

Media Release – For immediate use

Former Nanyang Girls' High School principal to be inducted to the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame

Queen of the Malay airwaves among seven others being honoured this year

17 January 2019 – Liew Yuen Sien was just 26 when, in 1927, she gave up the adventurous life of a globe-trotting journalist to become principal of Nanyang Girls' School. She remained principal for nearly 40 years, playing a key role in shaping the values and lives of generations of Singapore women.

During the 1950s and 1960s, when radio was a major influence in the Malay community, Zahrah Za'ba ruled the airwaves. A multi-talented woman, Zahrah read the news, did live commentary on major local events, wrote scripts, played lead roles in radio plays, produced plays and many other shows - and ran the Malay broadcasting department.

Yuen Sien and Zahrah are two of eight remarkable women who will be inducted to the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF) in March. They will join the 152 women who are already in the Hall of Fame, which was launched by the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) in 2014.

The other six women who will be honoured at the 6th SWHF Induction Ceremony gala dinner on 23 March at the St Regis Hotel are:

- Award-winning author Tham Yew Chin, who has written nearly 200 books and is the best-known Singapore writer in China
- Educator Evelyn Norris, who had a long and deep association with Raffles Girls School and was its principal for 15 years
- Uniformed professionals Florence Chua and Gan Siow Huang who broke through the brass ceiling when they became the highest-ranking women in the Singapore Police Force and the Singapore Armed Forces
- Runners Glory Barnabas and K Jayamani who brought sporting glory and gold medals to Singapore with their amazing races in the 1970s and 1980s.

The eight women, or their representatives, will at the gala dinner be presented with ***The Flame***, the SWHF trophy, by President Halimah Yacob, who is patron of SCWO. President

Halimah was in the inaugural group of women inducted to the Hall of Fame in 2014.

Professor Tommy Koh, who chairs the SWHF Selection Panel, said the eight women are “outstanding examples of the capabilities and contributions of Singapore women”. He added: “We set out in 2014 to build the SWHF as the premier award for women in Singapore and we are delighted that this has been achieved.

“The stories of the women in the Hall of Fame are truly inspiring. It is important that their stories are recorded for posterity and shared, especially with young people. It is so easy for women’s role in Singapore’s development, especially in the earlier years, to be forgotten.”

The SWHF induction ceremony and gala dinner is held in March every year by the SCWO as part of the celebrations of International Women’s Day. Guests at the dinner will include women already in the Hall of Fame, women parliamentarians, foreign diplomats, senior civil servants and representatives of SCWO’s member organisations.

Further information on this year’s eight inductees and a SWHF fact-sheet are attached.

For more information, please contact:

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