

THREE-YEAR PARTNERSHIP TO PROVIDE WORK OPPORTUNITIES IN SPORTS

I.T.E., SPORTS HUB TEAM UP TO BOOST SPORTS MANPOWER

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SINGAPORE—As Singapore's sports industry grows at a steady rate with an increasing number of local and international events held here and as the S\$1.33 billion Sports Hub add more to its calendar in the coming years, there will be increased demand for jobs tailored for sports.

To help meet this demand, the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) and Sports Hub Pte Ltd (SHPL) yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding that will offer internships for students from ITE College East, West and Central.

The three-year partnership will give interns opportunities to work in fields such as event and sports management, hospitality and customer service.

This is not the first time SHPL has offered internship to ITE students. Last October, four months after opening its doors, SHPL recruited eight students for a 10-week attachment, giving them an opportunity to seek full-time employment with the sports facility when they graduate.

SHPL managing director Mark Collins said they currently have 300

full-time employees under their payroll but with the number of events expected to increase at the Hub, their manpower needs will double in the next two years.

"I have seen the sports industry in Singapore take a quantum leap since I first came here in 2006," Collins told TODAY. "It is rapidly growing at a rate that I have never seen in any part of the world, and with the Sports Hub up and running now, I expect to see another such leap over the next few years.

"But to support that growth, we have to understand that we can't just shake a tree, and a bunch of people equipped in the sporting field will fall out. A lot of operations are facility-specifics, so we have to get local talents, cultivate their skills, and create a couple of hundreds of them and more to support us."

The sports industry is on a healthy growth trajectory, he added, noting that national sports associations (NSAs) such as the Football Association of Singapore inked a S\$25 million deal with sports media rights company MP & Silva while the Singapore Rugby Union brought top-class rugby action to Singapore.

Collins said he is confident that



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Bruce Poh (left), ITE director and CEO, Lawrence Wong (centre), Culture, Community and Youth Minister, and Philippe Collin Delavaud, Singapore Sports Hub CEO at the MOU signing ceremony yesterday. PHOTO: SINGAPORE SPORTS HUB

the "(education) system in Singapore is capable of churning the required manpower" to support the many international sporting events lined up.

Nanyang Technological University, the Singapore Institute of Management and the Asia Pacific School of Sports and Business currently offer various degree courses in fields such as sports science, management and physical education.

Last year, the Singapore Management University (SMU) also penned a five-year agreement with the University of Oregon for a sports-related international student-exchange programme.

"I have never been so optimistic, as educational institutions here realise the opportunities in the sports industry," said Collins.

ITE student Rashafika Roslan, who studies community sports and recreation management and who

was also an intern with the Sports Hub last October, hopes to return there as a full-time staff after she completes her course.

"There are about 70 students in my course, and they chose eight of us for the first batch. I have learnt a lot of practical skills, and hope for a job at the Sports Hub one day," said Rashafika.

SHPL chief executive officer Philippe Collin Delavaud said the tie-up with ITE is a perfect fit for the Hub because the educational institution offers courses for a broad range of skills, from technicians to engineers, for sporting events. So the fit between the two organisations are very tight, he said.

"ITE has more than 30,000 students, and certainly there is no other organisation that can go so deep and wide. There will be more of such deals in the future, for sharper training."