



News Release

GIC launches GIC Sparks & Smiles to engage Singapore's youth and to create more confident communities

3 January 2016 – GIC, which turns 35 this year, has embarked on a unique journey to help build more confident communities in Singapore through the launch of its social impact programme, GIC Sparks & Smiles (GIC Sparks). The programme seeks to inspire and enable youths in Singapore to play a positive and active role in their communities.

Over a four-year period, GIC plans to give S\$2,000,000 worth of community service grants to over 500 students across six universities, five polytechnics and the Institute of Technical Education (ITE). Each grant is worth between S\$3000 and S\$5,000. To receive it, GIC is looking for students who show the desire to serve the community, as well as demonstrate a need for financial support. The students who receive the GIC Sparks study grant commit to providing at least 25 hours of community service including mentoring. They will get exposure to a range of experiences, skills and opportunities to enable them to volunteer and give their time in a way that makes a difference.

Deanna Ong, Director of Human Resources & Organization Development, said: “GIC recognises the potential impact of GIC Sparks going far beyond its grant recipients to a much wider community. Through the quality interaction between the recipients and community members, we believe both sides will experience the impact of empathy and positive role modelling, which builds confidence for their future.” She added: “We believe a higher level of youth volunteerism will bring about a positive impact in improving education and the general well-being of the community. We see this programme as very aligned with our work to benefit present and future generations of Singaporeans.”

GIC is working closely with its charity partner Beyond Social Services (Beyond) to deliver the programme. Beyond provides the students with mentorship training and connects each of them to a disadvantaged child, youth or family. Acting as facilitators or mentors, the students must build a relationship so they can make a difference through the act of doing. The activities done together can include tutorship, mentoring or facilitating conversations about key issues such as employment or education.

“GIC has innovated a new way of empowering youth by fostering a relationship between them and the less privileged. We see both the volunteers and the young people they engage finding new strengths,” said Mr Gerard Ee, Executive Director, Beyond Social Services.

Throughout the mentoring period, the recipients will be supported by Beyond’s social service professionals so they can grow in their roles and have solid sounding boards to augment their empathy and effectiveness. To date, 48 students from Singapore’s six universities have been trained and deployed by Beyond.

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Contacts

Ms Jennifer Lewis
Head, Communications
DID: +6889 8383
Mobile: +65 9826 6198
E-mail: jenniferlewis@gic.com.sg

Ms Mah Lay Choon
Senior Vice President, Communications
DID: +65 6889 6841
Mobile: +65 9838 9425
E-mail: mahlaychoon@gic.com.sg

About GIC

GIC is a leading global investment firm with well over US\$100 billion in assets under management. Established in 1981 to secure the financial future of Singapore, the firm manages Singapore's foreign reserves. A disciplined long-term value investor, GIC is uniquely positioned for investments across a wide range of asset classes, including real estate, private equity, equities and fixed income. GIC has investments in over 40 countries and has been investing in emerging markets for more than two decades. Headquartered in Singapore, GIC employs over 1,200 people across 10 offices in key financial cities worldwide. For more information on GIC, please visit www.gic.com.sg.