

## Foreword from the President

Dear Readers,

Happy New Year 2006!

What's your aim for 2006? To self-advocate for your rights?

UV aims to promote Self-advocacy through talk shows, public announcement & media, etc. We want the public and the government to know more about us.

Self-Advocacy groups should be spread all over Malaysia. Why? To encourage Persons with Learning Disabilities at an early age to self-advocate, to help them know their rights and to give them courage and confidence to stand up for their rights. Learn to be responsible and independent. This is one important way to help persons with learning disabilities to be independent.

In other countries like developed countries, they allow people with learning disability to voice out, encouraged by their teachers and without being criticized by the public.

I would like to say thank you to the Malaysian Government for allowing us to form our own Society



and I want to thank Dignity & Services for helping and supporting United Voice for almost 11 years. And now Dignity & Services has allowed us to run our own Society.

Please help to support Self-Advocacy groups to grow and advance in future. In Panama City, at the Panama Special Olympic World Congress 2005, the Prime Minister & the First Lady of Panama (PM's Wife) came on time and gave a speech in front of the delegates (athletes), escorts (mentors), volunteers, reporters, observers and it was telecast on Panamanian Television Broadcast. Their effort to come for the event and their speech was a great encouragement for all the people with learning disabilities who came from all over the world. I hope the Malaysia citizens will also show such support for persons with learning disabilities in Malaysia.

*Johari bin Jamali*  
*President of United Voice*

## Why is Self-Advocacy Important?

Self-Advocacy is important, because it allows people with learning disabilities to speak up for themselves. It enables these people to talk to others about their own views, as well as their needs and wants without help from parents. I am one of these people with learning disabilities, and I am a mild, slow learner. I was born in 1982, and had Global Development Delay. I was not able to speak, until I went to Lourdes, France, with my mother. When I was young, I could only make sounds to tell my wants & needs to my parents. At Lourdes, France, my mother prayed to give me my voice. Since I could not talk at the Age of Parents' Happy Moments, almost everything was delayed. Shortly after my overseas trip, my mother took me to the speech therapy. At the time, there were only English-speaking therapists, and I learnt to speak English. Now... I can voice what I need and/or want. In the 1<sup>st</sup> National Self-Advocacy Conference, I learnt to

speak up more for myself. It was held in Bangi. As I was speaking English well, I was put in the English Room One (advance room). I listened attentively to 'Teacher' Joyce. The organizing committee organized a day trip to Kuala Lumpur, and it gave three choices of shopping malls at (KLCC, Bandar Sunway, and Putrajaya). I chose KLCC, as it is easily accessible by LRT, buses, cabs, and cars, and I preferred this mall to the other choices. At the Conference, I learnt I could voice out what is on my mind, and I could make my own choice. Two days before the night of the day-trip, I volunteered to do a YMCA dance with several others. I spoke my mind, and I was dancing in front of everyone at the Dinner and Dance Night. It was fun. I was chosen to represent my English group, since I was able to speak the language loudly, clearly, and properly.

*by Eleanore D'Orville*

# Being Independent

United Voice, the 1<sup>st</sup> Self-Advocacy Society of Persons with Learning Disabilities Selangor and Kuala Lumpur had broken the chains of being dependent on Dignity & Services (D & S) for sponsorship. Since we became a registered Society on the 12 of July 2005, we have been working towards being fully independent from Dignity & Services.

We are grateful to D & S for all their support, guidance and helping us to be an independent body. We now have our own bank account, our own accounting system and own network.

Being independent is not an easy task. We have to learn to manage our own finance and raise our own funds. We are grateful to all those who have been faithfully supporting us. Our heartfelt thanks to their partnership.

The Society is taking a very positive step in expanding the self-advocacy movement beyond Klang Valley region to other parts of Malaysia in order for us to realize the dream of being a National Body. Since the 1st National Self-Advocacy Conference in 2004, we saw one more Self-advocacy groups being established – the Mutiara Voice Club in Penang.

We hope more self-advocacy groups will be set up in every part of Malaysia. Those who wish to have some training and assistance from us to form a self-advocacy group may contact us at United Voice. We will be most glad to meet with your group and their parents to explain to them what self-advocacy is all about and why persons with learning disabilities need a self-advocacy group.

UV is glad to introduce to you other self-advocacy groups that we network with in Malaysia. Please contact them if you wish to know more about them.

*by Eugene Lau*

## Adventure Club, Dayspring

Dayspring Self-Advocacy known as, 'Adventure Club, Dayspring' was formed on 26th February 1999. Currently, we have 18 members and Mr. Khor Hwai Yee is the Chairman. Activities include organizing camps, trips, visit social homes, 'gotong-royong' and bring awareness to parents and community. Our group is supported by Dayspring Training Centre. If you wish to know more about us, please contact Mr. Jimmy Low at 03 - 3342 7467

*Dayspring, Klang*

## Kangaroo Club

Our group was formed in 1996 when we held our first meeting together at the Seri Mengasih Hall, together with my friends Alvin Lim, Chin Boon Choon and the rest. As a group we voted the name Kangaroo Club because kangaroos can jump high and far away, it is symbolic for us to be able to do things "high and far away" as the action of a simple jump is already quite difficult for us. Myself, Andrew Lee, is the Chairman of Kangaroo Club. We have organised a lot of social activities like going for the movies, play bowling, go "jalan-jalan" and made parties where we met up with old friends and former teachers. We don't have any sponsors, so we each subscribe a membership fee of RM1 per month to finance our activities. If anybody is interested in joining us, please contact Seri Mengasih Centre and talk to Teacher Irene Tioon or Adrian Chong.

*Andrew Lee  
President of Kangaroo Club  
Kota Kinabalu, Sabah*

## Report of the United Voice Committee Elections on Jan 15<sup>th</sup> '06.

The election was held at United Voice Office. Half of the 71 UV members turned up at 3:00p.m. or later. The elections went smoothly this year without any untoward incident. It was a tough 3-cornered fight for the Presidential, Secretarial and Treasury positions. Johari Bin Jamali faced off Vice-President Lim Kay Huat and contender Aslam Bin Sulaiman in a bid to retain his position. Yeow Chor Keen faced off Foo Khee Choong and newcomer Cynthia Joann A/P Thomas Raju, while Moo Shook Leng faced off Teoh Hooi Ting and debutant Tang Wing Cheong for the Secretarial and Treasury Positions respectively.

At the end of the elections, results were released at 4:30p.m. by supporting friend Yeo Swee Lan. The new Committee members are:

President	: Johari Bin Jamali
Vice-President	: Lim Kay Huat
Secretary	: Yeow Chor Keen
Assistant Secretary	: Cynthia Joann A/P Thomas Raju
Treasurer	: Teoh Hooi Ting
Ordinary Comm. Member	: Aslam Bin Sulaiman
Ordinary Comm. Member	: Foo Khee Choong
Ordinary Comm. Member	: Moo Shook Leng
Ordinary Comm. Member	: Alexander Tang Wing Cheong

Reported by:  
*Eugene Lau Boon Leng  
Public Relations Officer*



Johari leading a planning meeting



Kangaroo Club

## Friendship Club

Our group was formed at 23 September 2003. Our club's President is Kenny Chan Yat Weng. Our club's activities were Self-Advocacy Conference, IFT to Penang, Special Hand Bazaar and Dinner & Dance. Our group is supported by Malaysian Care. Contact Persons : Kenny Chan Yat Weng 016-3114034 Adam Chin Yin Sing 0163844476.

*Matthew Loh Yen Hui  
Assistant Treasurer  
Friendship Club, Kuala Lumpur*



Mutiara Voice Club

## Mutiara Voice Club

Nama kelab ialah Mutiara Voice Club ditubuhkan pada hari Sabtu 11hb June 2005. Saya, Md Shahell B Md Yusof ialah Presiden club. Aktiviti kelab ialah melawat ke rumah P. Ramlee, berkelah di Taman Rimba dan melawat ke Bukit Bendera. Kumpulan sokongan kami ialah Asia Community Service. Kami tiada alamat emel, tetapi boleh menghubungi kami melalui hp Shahell 016-4886271 (Pengerusi) dan Setiausaha Rozihad 016-4703528. Kami juga boleh dihubungi ditempat kerja kami di tel 04-8665349 dan alamat tempat kerja di no 53 jalan baru, Mk I Pulau Betong, Balik Pulau 11000, Penang.

*Shahell  
Presiden Mutiara Voice Club, Penang*



Dragon Club

## Bethany Advocacy

Our Self-Advocacy group was formed 12/02/1992. The name of our group is Bethany Advocacy. Azizul Ariffin is the president of our group. They have discussion, singing, playing games, and moral lessons. Our group is sponsored by Bethany Home. Should anyone be interested to join our group he/she can contact Azizul Ariffin at 05-6411276.

Our group is getting bigger and bigger each year. At present our group consists of 41 members. We started with only 10 members. We always sit in a circle, then everyone have to introduce themselves by saying their own name, where they come from and how do they come to school.

They also share what do they do after they finished school (working). They give comments of one's grooming, dressing, etc., also on discussion, regarding how one should behave in the public/school/home, and then they plan the programme for the following week.

*Edmund Hunt  
Service Coordinator  
Bethany Home, Teluk Intan*



Friendship Club

## Dragon Club

Kumpulan kami ditubuhkan pada 4hb Ogos 2003. Saya, Ahmad Rozaeen ialah Presiden untuk kumpulan kami. Aktiviti-aktiviti yang sedang ada dengan kumpulan "Dragon Club" ialah pertandingan bocce, badminton dan olahraga. Kumpulan kami yang sentiasa bermesyuarat di No 12A, Jalan 2/14 Taman Kajang Utama 43000 Kajang, Selangor telah diberi sokongan oleh Persatuan Kanak-kanak Istimewa Kajang (PKIK). Jika seorang hendak menjadi ahli kumpulan kami boleh berhubung terus dengan dengan Encik Ahmad Rozaeen di PKIK nombor telefon: 03 87366385.

*Ahmad Rozaeen  
Presiden Dragon Club, Kajang*



Bethany Self-Advocacy Group

## Advokasi-Diri

Perkataan advokasi-diri adalah sesuatu yang baru saya pelajari apabila saya mula terlibat dengan persatuan United Voice dalam tahun 2001. Saya kurang faham apa ertinya yang sebenar, mungkin saya telah aplikasikan pengalaman itu tanpa saya sedari. Seingat saya perkataan ini juga tidak pernah disebut oleh mana-mana guru saya sepanjang proses pembelajaran saya di sekolah menengah.

Bagaimana pun, apa yang saya faham mengenai advokasi-diri ialah 'belajar menjadi dewasa mengikut keputusan dan sesuai dengan keupayaan saya, juga kebolehan mengetahui apa yang saya mahu dan bagaimana cara untuk memenuhi keperluan diri saya. Ini adalah bertujuan untuk belajar menjadi seorang dewasa yang boleh berdikari dengan melalui proses ke arah alam dewasa dan matang seperti lain-lain orang dewasa yang berjaya'. Makna ini saya tahu melalui [www.Idonline.org](http://www.Idonline.org)

Advokasi-diri amat perlu bagi diri saya supaya saya tahu kemana hala tuju kehidupan saya untuk jangka masa pendek dan jangka masa panjang. Saya bernasib baik, kerana perkara ini selalu dibimbing oleh ibu saya. Kami selalu berbincang apa yang sesuai dan tidak untuk masa depan saya, adakalanya ibu saya akan berleter panjang mengenainya, kerana ada ketikanya saya akan membuat keputusan atau berangan-angan dengan perkara yang diluar kemampuan saya. Bagaimana pun dia selalu mendengar apa isi hati saya, dan kemudian membantu saya membuat keputusan. Dengan sokongan ibu dan keluarga, saya pasti advokasi-diri telah mengajar saya melalui proses kehidupan dengan lebih bermakna, kerana ia berkait dengan aktiviti yang saya suka lakukan.

Advokasi-diri ini juga perlu untuk lain-lain orang kurang upaya - kerana kami perlu tahu buat keputusan sendiri, beritahu orang lain apa kesukaan dan kemahuan kami dan buat-lah sesuatu yang kami suka lakukan dan bermakna untuk masa depan kami. Cara ini boleh memberitahu orang lain yang orang kurang upaya juga mempunyai perasaan, harga diri dan berhak menikmati dan melangkah hidup ke alam dewasa seperti insan dewasa yang lain. Satu contoh yang ingin saya kongsi bersama ialah memberanikan diri untuk terlibat dalam



aktiviti sosial seperti menghadiri seminar Hari Kanak-Kanak Antarabangsa anjuran Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat pada tahun 2003, membuat keputusan untuk melakukan kerja amal di Pusat Dalam Komuniti (PDK) sementara mencari peluang pekerjaan di tempat lain dan memilih untuk bermalam bersama ahli kumpulan United Voice di Shah Alam. Semua aktiviti ini membantu saya untuk lebih matang, membina keyakinan diri saya dan memberi kesedaran yang saya telah menjadi orang dewasa.

Saya juga pernah memberi komen melalui email ke satu rancangan di TV iaitu siri " 7 di pihak anda" mengenai memberi ruang tempat duduk kepada orang OKU seperti saya apabila diperlukan dalam perkhidmatan kenderaan awam. Email ini telah dibacakan oleh pengacara berkenaan dalam siri yang berikutnya. Ini adalah kerana saya kerap kali berhadapan dengan sikap tidak peduli pengguna perkhidmatan kenderaan awam terhadap keperluan orang OKU.

Advokasi-diri menjadikan saya seorang yang lebih peka untuk menyatakan kepada orang awam apakah hak dan perkara yang sepatutnya diterima oleh orang-orang seperti kami. Bagaimana pun saya agak terkilang kerana hak kami selalunya tidak dipedulikan oleh beberapa pihak, walaupun kami mempunyai advokasi-diri sendiri.

Coretan :  
*Nazmi Kamarulzaman*  
*Coventry, United Kingdom*  
*5 January 2006*

Alamat Email saya: [nazmik@yahoo.com](mailto:nazmik@yahoo.com)

# United Voice 1st Anniversary Dinner

*Venue: Perdana Ballroom  
Bukit Jalil Golf & Country Resort*

*Date: 15th July 2006*

## Come & celebrate with us!

For more details please contact United Voice

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