



A hand up, not a hand-out

Participants pick up sewing skills through Caltex initiative

CHEVRON Malaysia Limited, which operates the Caltex brand, has launched a self-sustainable skills programme for MyKasih Foundation welfare recipients in the Klang Valley.

Caltex Sew4Life, which kicked off on May 10, is a five-month community programme aimed at empowering women in Lembah Subang with new skills to help them achieve financial stability and independence. Weekly workshops include traditional wear tailoring, hand appliqué, beading, smocking and quilting.

MyKasih Foundation coordinates the programme in close collaboration with non-governmental organisations and small businesses in the area.

Participants comprise mothers from the lower income group who are either sole breadwinners of their families or have a high number of dependants.

"At Chevron, we are about enduring relationships. Caltex Sew4Life harnesses the capability of trusted community partners to facilitate the requirements of com-

munities in need. With MyKasih Foundation's help and expertise, Chevron is able to contribute towards providing enterprising women with relevant skills towards financial stability.

"The success of the Caltex Sew4Life graduates also helps pave the way for others in the community to gain skills and break the cycle of poverty," Chevron Malaysia country chairman Jeremy Oh said.

Chevron contributed RM54,000 to fund Caltex Sew4Life, which includes start-up interest-free loans of RM9,000 for promising graduates. Graduates in turn will channel sales proceeds back to MyKasih Foundation for a mutually agreed period to fund future students.

MyKasih Foundation chairman and co-founder Dr Ngau Boon said, "We always seek to engage with partners who support local initiatives aimed at improving the well-being of the underprivileged. This programme is an excellent example of how community-based corporate social responsibility initiatives can make a positive, long-lasting difference."

According to Dr Ngau, the real benefit of the programme was that it provided those from the lower income group with an alternative to a hand-out.

MyKasih Foundation advisory council member Nazrin Aneeza, who leads the skills training component of MyKasih's programmes,

said, "Our students have been hard at work and are very excited by the Raya festivities. All their products will be on sale on our MyKasih Foundation website."

Participant Norsila Saat, 45, is a keen participant in the smocking workshops.

"My specialty is dresses for children. I can stitch any design that the customer requires. I have always enjoyed smocking and hope to be the top graduate to earn the start-up loan to purchase a smocking machine," she said.

Caltex Sew4Life is part of Chevron's Energy for Learning global initiative. The initiative aims to support learning-based programmes that help people acquire new knowledge. For more details, visit www.mykasih.com.my.



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