

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Local Students Gain Inspiring Experience Meeting Para Swim Stars of the Para Swimming World Series Singapore 2023



*(Above) Spanish Paralympian Teresa Perales (back middle), meeting with learning journey participants from Cherie Hearts @ Charlton, together with (on her right) Ms Mercedes Alonso Frayle, Spanish Ambassador to Singapore, and (on her left) Ms Angeline Peh, Vice President, Singapore Disability Sports Council (SDSC).*

Over 400 students, including preschoolers as young as four years old, were given a unique opportunity to observe para swimmers in action and learn about the different roles involved in organizing a world-level parasport competition, thanks to free learning journeys provided by the Singapore Disability Sports Council (SDSC) during the only Asian leg of the Para Swimming World Series 2023.

Classification, a system unique to parasport competitions that determines which athletes are eligible to compete in a sport and how athletes are grouped together by the degree of activity limitation resulting from their impairments, was one of the aspects the students learned about.



During the free learning journeys, students were introduced to themes of inclusivity and accessibility and had the chance to learn about the different adaptations and equipment used by para swimmers, including tappers who use a long device, akin to a fishing rod with a tennis ball at the tip, to tap visually impaired swimmers when they are approaching the end of the pool to avoid injury or to make a turn if necessary.

The students had the opportunity to meet two para swim legends, Teresa Perales and Yip Pin Xiu, who are internationally recognized for their achievements in the sport.

Mark Tan, a lecturer at ITE College Central who volunteered as one of the facilitators for the learning journeys, said, "The activities are interesting and informative, and good for encouraging inquisitive minds. For older students, it's good for them to be more accepting and understanding of people with differing abilities, and to see that they are still able to achieve their goals."

Kelly Fan, Executive Director of SDSC, emphasized the importance of inclusivity in sports, stating, "We believe that sports should be accessible to all, regardless of ability. The learning journeys were a chance for our younger generation to get an early start in witnessing the power of sport in not only breaking down barriers but also building resilience."

The Para Swimming World Series will be held at the OCBC Aquatic Centre from April 29th to May 1st, 2023. Singapore marks the 5th leg of the 2023 World Series and the only Asian leg. This is the 2nd time that Singapore is hosting the event, the first being 2019. A total of 174 para swimmers from 21 countries would be racing over the three days, using a multi-class point system.

Tickets are on sale on SISTIC website at \$10 for a day pass and \$25 for a 3-day season pass. A livestream of the heats and finals will also be available on MeWatch.

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**Photo link:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11pNSHTzfWAtPm7ielk-M43gLYcCl?usp=sharing>

**About Singapore Disability Sports Council (SDSC)**

Established in 1973 by the then Ministry of Social Affairs, the Singapore Disability Sports Council (SDSC) is Singapore's national sports body for persons with disabilities. Committed to transforming the lives of individuals with disabilities through sports, the SDSC engages, develops, and promotes excellence among persons with disabilities.

In partnership with its members - an alliance of social service agencies, parasport and mainstream sport organizations - the SDSC drives Singapore's movement towards greater inclusivity. SDSC's efforts have produced inspiring success stories such as Aloysius Gan,



Asian Youth Para Games medalist, and Yip Pin Xiu, Singapore's most decorated Paralympian.

More information at [www.sdsc.org.sg](http://www.sdsc.org.sg)