

Holistic Change

All-rounder **Angela Yap**, founder of Akasaa, stands firm on social entrepreneurship

Performance coach, lecturer, columnist and author, Angela Yap embodies the essence of social entrepreneurship through her company Akasaa's philosophy of democratising innovations – operating businesses with a social conscience. Akasaa is the culmination of her past experiences in the corporate world and work with non-profit organisations.

A staunch advocate of human rights issues both locally and abroad since the age of 18, the outspoken young lady was the youngest member, at age 22, to sit on the Board of Governors of Amnesty International Malaysia. Yap's work included working with marginalised communities in the country such as the *orang asli* and plantation workers, seeking better legal protection for women and girls, and building strategies for the advancement of human rights through education.

Yap remembers one of her most memorable moments. It was during the release and re-arrest of Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, which resulted in a peaceful demonstration outside the Myanmar Embassy in KL.

"We were there as international observers to ensure the adherence of international laws. Few people understand how important it is for us to use our freedom to help others ensure theirs. Freedom is a privilege, not a right, and our duty as citizens is to ensure we use ours in the right way. Our lives are nothing if not spent in the service of others."

Passionate about providing a holistic education to the young, Yap has set up a one-

year mentorship programme aimed at building leaders of tomorrow by building holistic individuals. The by-invitation-only programme works with three to four selected youths from public schools.

"With so much knowledge out there,

book *Managing Ya-hoos!* tells true accounts of unscrupulous conduct and the "nobodies" who change things. The book delves into issues such as ethics, social enterprise, business reform, feminism and moral obligations. Every book sold means one Time Dollar – equivalent to one

"Our lives are nothing if not spent in the service of others"

everything in life is connected. Only when you can connect the dots can you be a lateral thinker. Problem is, young people aren't taught to see that connection," she says. "This programme equips them with the whole spectrum – fine arts, psychology, history, business, even quantum mechanics – and ties everything together to build confidence in these young people so they can function as holistic individuals."

Yap also works tirelessly on her Via Awake Minds training programme, Malaysia's first one-to-one training for children, youths and mid-career professionals. For every paying participant, Akasaa provides free training to an underprivileged youth or refugee.

Not stopping at that, Yap is excited about her first-in-the-world Time Bank via book sale concept, which is based on an innovative time banking model developed by Yale-trained lawyer Dr Edgar Cahn in the 1980s. Her new

free hour of training – deposited into the Time Bank. With full accountability, these accumulated training hours will be channelled into providing free education for refugees and poor urban youths.

Part of Yap's impressive repertoire also includes co-authoring *Cities, Citizens & Civilisations* for the United Nations Development Programme – The Urban Governance Initiative and *Answering Is An Art*, which the Western Australian Education Council praised as "an innovative approach to teaching business issues."

A nominee of *Great Women of Our Time 2011* by *Malaysian Women's Weekly* for her outstanding achievements and contributions to society in finance and commerce, Yap also received the inaugural *Most Successful Women 2012 Award* from *Jessica* magazine alongside personalities like Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir and Dato' Ambiga Sreenevasan.

It, the new way

Samsung
GALAXY Note
10.1

