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A Journey of Service and Growth: An Interview with Mrs. Doris Ho

The DGS Eco Garden is a gift from the DOGA to the School and Mrs. Doris Ho (DGS Supervisor 1984-2021), which was officially opened on the 20th December 2023 at the DGS Mini Bazaar in DOGA Place by Mrs. Doris Ho.

Driven by Mrs. Ho's concern for the environment and her vision of offering a quiet retreat for students, the Eco Garden was created. It features a "Daily Service Bench", dedicated to Mrs. Ho in appreciation of her tremendous service to the School. In line with the theme of the Garden, the bench was purposefully recycled and crafted from a local tree that had fallen during a typhoon. Together with the other "eco" features, DOGA hopes that the Garden will serve as a living testament to environmentalism, where students can find relaxation as well as inspiration to embrace Mrs. Ho's green advocacy. In a symbolic gesture of continuity and care, the DGS Environmental Ambassadors assumed the responsibility of the Garden from Mrs. Ho by receiving a watering can from her, signifying their commitment to be stewards of the Garden.

After the ceremony, DOGA's Editorial Subcommittee had the privilege of chatting with Mrs. Ho over a cup of tea in the DOGA Room, where she shared her insights into the purposes of a garden, alongside her remarkable journey at DGS and beyond, which she attributes to the blessings and guidance of God.

Quoting from the book "On the Necessity of Gardening", Mrs. Ho recalled Justus Lipsius (1547-1606) said, "It is the garden that is the training ground for the creativity and wisdom that will enable us to recreate the world." In her view, the purpose of a garden is not merely in its aesthetic appeal, but as a dynamic learning ground that enables us to rekindle our relationship with nature. It is also a gathering place for in-person activities, restoring a balance that can come askew from over-reliance on remote learning, and a potential social disconnection that can arise from excessive use of modern technology. "I want to see the Garden being used," she said, "for all sorts of activities." She eagerly anticipates returning to DGS to witness the inspiring eco-projects that the students would create, and

even envisaged the possibility of open-air concerts being held in the Garden, to encourage a sense of community within the DGS family.

Reminiscing about her time at DGS, Mrs. Ho felt that one of her most cherished aspects was the lifelong friendships forged with her classmates from the Class of 1957. Even today, around 10 of them gather monthly for lunch, offering unwavering support to one another through life's ups and downs. She fondly recalled her English teacher, Miss Allen, who resided on campus with her two big dogs that followed her everywhere, even into the classrooms. Miss Allen not only taught English but also imparted the skill of knitting, a hobby that Mrs. Ho continues to enjoy to this day. Mrs. Ho still appreciates the huge field in those days which provided ample space for running, and the Nissin huts that housed art classes. She even delighted us with a mischievous memory of sneaking snacks from under the classroom desk lid during classes!

Mrs. Ho attributed her ability to overcome life's challenges to the education she received at DGS. Speech training with Mrs. O'Connell, the teacher responsible for speech competitions, equipped her with impeccable pronunciation and voice projection, skills that proved invaluable throughout her different careers. Another important attribute she learned at DGS was the value of resilience and a constant drive for self-improvement, enabling her to embrace diverse environments and jobs after graduation. Given the disruptions of the recent pandemic, Mrs. Ho emphasised the importance of these qualities for students, as they navigate a post-pandemic world. Amidst the irresistible lure of technology and AI, she again underscored the need to achieve a balance by cultivating an appreciation for the humanities, while accepting our responsibilities for the environment and our community.

Mrs. Ho reflected that her career path had been a blessed one. "In retrospect, I feel strongly that God's hand was always there to guide me along my career path, as I could not have possibly



done it on my own." After completing her education and teaching in the UK, she briefly taught in Hong Kong before exploring other career opportunities, first in the finance field, and ending up as an Administrative Officer in the Hong Kong Government, where she had the opportunity to gain exposure in multiple departments, including the Music Office, Post Office, Health and Welfare Bureau and others. She recalled that the skills she acquired at DGS proved to be indispensable when confronted with challenging situations in these roles.

When appointed as a DGS Supervisor, Mrs. Ho did not really have any idea of what was expected of her.

Recognising that if she lacked the ability in a certain area, she needed the humility to learn and to take advice from others who could do the job better. As Mrs. Ho humbly remarked, "I'm not the leader, I'm the follower. I've learned so much from the others and I'm still learning." As a Christian, she believes a minister or leader's role is to serve.

Embedded deep within Mrs. Ho's heart is the "One School" concept. She emphasised the profound benefits that arise from sharing a common campus for students, teachers, and parents alike. When faced with the option of separating the Junior School to another location, she was pleased that the School Council rejected the option, cognisant of the inherent value of keeping both the Junior and Secondary schools together. She pointed out that the intertwining staircase in the redeveloped campus serves as a physical manifestation of the unity and collaboration between the two schools. By sharing the same campus, a multitude of interactions and exchanges are fostered among students of all ages. Students of the Junior and Secondary schools can learn from one another, enriching the learning journey for all.

Serving as DGS Supervisor for 37 years had been a meaningful and fulfilling journey for Mrs. Ho. She deeply appreciated the collective efforts of alumnae, parents,

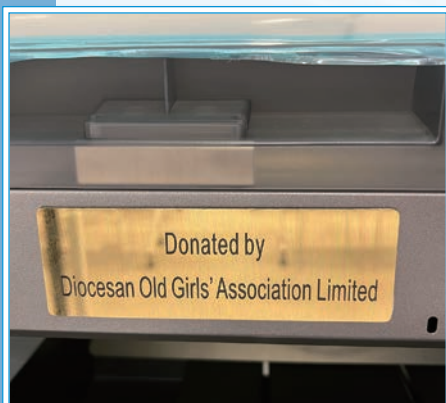
students, staff, and School Council members, who worked together to ensure the success of various events and projects at the school. One significant milestone during her tenure was overseeing DGS's transition from a grant school to a Direct Subsidy Scheme school, a positive and exciting change that provided additional resources and flexibility. Looking back, Mrs. Ho felt blessed to have worked with dedicated headmistresses and staff, enabling her to learn so much as a Supervisor. Furthermore, she had led the major School Redevelopment Project in 2009, where the commitment and sincere efforts of School Council members proved invaluable. Mrs. Ho expressed her gratitude to all those involved and humbly acknowledged, "I really experienced God's love and blessings throughout these projects. He has really looked after the School. I've been so blessed to be part of it all."

After her retirement, Mrs. Ho's daily life revolves around her Christian faith, which serves as a compass for her actions. Thankful for God's blessings, she seeks to serve others, and offers thanks for being placed in situations where she can make a meaningful difference. She is grateful for the gift of good health and well-being at her age, which she sees as a precious resource to be utilized to the full. Recently, she has found meaning in being present for others by lending a sympathetic ear, offering help wherever needed.

We are truly thankful for Mrs. Ho's wisdom, unwavering passion and commitment to education which has left an indelible mark on the DGS community. She has exemplified the meaning of "Daily Giving Service" by giving selflessly to ensure that DGS students would have the best resources to pursue their goals. We came away feeling we have much to learn from her leadership, humility, and dedication to service. Her legacy at DGS will continue to benefit and inspire future generations of DGS students in their Daily Giving Service.

DOGA Donates Garment Printer

DOGA is pleased to donate a state-of-the-art digital garment printer to the School's new Digital Learning Centre. It is being used as a teaching tool in IT lessons and in the School's virtual store at the Mini Bazaar. By integrating industry-level technology into classroom learning, we hope to provide students with a real world experience in design, production, and marketing of digital art.



DOGA Annual Dinner 2023

The much-awaited DOGA Annual Dinner made a grand return on 17th October 2023 at the Hotel Icon, attracting over 400 alumnae spanning classes from 1964 to 2016. Immersed in the vibrant "Neon Magic" theme, old girls enjoyed an evening of innovation and fun. The event featured dazzling venue decor, engaging games, integration of QR code to access the programme brochure, and a computerised lucky draw. Alumnae perfectly echoed the night's theme with their creative and eye-catching outfits. A memorable highlight was the calligraphy competition, where each class year showcased writing '拔萃' in Chinese brushstroke, stirring fond recollections of school days when brush pens were used for Chinese dictation. A hearty congratulations to the class of 1996 for clinching the Best Turnout Class award with an impressive 37 attendees. The dinner was abuzz with the joy of reconnecting with old friends, laughter, endless conversations, photo-taking, and lively souvenir shopping, making it an unforgettable night of camaraderie and celebration.



Calligraphy Competition Winners



Photo Corner



Best Turnout Class – Class of 1996



Best Dressed Competition Winners

DOGA Legal Group Gathering



The DOGA Membership Subcommittee's Legal Group hosted an evening junk boat gathering on 23rd November 2023. Around 30 old girls, including solicitors, barristers, in-house counsels, legal HR managers, and students, bonded and shared professional knowledge and experience. Everyone enjoyed their drinks, laughter, stimulating discussions, and the spectacular Symphony of Lights show as the junk cruised along the Victoria Harbour.

Beach Cleanup

On 5th November 2023, DOGA organised a beach cleanup at Lung Kwu Tan, Tuen Mun, with an impressive turnout of around 60 old girls and their family members. The group learned about the sources of heavy ocean pollution at the area, including the effects from nearby power stations and industrial waste from Mainland China. Despite the scorching heat, they collected over 40kg of ocean trash that was washed up or littered onto the coastline. We are proud that our members and their younger generation are helping to make a positive difference to the environment.



Bunny Lantern Workshop

On 24th September 2023, the Art Club hosted a DIY Nostalgic Bunny Lantern workshop at the School for around 30 old girls and their family members. With their skillful hands and imagination, the participants transformed simple and accessible materials, including craft paper and a round paper lantern, into colourful bunny (or unicorn!) lanterns.



DOGA Interhouse Basketball Competition 2023

DOGA Sports Subcommittee hosted the DOGA Interhouse Basketball Competition 2023 on 24th June 2023. After four years of waiting, old and new basketball players returned to the court, showing their house and team spirit with extremely high morale. Around 30 passionate old girls, who missed their time playing, sweated and cheered together, played their best and fought for the championship title. Symons team once again claimed champion after four years, while Skipton and Hurrell were awarded first and second runners-up respectively.



DGS Careers Fair 2023

The DGS Careers Fair 2023 made a triumphant return after a four-year hiatus on 24th June with record high student participation. Designed for all secondary school girls and for the first time, Primary 6 girls, the event aimed to broaden their perspectives and inspire them to explore different career paths. More than 90 old girls and other representatives showcased over 40 different job types across a wide range of sectors, including business, medical and healthcare, legal and law enforcement, architecture, engineering, media, hospitality, information technology and more. Enthusiastic students engaged in discussions with experienced alumnae, gaining valuable insights into potential careers.

Dr CJ Symons Scholarship 2023

DOGA is happy to announce that Nicole Mong Joo Chung has been awarded the Dr CJ Symons Scholarship for 2023. The scholarship, which amounts to HK\$160,000, will go towards her study at the University of Pennsylvania where she intends to major in Biology and Computational Neuroscience. Congratulations and we wish Nicole every success in her future endeavours.

