



## Halogen Foundation Singapore

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## Singapore Council of Women's Organisations

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## For Immediate Release

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## “Free to Be” – Young Women Encouraged to Recognize and Exercise their Freedom Well at the 5th National Young Leaders' Day (Women Edition) 2013

**Singapore, 9 March 2013** – Freedom. How many women worldwide can say they are truly free? How free are women in Singapore? Four convention-defying female leaders: **Gina Romero**, ‘rock-chick’ entrepreneur and Head of Athena Network Singapore; **Janice Wong**, Founder of 2am:dessertbar; Singapore Woman Award 2012 recipient **Cassandra Chiu** and Award winning journalist **Pamela Ho** inspired 550 female students from 32 schools at the National Young Leaders' Day (Women's Edition) with their life stories. With the twists and turns of their paths, the speakers shared how they took hold of their freedom to pursue their dreams in male-dominated industries, against social norms, overcome surmounting challenges and ended up creating something beyond themselves.

The fifth National Young Women Leaders' Day is organized by **Halogen Foundation Singapore**, in partnership with **Singapore Council of Women's Organisations**, as part of the celebration of International Women's Day. It is both a celebration of the freedom women have gained, and a reminder to use this freedom well. Ms Indranee Rajah (Senior Minister Of State, Ministry Of Law And Ministry Of Education) highlighted how far Singapore women have come in fighting for freedom and equality compared to the rest of the world. She also challenged the young women not to take this freedom for granted but to rise up and lead well.

During the event, the participants were encouraged to tweet and post on Facebook with the hashtag #freetobe, to express what they are free to do now and what they will use the freedom for.

Martin Tan, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Halogen Foundation Singapore says: “The freedom of women in Singapore has not come easy. It took many brave women in our history to break the glass ceiling that existed for decades. Today, we see those heroines in our society. They are the CEOs of MNCs, politicians and social activists, all contributing to our country. To them we owe a great debt. Their contribution makes any aspirations of our young women leaders here, possible. “

Mrs Laura Hwang, President, Singapore Council of Women's Organisations, shares “We are delighted to partner the Halogen Foundation once again this year as part of our series of International Women's Day celebrations, and we hope to continue to work closely with our partners in order to encourage young women to be the best that they can be and enable them to participate more fully and equally in society.”

## About National Young Women Leader's Day

National Young Women Leader's Day is a national platform conceptualized by Halogen Foundation Singapore to inspire young women by introducing female leaders who have lived out admirable values to achieve success in various fields. Previous speakers include Ms Bridget Tan, President of the Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME), Ms Yip Pin Xiu, Team Singapore Para-Athlete, Dr Karen Dyer (Center for Creative Leadership, USA) and Cheryl Fox (Channel NewsAsia anchor).

## About Halogen Foundation Singapore

Halogen Foundation Singapore is the only organisation in Singapore purely focused on youth leadership development. We are a not-for-profit that has been conferred the Institute of Public Character (IPC). Defining leadership as influence, Halogen seeks to build young leaders who will practically change the world in issues they believe in. We aim to make quality leadership education and experiences available and accessible to all young people regardless of race, income or religion. Through events, workshops, service projects, community building initiatives and research initiatives, Halogen inspires and influences a generation of young people to lead themselves and others well. With both character and competence, we believe that every young person can fulfil their dreams and be positive change-agents in society.

Web: <http://www.halogen.sg>

Facebook: <http://www.fb.com/halogensg>

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## About SCWO

The Singapore Council of Women's Organisations is the National Coordinating body of women's organisations in Singapore. Our 57 Member Organisations represent more than 600,000 women in Singapore.

Incorporated in March 1980, the SCWO serves to unite the various women's organisations, clubs, committees, groups and women leaders together, working in accordance with its various aims and objectives. The SCWO also serves to coordinate these associations into a national movement and to act on their behalf in matters for which it is authorised by its members.

The SCWO is represented on various Government and inter-ministry committees where we contribute our views in the areas of family, women, and on children's issues. We are involved in government Feedback Sessions and other discussions on issues and policies

## Our Services

**Star Shelter**—It is the only secular crisis shelter in Singapore, and is a safe temporary refuge for women and their children seeking refuge from a life of family violence. It is a place

where they learn to re-build their lives, be independent, and prepare for a future free violence.

**Maintenance Support Central** – The one-stop drop-in Centre that provides support and assistance for claimants who have difficulty recovering court ordered maintenance from their spouse.

**Legal Clinics** – Experienced lawyers from the Singapore Association of Women Lawyers (SAWL), and other volunteer lawyers are available twice a month to assist women without the means of basic legal advice and information. With the assistance and support of the Law Society of Singapore's Muslim Law Practice Committee, Muslim Law Legal Clinic is available at SCWO for Muslims seeking legal advice specifically on matters pertaining to the Syariah Law

**IT Hub**— A Training Centre run by volunteers for women and their family members to become IT connected and updated.

**New2U Thrift Shop**—Sells pre-loved apparel, shoes, accessories and household items, with proceeds going to Star Shelter.

**Function Rooms**—The Bonny Hicks Education and Training Centre consists of six rooms ranging from 9 sqm to 88 sqm, equipped for training, seminars and meetings, available for rentals to member organisations and the public.

**The Library**— The Library is named after the late Justice F.A. Chua. It is an archival library for all women's organisations -local and international.

**The Café** – The café @ SCWO offers a range of tantalizing food, desserts and coffee.

### Our Initiatives

**WR—Women's Register** is a platform for on-line Mentoring, Networking, Education and Inspiration, and reaches out to women and girls, from eighteen year and beyond.

**BoardAgender** – Provides a forum in Singapore to create greater awareness and understanding of the benefits of gender balanced business, and to facilitate the advancement of more women into senior leadership roles and onto boards.

**Wall of Fame** – In 2005, SCWO launched the Wall of Fame to honour the significant contributions of pioneering women activists who have helped shape the landscape of female advancement in Singapore.

Web: <http://www.scwo.org.sg>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/theSCWO>

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