



Towngas, Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited and Institution of Dining Art launch second year of We Can Cook programme for the ‘Young Old’

(12 November 2018) With more and more people choosing to retire at a younger age, retirees nowadays are more energetic and have a higher level of education in general than their predecessors, which equips them with the ability to acquire new knowledge later in life. To provide leisure activities that better cater to their interests, The Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited (Towngas), Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited (Welfare Council) and Institution of Dining Art have co-organised the innovative We Can Cook programme, the first local cooking programme for the ‘Young Old’ supported by a corporation, the culinary industry and the social welfare sector. On 11 November, over 60 Young Old graduates from the programme celebrated with the fun-filled ‘We Can Cook — Farm to Table’ graduation ceremony together with participating chefs.

Since its inception in July 2016, 24 chefs and over 500 Young Old participants have taken part in the programme to create a total of 24 international dishes. Some have continued to volunteer and share their experience at elderly centres. Earlier this year, some also served as mentors and taught a group of secondary school students a recipe that they had learned from the chefs, realising the motto of ‘We Can Cook, We Can Teach, We Can Share’.

The ceremony provided an opportunity for the participating chefs and Young Old graduates to prepare and enjoy a meal made from vegetables that they picked from Towngas’ organic farm, showcasing their superb culinary skills.

Peter Wong, Towngas Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer – Utilities Business, said, “At Towngas, we value the power of innovation. Today’s event is a good example of that: it takes the cooking class out of the classroom and into the farm, so that we can enjoy the food in natural surrounds. We have to thank our partners, the Welfare Council and Institution of Dining Art, for supporting this meaningful programme for two consecutive years, which has benefitted a growing number of Young Old graduates.”

Kelvin Yau, Chairman of the Institution of Dining Art, added, “Our professional chefs are pleased to share their knowledge with the public. ‘We Can Cook’ offers an excellent opportunity for them to interact with the community and share their unique experience, and provide professional training to programme participants. At the same time, the culinary industry is able to learn more about the Young Old and tailor their service to suit this particular segment of our clientele.”

Joseph Man, Deputy Director of the Welfare Council, remarked, “Retiring in style is popular with the Young Old group. The We Can Cook programme blends the two important elements of professionalism and innovation to offer affordable cooking classes at Towngas’ well-equipped cooking centre, making it very popular with our members.”

Dr Lam Ching-choi, Member of the Executive Council and Chairman of the Elderly Commission, said, “In recent years, more and more people retire with a higher level of education and better economic situations. They look for an innovative and quality way of life, and traditional elderly-care services cannot meet their expectations. We Can Cook is a good example of a new way of cooperation between the business and social welfare sectors which takes elderly care to another level. Participants can even share their newly acquired culinary skills with the rest of their community.”

Ms Law, an office worker before her retirement, said, “I had a lot of fun in the class. It was an extraordinary experience and I enjoyed sharing my cooking with my family. And now I am happy to share what I have learned with secondary school students as a volunteer myself.”

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We Can Cook Programme

We Can Cook, the first cooking course for ‘Young Old’ retirees, was taught by professional chefs and held at the fully equipped Towngas Cooking Centre. In an enjoyable learning environment, Young Old students could broaden their social network and reinforce their self-confidence at home and in life. Since 2016, a total of 24 cooking classes featuring international cuisine have been conducted for participants aged 50 or over.

Press Photos:



(From left to right) Chairman of Institute of Dining Art, Kelvin Yau; Deputy Director of the Welfare Council, Joseph Man; Towngas Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer – Utilities Business, Peter Wong; and Dr Lam Ching-choi, Member of the Executive Council and Chairman of the Elderly Commission, experience farming by ploughing and planting seedlings with Towngas volunteers.





Guests, We Can Cook students and Towngas volunteers had a good harvest at the farm.



Participating chefs use freshly cut vegetables harvested by Young Old students to create mouth-watering dishes.



We Can Cook participants present hand-made souvenirs to their chef instructors as a token of appreciation for their sharing of experiences and cooking skills.



We Can Cook student Ms Law presents a basket of fresh vegetables to Dr Lam Ching-choi, Member of the Executive Council and Chairman of the Elderly Commission.



Guests, Young Old participants and volunteers enjoy a feast of traditional pun choi after a day full of joy.

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