarity of their long-term aspirations.

Every individual impacted is an achievement. An OBS programme not only helps the keen and ready to excel but also inspires participants who have not yet discovered their hidden strengths to go beyond their limits.

Coming up: OBS participants share how their OBS experience has changed them in various ways.



The 7 Habits are habits that are timeless, and really address the issue of personal effectiveness and interpersonal effectiveness.



**Francis Foo, Principal  
(Choa Chu Kang Primary School)**

# multi-dimensional adventures, life-changing experiences

Braving the weather, camping out in tents, conquering a high obstacle and taking on adventure challenges such as going on a sailing expedition or trekking in the rustic environment of Pulau Ubin. What often make these activities memorable are the learning values that youths come to associate with these experiences. The life-changing impact of an Outward Bound course is certainly conspicuous, as shared by principal of Tanjong Katong Girls' School (TKGS), Mrs Mary Seah.

"When I first came to this school and went around the different Secondary 4 classes and I ask them, if I could help you prepare for your O levels examination, what is one thing you want me to do? And they said, 'Madam, please run another OBS course for us, because it was at OBS that we found courage, we learnt to be determined, we learnt not to give up, even though the going was tough. We learnt to work together as a team, we supported each other and we overcame the odds.' I thought that spoke volumes about what OBS could do for my students."

By reminding youths to appreciate what they usually take for granted, an OBS programme also strengthens relationships. TKGS student Savana Fairoze Idnani shared how OBS had brought her closer with her family, "Before OBS, I was very quiet in my family. The course allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and I learnt to speak out with my loved ones. This really improved our relationship."

Besides instructor-facilitated learning, an OBS programme also harnesses the power of peer-influence which improves group dynamics, as 16-year-old Ng Wei Jin from Raffles Institution attests, "When we were lost in the mangrove forest, I was amazed at how everyone persevered to find the way out. This influenced me to endure the difficulties as well."

Serial OBS participant, Sanjay Radakrishna, exuberantly tell us, "I have participated in 4 Outward Bound courses. OBS has given me new insights in life. I've had the chance to pick up various life skills and values that have helped me to identify my own strengths and weaknesses. These new skills have allowed me to embrace the world with an open mind as well as be ready to help the people around me."

Participants learn best when they take ownership of planning and problem-solving in an engaging and supportive environment. OBS provides that very platform for youths to discover their inner strengths and step up!



*Students forming strong bonds while camping out in tents*



*4-time OBS course participant, Sanjay Radakrishna*

# redefining you-ths with the leadership and service award (LSA)



LSA recipient Loh Yi Rong with his fellow course-mates on their 21-day expedition

The Leadership and Service Award (LSA) was introduced by OBS to challenge and redefine what youths can achieve for themselves and the community. Successful applicants receive a scholarship to attend the OBS 21-Day Classic Challenge Course – a signature multi-element and multi-expedition journey of self-discovery, after which they undertake leadership roles in meaningful community service projects such as organizing a one-of-a-kind OBS adventure for youths with special-needs, who would otherwise not have the access to such an empowering experience.

The LSA is an eye-opener to one's own capabilities, and convinced Loh Yi Rong, an undergraduate of the Nanyang Technological University, of his duty to serve others. "After OBS, I decided to join an environmental youth group. I was recently elected to serve as their Vice-Chairman and I have been involved in organising a few pro-environment events with them."

Fellow LSA recipient Jaslin Kong went on to conduct a 1-day kayaking orientation programme for youths with at-risk behaviour from Beyond Social Services. "I wanted them to like kayaking and eventually get their certifications, even to coaching level, so they can return and contribute to others in a cycle and we've had 3 sessions so far. I think what they really need is structure, and a programme that will help them learn something new."

Jaslin quipped how something about OBS energized her for a change. "I cut my long hair to a bob and shocked all my friends, it was a very big step for me." President of a CCA volunteer group, she added, "No more procrastinating. Before OBS, I'd be neutral and think it was okay if my volunteers didn't turn up. Now I think rocking the boat will be a little nice. If my volunteers don't turn up, I will step in and fill the gap while encouraging them to come. My CCA adviser can see the difference in me."



After OBS, I decided to join an environmental youth group. I was recently elected to serve as their Vice-Chairman and I have been involved in organising a few pro-environment events with them.



# OBS alumna flexes her muscles for the community



Joycelyn (left) shoulder-to-shoulder with fellow OBS Alumni Jacelyn Ng busy packing noodles to be served at the Willing Hearts' Soup Kitchen

So powerful was the sharing by her OBS Instructor of the fourth Outward Bound pillar – “a sense of compassion through service”, that 15-year old Joycelyn Sng was moved to pitch in for not one, or two but three community projects as an OBS Alumna.

In a short span of a few months, Joycelyn has:

- Raised 390 bowls of rice (sponsored by NTUC Fairprice) for needy families at Walk For Rice with the Harvest Care Centre
- Prepared and delivered food to the needy all over Singapore with the Willing Hearts' Soup Kitchen
- Befriended and engaged under-privileged children from the Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home.

We know this growing list of social projects is just the beginning for Joycelyn. The vivacious teen shared, “After my experience at OBS, I realized that I have more energy in me to help the needy. I don't mind waking up early in the morning to volunteer because I find it meaningful.”

Way to go, Joycelyn! We look forward to more youths recognizing causes that benefit our community and throwing in their weight to make a difference. As they say: Be the change you want to see. The OBS Alumni lets YOU-ths do just that!

# OBS help youths with autism reach for the sky

On OBS' annual Community Service Day in August, 110 OBS staff befriended and guided 47 youths with autism from the St. Andrew's Autism Centre (SAAC) and Eden Centre for Adults (ECA) in a customised 1-day adventure-based experience at OBS' East Coast campus.

The youths enjoyed themselves in various outdoor activities with OBS staff such as Instructors Shaik Muhammad Iftikhaar and Wan Yoke Ling guiding them in scaling the rock wall, navigating a dark tunnel-maze and playing team games. The OBS Adventure programme also helped them develop life skills such as self-confidence, teamwork, communication and leadership.

Kelvin Ong, who heads the Day Activity Centre at SAAC shared, “The youths have moderate to severe autism, and we were pleasantly surprised that most of them managed to climb the rock wall. It was a major accomplishment for them indeed. They also enjoyed the calm surroundings and wide open space that OBS offered.”

Working with participants with special needs is not new for OBS staff who have organized programmes for the hearing-impaired and intellectually-challenged children as well. As a pioneer in outdoor education, OBS will continue to lend its expertise to empower the various segments of our community with their very own unique Outward Bound experience.



OBS Instructors helping youths with autism scale the rockwall



# community leaders leap on the adventure bandwagon

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**More than 1000 GRLs**  
trained in 2012

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**16-71 years old**  
age range

Nobody is too young or old to help shape our home. OBS believes in bringing and bonding people together to create a more cohesive and harmonious community. Our specially-designed series of adventure-based programmes help grassroot leaders (GRLs) realize their untapped potential and inculcate a deeper passion to serve the community. The OBS GRL Teambuilding Programmes forge enduring friendships, strengthen existing ties and promote lasting camaraderie amongst these untiring community leaders. We believe that if we start by harnessing individual enablers, we can unite, liven and vivify one little community at a time.

Those who have come onboard include Tanglin-Cairnhill Constituency, Moulmein-Kallang GRC, Whampoa SMC, Hong Kah North Constituency, Bukit Batok East GRC, Bishan North CO and Marsiling CO. If you are a GRL, contact us to find out how a programme can be customized for your organization!



“The rock-climbing activity in OBS reinforces my never-give-up spirit. In serving the community, I must continue to adopt this mindset and focus on improving community events continuously.”

**Syahir Shahful Bahri, 16**  
**Tanglin-Cairnhill YEC Arts and**  
**Culture Secretary**



“Today I learnt the never give up spirit – ‘if I can’t, then I must’. It will be good if more people from my RC Committee come for an OBS programme. It will train them not to give up easily when handling community events or when they meet obstacles. “

**Gerlyn Ong Qiu Hui, 20**  
**Member of Hong Kah North**  
**Zone 4 RC**

# providing value in outdoor education (OE) like no other

OBS prides itself on having full-time dedicated outdoor professionals and world-class capabilities. A learning organization, it advocates meeting the highest industry standards in terms of educational methods and professional knowledge, and constantly seeks enrichment opportunities for staff to achieve these high standards.

## 45TH ANNIVERSARY SINGA-LUMUT EXPEDITION

To commemorate OBS' 45th anniversary, more than forty OBS staff sailed 630 nautical miles over 10 days in open waters off the Straits of Malacca in the Singa-Lumut Expedition, a unique opportunity for all to hone their outdoor skills and also reflect upon and reaffirm the very values that OBS teaches.



## EQUIPPING INSTRUCTORS WITH ADVANCED INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS

With programmes running locally and overseas through the year, OBS makes sure to equip Instructors with advanced industry skills for real-life situations.



Our staff recently undertook the extensive Wilderness Advanced First Aid (WAFA) course on stabilization, treatment and evacuation of patients in remote areas, and are certified skilled in handling a wide range of patient care issues from wounds to spinal injuries, from allergies to neurological emergencies, and more.

## OBS MEDICAL ADVISORY PANEL

The OBS Medical Advisory Panel, established in 1992, is an advisory body of senior doctors that meets quarterly to discuss medical protocols and methodologies relating to OBS programmes. It comprises three permanent and seven appointed members.

The panel regularly reviews OBS' medical policies to keep them current and aligned to the local healthcare standards. Clear parameters and guidelines are also laid out by the panel for the medical screening of OBS participants. All Instructors and Outdoor Nurse Practitioners (ONP) adhere closely to the best practices suggested by the

panel on the management of first aid and quality care provided to our participants.

Medical Panel's Areas of Specialization:

- Accident & Emergency Care
- Orthopaedic Surgery
- Sports Medicine
- Psychiatry
- Paediatrics
- Child Psychology
- General Practice



*The Medical Advisory Panel and OBS staff at the Appreciation Dinner organised to thank the panel for their contributions to OBS*



*Course participants doing their safety checks before a climbing activity*

# what's new in 2013?

In 2013, schools can look forward to more places in a greater variety of OBS youth programmes and greater opportunities for customized service learning to complement self-discovery. Inter-agency collaboration with the National Youth Council (NYC) and Voluntary Welfare Organizations (VWOs) to customize service programmes for schools is also in the works. As the OBS Alumni and Community Leaders Programmes swing into full gear in 2013, we hope to see a greater number of youths and GRLs connecting with the community in even more meaningful and creative ways.

OBS will continue to work closely with PA and other organizations in building capability for staff and volunteers. Individual youths will also be able to participate in a range of immersive Global Programmes. Those with leadership potential and keen in community volunteerism are strongly encouraged to apply for the Leadership Service Award (LSA) and a place in the memorable once-in-a-lifetime 21-day Classic Challenge.

**For more information on upcoming programmes, please visit our website ([www.obs.pa.gov.sg](http://www.obs.pa.gov.sg)), email: [PA\\_outward\\_bound@pa.gov.sg](mailto:PA_outward_bound@pa.gov.sg), or Tel: +65 6545 9008.**

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