

SMU undergrads raise S\$64,000 for elderly



SMU student interacting with a spritely senior citizen at Lions Befrienders (Mei Ling) Senior Activity Centre.

PHOTO: SMU

SINGAPORE – A group of 30 undergraduates have led the Singapore Management University (SMU) to raise S\$64,000 in cash and in kind in a nine-month university-wide community service effort.

The cash proceeds raised will be used to support underprivileged seniors under the Lions Befrienders Service Association's (LBSA) outreach programmes, conducted through its Senior Activity Centres.

The in-kind donations — 2,500kg of food and necessities

— were on Saturday delivered to 170 households at Mei Ling Street under the care of the LBSA, as part of a walkathon challenge.

Some 505 SMU representatives, including students, faculty members and staff, took part in the 8km walkathon, journeying from the SMU campus to the Queenstown Community Centre, carrying a backpack load of 5kg of in-kind donations. The walkathon capped off the annual social project, called the SMU Challenge.

Since January, SMU students have

been going door-to-door offering to do household chores in exchange for donations. Street collection drives were also carried out.

Volunteers also spent time interacting with the elderly at the Lions Befrienders (Mei Ling) Senior Activity Centre who are living in one-room and two-room rented units.

Second-year business student Ler Jie Qi, Chairperson of this year's SMU Challenge, said: "I believe it is important to spread the message of giving back to society. It is something everyone of us can do by getting those within our circle of influence to be involved in meaningful events such as the SMU Challenge."

"Having such an event not only allows us to create a greater impact on the people we serve, but also builds upon a stronger and more unified SMU family," she said.

On Saturday, SMU also earned a place in the Singapore Book of Records for the Largest Mass Walk Carrying Groceries, a record previously set by SMU students, faculty and staff in 2010 with 197 participants.