

Learning to Accept

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Sik-wai is a child born with intellectual disability and severe cardiac disease. Her father has never accepted Sik-wai's health conditions, and sometimes blames her, making cruel and cold remarks, "Why weren't you born like everyone else? What a monster!" Despite her father's rejection, Sik-wai's mother has always accepted her daughter for what she is.

Sik-wai is precious in her mother's eyes. Although rejection from family members and discrimination from the community has made life full of disappointment, she has learned to face adversity. She truly believes that every life is worth living. She secretly hopes that one day, there would be no discrimination against persons with intellectual or physical disabilities. They would be treated as ordinary people, with respect and acceptance so that they can overcome barriers and integrate into society. So, when Sik-wai's school successfully obtained funding from the EOC's Community Participation Funding Programme to organize an integration project, her mother jumped at the chance to get involved.



Sik-wai is a student of the Church of Christ in China Kei Shun Special School, which has an enrolment of about 200 children with mild-grade intellectual disability. The school's motto is "Do not give up on any child". To foster understanding and acceptance of persons with intellectual disability by other youngsters, the school launched an integration project, "A Harmonious New Era with Equal Opportunities", which was an exchange programme between the Special School and primary students in Kwun Tong and Tsuen Kwan O. Earlier this year, Kei Shun Special School organised 8 visits for its students to 4 elementary schools, and later the primary 3 to 5 students of the

4 schools repaid the visits. The visits ensured that all the children enjoyed fun and games together, and were able to gain a better understanding of each other.

To measure the effectiveness of the project in eliminating discrimination, an "Attitude Assessment" questionnaire was distributed to the children. A total of 639 respondents showed a significant change in the their attitudes to accept children with intellectual disability. Meanwhile, about 95% of the school staff indicated that the activity had promoted better understanding of persons with intellectual disability among the school children, and helped them accept and care for persons with intellectual disability. Some teachers even suggested organizing follow-up activities to provide more interaction with the students, to further enhance the project's effectiveness.



Attitudinal change - step by step

The project was supervised by Ms Karen Lau Sau-cheung, a nurse in Kei Shun Special School. "An inclusive community is beneficial to our youngsters and their development, and this nurtures a more united and harmonious society. Through more exchanges, the students no longer feel that children with special

education needs are strange," said Ms Lau. The project meant a substantial amount of preparation work for Ms Lau, but she considered it all worthwhile. "Our children with intellectual disability have taken their first step to contact other school children. Naturally, this has enabled them to gain a better understanding of each other. Such a step for the young and frail children showed their strong determination to overcome their personal disabilities. They did not give up easily and were persistent to perform for the other school children. Such a step provides a chance for the two groups to play together, and to interact with each other in a positive way." Students with intellectual disability were not only at the receiving end of assistance, both sides learned to accept each other.

Kei Shun Special School also invited parents to share their personal experiences, and subsequently published 1,000 booklets. The story of Sik Wai is one of many in the booklet. Mr. Wong Sui Lun, Principal of Kei Shun said, "There are many touching stories in the booklet, and you will be deeply moved by each and every one of them. You will also find out what a daunting task it is to take care of a child with special needs." Each parent tells a different story, but the common theme is that every parent and child have suffered some form of social discrimination. They are not fairly treated nor respected, and their children are looked down by others and deprived of their rights since early childhood.

"Just imagine, how would you feel if these things had happened to you?" asked Mr. Wong. "These families just want their children to be treated like everyone else, so that they can truly become a member of our community."

[Each year the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) sponsors about 50 to 60 community projects through its Community Participation Funding Programme on Equal Opportunities.]



平等心深情話可在互聯網閱覽
<http://www.eoc.org.hk>

Overcoming Adversity to Build a Better Future

Overcoming Adversity to Build a Better Future



"EO Through Your Eyes"
roving photo competition.

The EOC launches its annual major public education initiative - "EO Expo 2005" on 29 October 2005 at Lok Fu Shopping Centre. "Overcoming Adversity to Build a Better Future" is the theme for this year's community events, which runs from November through December 2005.

Highlights of "EO Expo 2005" include the Commission's youth mentorship programme "Career Challenge 2005" and "EO through Your Eyes" roving photo exhibition. In addition, over 20 activities ranging from talks, workshops, visits and carnivals will also be organized during this period by the community partners to help build the Commission's vision for a fair and inclusive society.

Details of the EO Expo 2005: <http://www.eoc.org.hk>



Every year, the "EO Expo" draws large groups of interested participants.

平等機會博覽 2005 — 社區活動巡禮

Equal Opportunities Expo 2005 — Events Calendar

日期與地點 Date and Venue	活動 Community Event	主辦機構 Organization
10/2005 - 9/2006	2005 精神健康月 Mental Health Month 2005 活動詳情 List of Events: http://www.hwfb.gov.hk/download/services/events/mental_health2005/program_summary.pdf	精神健康月籌備委員會 Organizing Committee of the Mental Health Month
13/11/2005	無障礙城市定向2005 Barrier-free City Orienteering Competition www.selfhelp.hk	社區復康網絡 Community Rehabilitation Network ☎ : 2794 3010
22/11/2005 - 23/11/2005 酒廊香格里拉酒店 Island Shangri-La Hotel	亞洲多元共融會議2005 (探討在職女性及跨文化共融的問題) Diversity & Inclusion in Asia Conference 2005 (Women in the Workplace and Cross Cultural Effectiveness)	公益企業 Community Business ☎ : 2125 1889 http://www.communitybusiness.org.hk/Diversity.html (收費項目 Registration fee required)
13/11/2005 九龍長沙灣康樂足球場 Cheung Sha Wan Playground	第二十六屆聾人乒乓球比賽 The 26th Table Tennis Competition for People with Hearing Impairment	香港聾人福利促進會 The Hong Kong Society for the Deaf ☎ : 2527 8969
26/11/2005 旺角社區會堂 Mong Kok Community Hall	「性與法律研討會 — 校園篇」及 香港電台 「性本善Online 性與法律」網站啟用 Sex and the Law Forum & Website Launching Ceremony	香港電台 RTHK 及 eTVonline ☎ : 2339 3190 http://www.SexEdOnline.tv
10/2005 - 17/12/2005	「平等融合展前展」動畫設計比賽 "Equal Opportunities" Animation Design Competition	聖雅各福群會復康服務社交康樂中心 St. James Settlement Rehabilitation Services Social & Recreation Centre ☎ : 2835 4361 http://www.sjsrs.org
10/2005 - 12/2005 柏德學校 / 天主教柏德學校 / 九龍康樂學校 Bishop Paschang Memorial School / Bishop Paschang Catholic School	踏出平等路 — 講座及其他活動 The Road to Equality — Talks and Fun Activities	香港樂善協會彩荷青少年中心 Hong Kong Playground Association Choi Ha C & Y Centre ☎ : 2759 9821
9/2005 - 2/2006 全港中小學 Primary & Secondary Schools	推動智障人士融入社會 — 學校講座及義工服務 Integrating Persons with Intellectual Disability — School Talks and Volunteer Service	香港唐氏綜合症協會 The Hong Kong Down Syndrome Association ☎ : 2718 7773 http://www.hk-dsa.org
5/11/2005 · 13/11/2005 · 19/11/2005 · 26/11/2005 · 3/12/2005 · 17/12/2005 · 18/12/2005 · 21/1/2006 (15:00-17:00) 屯門 Tuen Mun	親子打劇之「家庭崗位」 "Family Status" Drama Performance for Parents & Children	康華三院雷鋒兒童中心 Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Lui Wing Cheung Children Centre ☎ : 2462 4405
12/11/2005 & 19/11/2005 (16:00-18:00) 新界葵涌和宜合道22號002室 Rm 002, No.22, Wo Yi Hop Rd., Kwai Chung	認識《家庭崗位歧視條例》小組分享及講座 "Knowing More About FSDO" — Small Group Discussions & Talks	香港聖公會麥理浩夫人中心 (家庭活動及資源中心) H.K.S.K.H. Lady MacLehose Centre (Family Activity and Resource Centre) ☎ : 2423 5045 http://www.skhmc.org
19/11/2005 - 20/11/2005 烏溪沙青年新村 Wu Kai Sha Youth Village	「無定型」Camp Camp 訓練營 "Breaking Down Stereotype" Training Camp	新界社團聯會婦女中心 New Territories Association of Societies Women Centre ☎ : 2660 5543
11/2005 - 12/2005 (16:30) 黃竹坑老人服務綜合大樓 Wong Chuk Hang Elderly Services Centre	「戲」走歧視 創新天地戲劇創作小組 "Eliminating Discrimination" Drama Performance	康華三院黃竹坑服務綜合大樓 Tung Wah Groups of Hospitals ☎ : 2814 2868
12/11/2005 (截止報名 Deadline)	「家減歧視」填色話句劇賽 "Equality for All" Colouring & Slogan Design Competition	路雅會石硤尾失明者中心 Hong Kong Lutheran Centre for the Blind ☎ : 2776 0033 http://hk.geocities.com/v1ctr/
11/2005 - 12/2005	「家減歧視」問答比賽 Q&A Contest on FSDO	
8/11/2005 · 16/12/2005 (19:00-21:00) 香港文化中心行政大樓4樓2號會議室 2, Conference Room, 4/F, Hong Kong Cultural Centre Administration Building	精神健康專題講座 2005 — 灰色天空 — 抑鬱症、欲罷不能 — 強迫症 Mental Health Workshop Series 2005 — Depression & Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	香港心理衛生會 Mental Health Association of Hong Kong ☎ : 2528 4656
12/2005 - 4/2006	「技能分享·教學相長」共融計劃 Social Inclusion Programme: Mental Development through Teaching and Learning	
12/2005 - 4/2006	精神健康急救課程 Mental Health "First Aid" Training 課程時程表 Programme Schedule: http://www.mhahk.org.hk	
12/2005 坪洲 Peng Chau	無障礙大使計劃 Barrier-free Programme	香港復健協會坪洲長者暨青少年鄰舍中心 HKPHAB Peng Chau Neighbourhood Elderly cum C/Y Centre ☎ : 2983 9000 http://pc.hkphab.org.hk
全年活動 A Year-round Project 九龍東頭邨康樂樓地下10-16號 10-16, G/F, Wing Tung House, Tung Tau Estate	133·男人幫 — 聚會分享 Mutual Support Group for Men — Sharing Session	明愛男士成長中心 Caritas Men's Centre ☎ : 2383 3377

“A Mission for Equal Opportunities” TV Docu-drama Series & Student Forum



Have you ever thought of how Hong Kong's equal opportunity legislation affects you?

- What is discrimination? Could I discriminate against someone without knowing it?
- As an employer, I know I have legal liability under the anti-discrimination ordinances, but what actions should I take?
- How do the anti-discrimination ordinances protect my rights?

Since the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), which is responsible for implementing the three anti-discrimination ordinances, over 100,000 enquiries and 7,000 complaints have been received, covering a wide range of areas, including employment, education, services and facilities. As the anti-discrimination ordinances affect all of us, the EOC joined hands with the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) again to produce a new TV docu-drama series "A Mission for Equal Opportunities" for a closer look at different forms of discrimination.

"A Mission for Equal Opportunities: Enhanced Version" – Get Yours Now!

The TV docu-drama series based on 6 real-life cases, were broadcast from April to May this year. Following the series, the EOC and RTHK held a Student Forum to discuss the contents of the programme and the legal provisions related to the cases. The Student Forum is now produced as an educational module, which includes a set of DVDs of the TV series and an explanatory booklet. If you are a teacher, student, employer, employee, human resources practitioner or a social worker, you may be interested to get a free copy of our new educational module.

Audience Feedback:

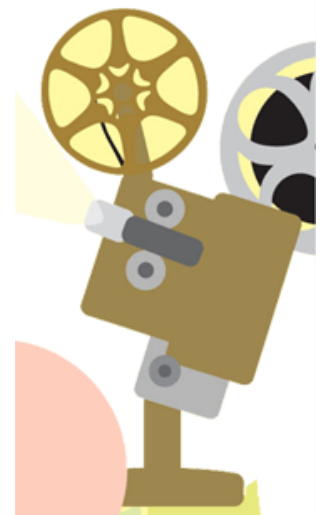
The TV docu-drama series "A Mission for Equal Opportunities" attracted an estimated 1.3 million viewers per episode. The viewers also provided a lot of valuable feedback:

"It is a very meaningful, substantive and serious production. I understand how helpless the person in the episode feels when he is dismissed as a result of his mental illness..."

"The programme brings a message – we may face unequal treatment in employment, yet with the EOC, we have channels to make a complaint!"

"Legislation is essential to equal opportunities."

"Not only do women face discrimination in the course of recruitment, men are often discriminated against in the service sector."



"I share the same feelings — I suffered from sexual harassment as the female student in the episode when I was in school. Everyone has to be strong to fight against such unequal treatment."



劇情簡介 A Mission for Equal Opportunities

Episode 1: I am Always with You

Ah Keung, a diligent employee is dismissed as a result of his mental illness — early psychosis. Under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO), it is unlawful for an employer to dismiss an employee solely on the ground of his / her disability. In today's world, persons with mental illness are often stigmatised. However, with the support of family and the community, they are able to pick up their lives again.



Episode 2: Family Ties

Pauline, a working single mother, was fired by her boss who believed she had to take care of her son and would not be committed to her work. According to the Family Status Discrimination Ordinance (FSDO), an employer should not treat an employee less favourably on the ground of his / her family status. How will Pauline cope?



Episode 3: The Unmarried

Two hard working and outstanding single women, Candy and Peggy, have been dismissed in a redundancy exercise because they do not have any family burdens. Is it reasonable for an employer to retain or dismiss an employee solely on the ground of a person's marital status instead of one's ability?

Episode 4: SARS Panic

Hong Kong people lived in fear during the SARS outbreak in 2003. Joey's mother contracted SARS. During Joey's home quarantine, her employer dismissed Joey on the ground that she had violated the company's instructions. Joey soon found out that the Disability Discrimination Ordinance protects persons with a disability against discrimination, and their associations, such as family members.



Episode 5: Sexy Campus

Carmen, a Form 6 school girl was sexually harassed by her classmate, but the problem would not go away. Sexual harassment is very prevalent in Hong Kong, this programme raises the serious issue of sexual harassment in schools, and sends out the message that it is unacceptable behaviour in our society.



Episode 6: The Three of Us

After so much hard work, Janet was happy to finally get a promotion. But she was soon dismissed, because her employer's wife felt uncomfortable about her husband working too closely with a woman. Does this case violate the Sex Discrimination Ordinance?



Visit the EOC website and fill in the request form for a free copy of the educational module "A Mission for Equal Opportunities — Student Forum".

Website: <http://www.eoc.org.hk>

Enquiries: 2511 8211

Valuing Diversity – a new on-line self-learning package for civil servants

Valuing Diversity

– a new on-line self-learning package for civil servants

As a cosmopolitan city, which embraces diversity and encourages acceptance of individual differences, Hong Kong has attracted people from different backgrounds to work and live here. They have enriched Hong Kong socially, culturally and economically.

Joining hands with the EOC, the government has developed two self-learning training modules, one on the disability sensitivity and the other on equal opportunity ordinances for civil servants to deliver quality service to the public.

The civil service employs about 4.5 percent of Hong Kong's labour force, representing about 158,000 employees¹. The government is not only the largest employer, but also the largest service provider, covering areas such as education, health, leisure, emergency services, environmental and social services. Therefore, it is important to raise the sensitivity, understanding and interest in gender, race, disability and equal opportunities issues, so that after completing the self-learning courses, civil servants, especially frontline officers would be better equipped to serve the public.

CD ROMs and a web site designated for civil servants will be launched soon and equal opportunities concepts will be conveyed through various multimedia formats, such as text, videos, games and quizzes. To know more about the self-learning package for civil servants please contact Evelyn Lai of the Civil Service Bureau on 2231 3922.



Note 1 : Hong Kong Yearbook 2004

Disability Discrimination Case – The Night Shift Blues

Disability Discrimination Case

The Night Shift Blues



The complaint

Mr Cheung worked as a customer relations officer in a property management company, which required him to perform night duty on a regular basis. Last summer, Mr Cheung took three months' sick leave because of a brain operation for his epilepsy, which had been worsening in recent years.

"After the operation, my doctor advised me not to work the overnight shift, at least for a few months, as this might affect my recovery. She wrote me a medical note explaining my situation so I could present it to my supervisor. However, having been informed of my health condition, my supervisor continued to assign me night duty," said Mr Cheung.

"What's more, I was the only person in our team who was not given a bonus at the end of the year. My supervisor explained it was because I took too much sick leave that year. He even threatened to fire me if it happened again. It's so unreasonable! I feel like being penalized for my illness!"

What the EOC did

Mr Cheung lodged a complaint with the EOC against his employer for disability discrimination. Both the Complainant and the Respondent agreed to attempt early conciliation to resolve the conflict.

Facilitated by an EOC investigator, Mr Cheung and his employer attended a conciliation meeting to discuss the settlement terms. After expressing their claims and positions, the two parties reached a consensus. It was also agreed that the Complainant would be exempted from night duty for the period recommended by the doctor, and he was also due for monetary compensation.



What the law says

Under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO), it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the ground of his / her disability. In this case, if an employee provides a medical certificate supporting special arrangement of duties, the employer should consider providing accommodation to help the employee with a disability perform his / her duties, unless unjustifiable hardship is encountered.

Sex Discrimination Case – Company’s Bonus Trip Not for Pregnant Staff

Sex Discrimination Case



In Hong Kong, the number of women complaining that they have been discriminated against on the job because they are pregnant is soaring even though birth rates have declined. Many pregnant women have been unfairly fired, or denied promotion and other staff benefits. It is clear that many employers are still discriminating against their female staff on the ground of pregnancy.

The complaint

"I was excited to learn that my company had invited the staff to a short overseas trip, as a gesture to show appreciation of our hard work. I was three months pregnant at the time and I believed I would enjoy such a short and relaxing trip. However, my application for the bonus trip was rejected. It was decided that two days annual leave would be deducted if I were to join other staff on the trip. The company's excuse was that I did not have sufficient leave days and was worried about my health condition. However, three other colleagues who also did not have sufficient leave balance were allowed to go. The company could have checked with me or my obstetrician to confirm whether I was fit to travel. Finally, when I resumed work after my maternity leave I was sacked. The company did not fulfill its statutory obligations and did not give me sufficient payment in lieu of notice. It seems to me I was discriminated against because I was pregnant," said Mary.



What the EOC did

Upon receipt of the complaint, the EOC investigator approached the employer for an explanation regarding Mary's allegations. While the company had asked the travel agency if Mary was suitable to go on the overseas trip, only very general information was obtained. It did not approach Mary or her doctor for additional information. The company admitted that other staff who did not have sufficient leave days were allowed to join the company trip. The company then added that Mary was not allowed to go because of her poor performance.



The company explained that Mary's employment was terminated because her services were no longer required. No recruitment had been carried out after Mary left the company.

The EOC investigator explained the provisions of the Sex Discrimination Ordinance to the employer and after several rounds of discussions and exchanges of correspondence, both parties agreed to conciliate. The company provided Mary with monetary compensation to cover the difference in payment in lieu of notice, and a letter of apology.

What the law says

Sexual harassment includes any unwanted and uninvited sexual behaviour which a reasonable person would anticipate would offend, humiliate or intimidate the recipient of that behaviour. Under the Sex Discrimination Ordinance, sexual harassment in employment is unlawful.



It is worth noting that, although an employer might not encourage any act of sexual harassment, or may have no knowledge of it, the employer may nevertheless be held vicariously liable for the unlawful act of an employee, unless the employer can prove that all reasonably practicable steps have been taken to prevent such an act from taking place.

Around the World

Around the World

Landmark Case: US Disability Law Covers Foreign Cruise Ships



Recently, the US Supreme Court ruled that foreign cruise ships sailing in US waters can be sued under a landmark anti-bias law if they discriminate against passengers with disability.

The case has been closely followed by the multibillion-dollar cruise industry. About 10 million people a year take cruises and an estimated 54 million Americans have some types of disability.

The lawsuit was brought by several travellers with disabilities who used wheelchairs or electric scooters. These travellers said that physical barriers on the Norwegian Sea and the Norwegian Star denied them access to emergency evacuation equipment and to facilities such as public restrooms, restaurants, swimming pools, etc. The cruise ships had also charged extra for cabins accessible to those with disability. The US Justice Department backed the appeal by the passengers, arguing that foreign-flagged ships are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Information source:

http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2005-06-06-scotus-disabled_x.htm?csp=N009

Disability Tax Credit Benefits Canadians with Diabetes

Canadians who use insulin to manage their diabetes may now be eligible for a federal tax credit worth up to CAD1,055. People with diabetes can face annual medical costs ranging up to CAD5,000 a year to manage their disease, and this federal assistance to ease some of the financial burden of diabetes has proved popular. The Canadian Diabetes Association has offered to work with the Canada Revenue Agency to develop guidelines to assist individuals with diabetes and their doctors to determine whether they would be eligible for the new disability tax credit.



Information source:

http://www.diabetes.ca/Section_Main/NewsRel/eases.asp?ID=117

Kuwaiti Women Win Full Political Rights

The Kuwaiti parliament has voted to give women full political rights. The amendment to the Kuwait's electoral law means women can for the first time, vote and stand in parliamentary and local elections.

The result, announced by the speaker of parliament, was greeted with thunderous applause from the public gallery where backers of the amendment were gathered. The Kuwaiti prime minister expressed his congratulations to the Kuwaiti women over their newly gained political rights, and at the same time announced his plan to appoint a woman in the government soon.

Information source:

<http://www.arabicnews.com/ansub/Daily/Day/050517/2005051705.html>

Payment to Family Carers of Disabled Persons Expected

In New Zealand, people who stay at home to look after a sick or disabled family member may soon be paid for their work.



The Office for Disability Issues has submitted a paper to Cabinet ministers, asking them to consider paying caregivers, as they have given up employment opportunity to provide care.

The policy review follows a 2001 decision of the Human Rights Commission's Complaints Review Tribunal that the Intellectual Handicapped Children (IHC), New Zealand's largest provider of services to people with intellectual disabilities and their families, breached human rights law by disallowing an application by the parents of a boy with intellectual disability to become paid carers.

Information source:

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/story.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10116379

1,2,3...smile

AIR MAIL

ON AIR

平等機會委員會一年一度以突破定型觀念為題的青少年師友計劃「無定型新人類」現正接受報名！

Act now to join the Equal Opportunities Commission's annual youth mentorship programme "Career Challenge", which aims to break down the barriers of stereotyping.



CAREER CHALLENGE

無定型新人類 05

嘉賓導師
Mentors:

1 周健德女士
Ms Alice CHOW
工程師 / 無國界醫生
香港醫藥護理學會成員
Engineer / Board Member,
Medecins Sans Frontieres
Hong Kong

2 馮惠儀女士
Ms Fanny FUNG
香港早報總編輯
Editor, South China
Morning Post

3 盧冠廷先生
Mr Lowell LO
著名音樂人
Renowned Composer /
Song-writer

4 何式熾博士
Dr HO Sik Ying
香港大學社會工作及
社會行政學系副教授 /
關懷愛滋主席
Associate Professor,
Department of Social Work
and Social Administration,
The University of Hong
Kong / Chairperson,
AIDS Concern

5 吳家榮先生
Dr Gary NG
醫生 / 傑出殘疾人士獎
得主
Doctor / Recipient of the
Outstanding Disabled Persons
Award

截止報名日期
Entry Deadline
7/10/2005

查詢 Enquiry

電話 Telephone: 2106 2250

電郵 E-mail: wingtsui@eoc.org.hk

網址 Website: <http://www.eoc.org.hk>

6 劉心怡女士
Ms Sharon LAU
天文台高級科學主任 /
世界氣象組織航空氣象學
會管理層成員
Senior Scientific Officer,
Hong Kong Observatory /
Management Group Member,
Commission for
Aeronautical Meteorology,
World Meteorological
Organisation

7 黃綱城先生
Mr Frank WONG
匯豐集團控股有限公司
董事
Chairman of HSBC Bank
(Hong Kong) Limited

8 沙意先生
Mr Saeed UDDIN
平等機會委員會委員 /
香港回教信託基金會
主席和前任秘書
EOC Member / Former
Chairman and current
Honorary Secretary of the
Incorporated Trustees of the
Islamic Community Fund of
Hong Kong

9 李麗娟女士
Ms Shelley LEE
民政事務專員秘書長
Permanent Secretary for
Home Affairs

10 潘角青女士
Ms Alison PUN
救護主任 / 世界消防
雜誌大獎金牌得主
Ambulance Officer /
Gold Medalist of World
Firefighters Game

11 王者區先生
(Harry 哥哥)
Mr Harry WONG
著名兒童節目主持人
Renowned Artist
Specializing in Children's
Entertainment

*名單以英文姓氏排列
Names are listed according to alphabetical order



平等機會委員會
Equal Opportunities Commission