



## An exciting June!

In this issue, read about:

- Water for Women fundraising project
- recent media features about aidha
- inspiring stories from an aidha graduate and our volunteer of the month
- upcoming events, volunteering opportunities, and more!

We hope you enjoy this edition of aidha singapore. For feedback or comments, please email us anytime at [communications@aidha.org](mailto:communications@aidha.org). Happy reading!



## aidha and UN Women partner for women's education

From 1 to 7 July, 2012, diners in leading restaurants in Singapore will be able to enjoy sumptuous meals while contributing to education for underprivileged women in the region's developing countries.

aidha teamed up with the Singapore Committee for UN Women, the United Nations entity for gender equality and women's empowerment, to launch "Water for Women", a fundraising awareness initiative in partnership with leading restaurants in Singapore.

Slated to run from 1 to 7 July, "Water for Women" coincides with Singapore's

celebration of International Water Week. **During the event period, restaurant patrons will be encouraged to donate a minimum of \$1 for every glass of tap water served during their meal.** Funds raised through this initiative will contribute mainly towards the financial literacy programmes spearheaded by UN Women and aidha. Restaurant partners include Senor Tacos, Pasha Bar and Restaurant, Kazbar, Via Mar, Gaia Ristorante and Absinthe.

For more information about the campaign as well as a full list of the restaurants who are partnering with us in this campaign, check out the aidha [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page.

## media appearances and features

A few more believers in aidha's work have featured us in their respective publications. Check them out:

### **Humaneity Magazine - June Issue**

Last April, Humaneity held their inaugural conference which saw social change agents that included aidha Executive Director, Veronica Gamez, share about their various endeavours. This month aidha is the subject of a [3-page feature](#) in their monthly digital magazine.

### **BWTP Bulletin**

Banking With The Poor (BWTP) did a [study on remittances](#) and the importance of including migrants in the banking system of their host countries. aidha was one of the organisations cited for enabling migrant domestic workers to improve the health of their remittances.

### **Schwab Foundation**

Finally, the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship released a journal on [governance of social enterprises](#) and cited aidha as one example of management structure.

Thanks to these exposures, aidha is gaining more and more visibility!

**thank you, audrey!**

**parvathy arumugam**  
*student of the month*



Life is a series of hellos and goodbyes, and this month, we are very sad to say goodbye and thank you to our dear Audrey Wong who is moving on to pursue a career in government policy.

Audrey started out with aidha in mid-2010 as our Assistant Director for Programmes. But as we all know, she did a lot more than that. In her expanded role at aidha, Audrey not only helped develop the current student programme, she has also served as a trainer for new mentors, a mentor buddy, and as volunteer manager. She also served as editor for the communications team, a role that we appreciate tremendously.

Describing her experience at aidha as a learning opportunity, Audrey says: "When I first started working at aidha, concerned friends would often ask, 'But when are you going to get a real job?'... I remember joking about this with Veronica, and she said that this job was more "real" than any she had ever had - here, she gave not just her time and effort but her whole self. **It's been an amazing journey learning from colleagues and volunteers who have given heart and soul in service of others.**



*A shot of Parvathy in between her classes at aidha.*

"Before, women were just kitchen workers. But in this generation, they need education. It brings a brighter future," Parvathy, a 47-year-old Taekwondo and running enthusiast says, with much energy. An Indian (Hindu) Malaysian domestic helper, Parvathy joined aidha after she heard about aidha from her neighbour, a fellow domestic worker from the Philippines. She started to work for her current employer family 7 years ago in Malaysia, then as the family moved to Singapore, she came to the new country with them. "Before aidha, I had no savings of my own. My older brother [who passed away a few years ago] took care of everything so I gave everything I earned to him. **I didn't think much about my future until I joined aidha,**" says Parvathy.

After joining aidha, her zeal for life really took off. She now is able to use the computer and internet and send text messages. More importantly, she has savings and future plans to establish her own flower garland business along with a farm for it. Attending Module 1 classes at aidha, she found that her instructors and mentors definitely made her learning more enjoyable as they explained different concepts until she was able to understand.

A natural extrovert, she appreciates the

And even more amazing to see the hope, strength and transformation of our students who left all they knew to build better futures for their communities."

Executive Director, Veronica Gamez, has this to say about Audrey: "Anybody visiting aidha would not be able to miss her kindness towards others, hands-on attitude and willingness to do anything required to support aidha's mission. Audrey was always mindful to ensure our students had the best learning experience while at aidha. She leaves a great legacy and has certainly inspired many as an exemplary hard-working, committed, focused and generous aidha representative. We will miss her very much!"

Indeed aidha will not be the same without Audrey. But we wish her all the best as she pursues her professional dreams of serving Singapore society.

*by ting claravall*

## volunteering opportunities

*Besides these, there are many other exciting projects available at aidha. Just approach us to find out how you can help!*

### communications

The communications team is the marketing, corporate communications, advertising, PR, design and digital arm of aidha. If you're interested in writing articles about aidha, have design skills or experience, enjoy photography as a hobby, or thinking about putting your time on Facebook to good, productive use, do join us and help us promote the aidha story to the world!

**IT**

**volunteers**

regular interactions with the volunteers and students from diverse backgrounds. She finds that her English is much better than before joining aidha, and she has made great friends from other countries at the school. She has constantly introduced aidha to other domestic helpers in her neighbourhood, helping them to explore new opportunities as well. Parvathy believes that "[aidha students] study more and learn more at aidha, not just from the education [it offers] but also from sharing with friends." Most importantly, she now defines herself as an independent woman with financial stability and high self-esteem.

"I like to spend each second in a good way. I don't want to waste time," says Parvathy. Indeed, on top of her busy schedule with her work and exercising activities, she is now enrolled in Module 2, taking up the rigorous business education classes and planning her business more in-depth.

"Shabas (keep it up), aidha!" she cheerfully says the Hindi phrase at the end of the interview. aidha wishes you the very same for you as well.

*by yina song*

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### for feedback or comments

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aidha receives laptop donations regularly and we need help getting them ready for our students' computer workshops. You will help erase old programmes, install new software, and label and organise computers so that the students can easily use them in class. You will need to donate a few hours each week to help out.

**If you want to volunteer but cannot come on Sundays, you can also come on weekdays or join us on our Tuesday 'late nights at aidha'! Please send an email to [info@aidha.org](mailto:info@aidha.org) if you're interested.**