

↑Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

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November 2015

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New General Secretary of Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

We are pleased to inform you that Mr. Nam Boo Won has joined as the new General Secretary of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs with effect from 1 November 2015. We request you to join hands with me to congratulate Mr. Nam Boo Won in his new assignment in the APAY movement.

Mr. Nam Boo Won just relinquished the position of the National General Secretary at the National Council of YMCAs of Korea. He has been involved with the YMCA for the past three decades as a successful YMCA professional. He started his YMCA career as a Secretary of the National Council of YMCAs of Korea in 1985. Then in the year 1988 he then joined Seoul YMCA as a Program Secretary and worked there for 9 years. Subsequently, he served the APAY as Executive Secretary for Programs from the year 1998, after his successful completion of his term of four years at APAY, he moved back to Seoul YMCA, Korea and later moved to the National Council of YMCAs as Senior Executive Secretary. After then, he was appointed as General Secretary of Gwangju YMCA, where he worked for 4 years. He held the position of the National General Secretary of National Council of YMCAs Korea since March of 2011. Mr. Nam obtained his Masters degree in Global Ethics from the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom. He is married & have 2 daughters, one married.

We request all YMCA movements and all concerned to extend support and cooperation to Mr. Nam Boo Won in discharging his duties at the APAY. His new email id is [nambw@asiapacificymca.org](mailto:nambw@asiapacificymca.org)

Farewell message from General Secretary, Kohei Yamada

Dear Friends in YMCA movements:

Time flies so fast. After the GA in Korea (September 2015), I am almost at the corner of my retirement. This is like a dream to me but it is real. I am both excited for my new life and also sad to leave Hong Kong, friends in church, in Judo Dojo, comfortable office with our staff members from 7 countries, and all the connections with my international friends like you.

As you may know, at the time of APAY General Assembly in September, we appointed Mr. Nam Boo Won, presently National General Secretary of National Council of YMCAs of Korea. He was in APAY for four years as an Executive Staff in the late 1990's. He will be assuming the GS of APAY starting November 1, 2015. I on the other hand will stay for two weeks in Hong Kong for handing over the GS work to the new leadership and will leave Hong Kong on November 15.

Let me take a moment here to say how much I have enjoyed my work at APAY. This job was never really a "job" but rather an adventure, always something new happened. I met many people, encountered good stories and sometimes had difficult challenges. It has truly been a blessing to work with you all and I appreciate all of your support.

People ask me what I will do after returning to Japan. I have a house in Utsunomiya City, 120 km north of Tokyo where we raised our three children from kindergarten to university. So this place is a special place with comfortable environment since it is surrounded by rice fields, mountains, a river, and old friends. I liked the nature in daily life and I missed it very much while I was here in Hong Kong. I plan to make a small garden for vegetables that we can eat at home. There are a few Onsen (hot springs) near our house as well.

In 1973 I went to the USA to study, I was planning to get a good business job. But after staying in the USA for a while, I changed my career plan to Social work. Life in the USA in the late 70's was exciting but at the same time I realized the social issues and gaps between people. I then decided to study Social Work. After going to a Master of Social Work program in Baltimore, USA, I saw a short video of elderly and their feelings of being burdens to his/her families. It was a shocking story and I then decided that this is my life work. I studied Gerontology (Study of the Elderly) till I graduated from the University. My first job, after applying to over 50 organizations, was the YMCA in Baltimore. It was the YMCA that took me as a Director of Senior Citizens' Programs in their YMCA in August 1977. I enjoyed the work very much since the elderly members gave me so much confidence and encouragement to my work. After two years of work there, I moved back to Tokyo to test myself in the Japanese society. My first job in Tokyo was at the Tokyo YMCA in April 1979. Since then I moved to the Tochigi YMCA in 1984, moved back to Tokyo YMCA in 1995, and became a National Council staff in 2002. Then due to the death of the former GS of APAY, Mr. Yip Kok Chung in 2008, I was appointed his successor from June 2009. This is my YMCA story. It has been led by some unknown hands and many people around me at the YMCAs I was in, I am sure.

Being retired, one thing I want to do is to complete my mission to help elderly people to fulfill their lives till they die, including mine and my wife's own elder lives. I will help make happy elder lives to many people in Japan, in Asia and in the world.

Keep in touch. Thank you so much for supporting me in the YMCA for many years.

~ Kohei Yamada

Farewell to Roger Peiris

Roger has worked at APAY as the Program Officer for Youth Development for 2 ½ years from April 2013 to the end of October, 2015. His work in APAY focused on Youth Development. He has completed his last work of the 19th General Assembly & 3rd Youth Assembly which was held in September 6-11 at Daejeon, Korea. He has gone back to Sri Lanka. We deeply appreciate his contributions and good relationship he built with Youth Reps and Change Agents as well as members of YPLD (Youth committee of APAY). We all thanks Roger for his

invaluable efforts for the past 2 ½ years and we wish him all the best for his future.

#### New President of the National Council of YMCAs of India

Mr. Lebi Philip Mathew has just been elected as National President of National Council of YMCAs of India for the term 2015-2018 on September 5, 2015 at New Delhi. He has been in the forefront of the YMCA Movement for the last three and a half decades and served the Movement in various practices as the Regional Chairman of Uni-Y, Chairman of Regional Youth Work Committee, Vice-Chairman of SWIR and presently he is the Chairman of YMCA SWIR. He has been selected as the best Regional Chairman of India two times consecutively by the National Council.

We wish Mr. Lebi Philip Mathew all the success in his new role.

#### Resignation of Mr. Anil Fernando, NGS of National Council of YMCAs of Sri Lanka

We received the notification from the National President of NCY of Sri Lanka that Mr. Anil Fernando, National General Secretary / CEO has tendered his resignation from the post of National General Secretary/CEO of the National Council of the YMCAs of Sri Lanka and has relinquished his duties from September 30, 2015.

Mr. Charles Brownson, Senior Executive Secretary is in charge of the National Office until the new NGS is appointed.

#### SOP Participants complete Two Modules

Ampatuan A-Esha Afdal from the Philippines shares her essay for the second module of SOP

Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) hosted its seventh School of Peace (SOP) in Siem Reap, Cambodia, beginning on Aug. 1. The 15 participants included two YMCA members from China whose introduction to ICF was due to the participation of several YMCA youth from China in the mini-SOP on the Peace Boat voyage from Japan to Okinawa to Taiwan in March 2015 that was organized by the World Alliance of YMCAs (WAY), the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY) and ICF. Other SOP participants at this year's SOP are from Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. They completed the first two modules of the program on Sept. 29.

The focus of the first one-month SOP module was identity, resistance and liberation while the second module concentrated on poverty, development and rights. In addition to a variety of sessions on topics related to these two themes, the participants also had several field trips that included visits to a forest protected by Buddhist monks, the Killing Fields of Choeung Ek near Phnom Penh and the Killing Fields Museum in the capital in the former Tuol Svay Pray High School that became known as the S-21 torture center under the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s.

The participants returned home to their communities at the conclusion of the first two modules to put into practice what they have learned. They were also given several assignments to complete before returning in January 2016 for the last one-month module that will be devoted to ways to build interfaith communities of justice and peace. Among their assignments during the three-month break between the second and third modules, the participants are to find a case study of a marginalized community and the problems they are facing, conduct research on a

peace hero, use a tool for transformation that they learned—drama, art, games, etc.—to help a group undertake structural analysis and lastly redraw the structure of their country using structural analysis and then draw a new structure that reflects their vision for the future.

~ Bruce van Voorhis, ICF Coordinator

Not interested any more?