

Media Release

Seven more outstanding honourees for the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame

Induction ceremony at Istana will include launch of *Awesome Women of Singapore*, a children's book about the women in the Hall of Fame

3 March 2021 – The 7th annual induction ceremony for the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame will this year be held on International Women's Day (8 March) at the Istana.

The seven women being inducted, or their representatives, will be presented with the Hall of Fame trophy, known as The Flame, by President Halimah Yacob, who is the Patron of the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO).

The Hall of Fame was launched by SCWO in 2014 to celebrate the achievements and contributions of women, and to document and share their stories.

The seven women who will be inducted on 8 March are:

- Pioneering public health nurse **Ida Mabel Murray Simmons**, who transformed infant and maternal health care in rural Singapore between 1927 and 1948
- Outstanding sportswoman and educator **Mae Noeline Oehlers**, who was a star hockey player in the 1930s and later the first Singaporean Principal of Raffles Girls' School
- Pioneering illustrator **Kwan Shan Mei**, who illustrated the readers and textbooks used by generations of Singapore students
- Pioneering social worker, educator, and activist **Myrna Braga-Blake**, who dedicated her life to shaping services for victims of domestic violence and training future social workers
- Pioneering dancer and choreographer **Santha Bhaskar**, who weaved into her classical Indian dance performances elements of other Asian dance styles
- Trailblazing sports administrator and lawyer **Annabel Pennefather**, who chalked up many firsts in sports administration, both locally and internationally, and in the legal profession
- First female commercial pilot **Teo Ah Hong**, who as the Chief Flying Instructor at the Singapore Flying College was responsible for the training of many Singapore pilots.

Fuller accounts of the accomplishments of the seven women are in Annex A.

President Halimah, who was inducted to the Hall of Fame at its inception, will also launch **Awesome Women of Singapore**, a children's book about the 160 women in the Hall of Fame, and name an orchid to commemorate the Ministry of Social and Family Development's Year of Celebrating SG Women.

The Awesome Women book, a collaboration between SCWO and Epigram Books, will bring the inspiring stories of Singapore's outstanding women to schoolchildren. It also showcases the work of 10 local women artists who were commissioned to each draw the portraits of 10 of the 100 Hall of Fame inductees who are featured prominently in the book.

This orchid is named in celebration of the continued progress, contributions and achievements of all SG Women, and as part of the Celebrating SG Women movement. **An MSF spokesperson** said the movement's message is "Let's come together to co-create and catalyse solutions that will shift societal mindsets to foster an even more equitable and inclusive society for our men and women."

"We are delighted to be able to mark International Women's Day by holding the Hall of Fame induction ceremony and launching the *Awesome Women of Singapore* book at the Istana," said SCWO President Junie Foo.

"Our IWD celebrations this year are all the more significant because of the gender equality review that is currently under way and the fact that the Ministry of Social and Family Development has declared 2021 as a year for celebrating women in Singapore," she added.

"There is indeed much to celebrate, but there are still some significant gender gaps and other issues affecting women that we really must get to grips with. We look forward to seeing comprehensive and far-reaching proposals in the gender equality White Paper that is due later this year."

With the launch of the *Awesome Women of Singapore* book, SCWO is also kicking off **Project Awesome: Dare to Dream**. This is a multi-pronged initiative to inspire young Singaporeans, especially girls, to dream big, aim high, and chart their own path in life. More information about Project Awesome will be released separately.

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About SWHF

The Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF) aims to recognise and salute the outstanding women of Singapore in all fields of endeavour. It is a celebration of the women who have made, or are making, an impact on our nation – the boundary breakers and record holders, the risk-takers and change makers, the role models and the standard setters.

They were the women who, at a time when social norms set limits on what a woman could do, pushed back the barriers and led the way for others. They were the pioneers, the pathfinders. They dared to dream and they turned their dreams into a new reality for the women of their time and the generations to come.

They are, today, the women who are shaping our society with their vision and passion, their enterprise and leadership, their talent and creativity, their humanity. They are the women who inspire us, and we want to recognise them and honour them.

For more information, please visit www.swhf.sg

About SCWO

The Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) is the national coordinating body of women's organisations in Singapore. We have more than 50 Member Organisations representing over 500,000 women in Singapore. Together with our members, we seek to promote the ideals of 'Equal Space, Equal Voice and Equal Worth' for women in Singapore.

SCWO provides opportunities, platforms and services that empower and support women across the various stages of life to fulfil their fullest potential, from programmes that inspire and educate younger women and girls such as the Women's Register and Inspiring Girls, to those targeting older women through advocacy work by the SCWO Ageing Taskforce which aims to raise awareness on the gendered phenomenon of ageing.

The Women's Register (WR), is a platform for networking, inspiration, community engagement and education that allow young women to learn, support and receive guidance from other women in the community. Public Education and Outreach to schools and organisations are done actively through the Inspiring Girls programme, by connecting young girls with empowering female role models and introducing them to the full variety of careers, and through the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF). SWHF recognises and celebrates the outstanding contributions of women in Singapore across all field of endeavours. BoardAgender is dedicated to advancing more women into senior leadership roles and boardrooms in Singapore.

Maintenance Support Central (MSC) empowers women with knowledge pertaining to their marital rights and provides them with all-round support by partnering with the public and private organisations to provide services such as free legal consultations on Family Law, and public education talks. Star Shelter aims to provide a safe temporary refuge for women and their children who are survivors of family violence regardless of race, language, creed or religion, empower them to manage and take responsibility for their lives, and assist them in rebuilding their lives free from violence.

SCWO strives to empower women holistically, to support women at every life and career stage and this is achieved by the close collaboration and cooperation with the SCWO's member organisations, as well as the public, private and people sectors to co-create solutions to empower women in Singapore.

For more information, please visit www.scwo.org.sg