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News Release
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70-year Old Sakae Sushi Kitchen Helper Wins May Day Award

- SGX-listed Apex-Pal also Receives Company Commendation Award

10 May 2008, Singapore – Apex-Pal International Ltd (“Apex-Pal” or “The Group”), The Innovative Food People, is proud to have two of its staff win the national May Day Model Worker Award, administered by the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC). The Company will also receive the May Day Company Commendation Award for helping to enhance the employability of workers in Singapore.

2. Seventy-year old kitchen helper, Robert Long Foo Heng, is one of our oldest employees working in Apex-Pal. He joined Apex-Pal in 2002 and worked in one of the Group’s Sakae Sushi outlets as a kitchen helper. From a Kitchen Helper whose main task is to assist the chefs in doing simple duties, Uncle Robert as he’s fondly addressed by all his colleagues, was groomed to be in charge of the *chawanmushi* (Japanese steamed egg custard) counter. Today, not only does he take care of the making of the *chawanmushi*, one of Sakae Sushi’s top selling dishes, he is also well known as our only *chawanmushi* trainer at the Bugis outlet. Uncle Robert has trained numerous kitchen helpers in *chawanmushi*-making, some of whom are years younger than him while others are mature workers aged above 40.

3. Thankfully, age was never a factor or an issue for him. “Even though some of the new staff I train are much younger than me, I do not feel the pressure. I enjoy my work very much and feel much younger working with the young crew members in the kitchen. They treat me very well and make me feel more energetic,” said Uncle Robert thoughtfully.

4. Having trained his fellow colleagues on the procedures of making *chawanmushi*, Uncle Robert currently oversees them to ensure that consistent quality is attained. In view of his earnestness to learn and excel, he was also given the opportunity to expand his work scope and is

being groomed to be a kitchen runner passing on customers' orders from the service crew to the kitchen staff.

5. The other winner is Mdm Lim Yok Bee, Sakae Sushi's first female Assistant Chef. Currently based in Sakae Sushi's Square 2 outlet, Auntie Yok Bee, as her colleagues call her, was a homemaker and joined Apex-Pal in 2002. From the position of a Kitchen Assistant, she has proven her capability and risen through the ranks. Today, at age 55, she has been given the responsibility of ensuring the Square 2 kitchen runs smoothly. To achieve this, she had to overcome her biggest challenge of using the computer to perform web ordering for the supplies for the kitchen, and to do simple calculations for payroll and food costing. Always eager to learn, she enrolled herself in the company-sponsored IT skills course and this has helped her to do her new job more efficiently.

6. Recognising her dedication, nurturing skills and ability to rise to the challenge, Auntie Yok Bee was also selected as one of Apex-Pal's in-house WSQ (Work Skills Qualification) certified trainer. Being a certified trainer, she is able to train newcomers using our in-house WSQ units, thus allowing our fellow colleagues to be certified with a Statement of Attainment, which is recognised at the industry and national levels.

7. Her positive attitude has never failed to motivate or encourage newcomers. No matter how many full shifts she has pulled, or how busy the outlet was, she would always find time to sit down with newcomers, especially the matured workers, to help them settle down during their first few days at work. "I am very happy to have joined the Apex-Pal family. Even though some of the new areas of work were initially tough, I am thankful that the Company sent me for courses to help me upgrade myself so that I can perform my tasks better," said Auntie Yok Bee.

An Inclusive Employer aiming to be An Employer of Choice

8. Apex-Pal will be awarded the May Day Company Commendation for its efforts in creating an inclusive workplace for those who want to re-enter the workforce. Indeed, it takes pride in being an inclusive company who employs anyone who has the right attitude and willingness to work and learn. More than 30% of its 1,000 staff are matured workers. It participates in the Yellow Ribbon Project giving ex-convicts a second chance in society. In addition, the company also employs MINDS (Movement for the Intellectually Disabled Singapore) students to do routine work like mailing of direct mailers.

9. “Manpower issue is a constant challenge for companies in the F&B sector. We are happy to have in our midst a large group of matured workers who are able to work hand in hand with the younger crew. In fact, they act like mentors to the younger ones, many of whom are foreigners with no family support here, and give them advice from work issues to personal problems,” said Ms May Foo, Vice President of Apex-Pal’s Human Resource and Capability Development.

10. Various initiatives have been put in place to ease older workers into the workplace. One example is the implementation of biometrics system at the restaurants so that staff no longer need to punch in and out to clock their working outs. This is a big help for the older workers some of whom may have difficulties writing their names. It also helps the supervisors to calculate the staff’s paychecks as the number of working hours can be downloaded from the server at Apex-Pal’s headquarters.

11. On the awards, Mr Douglas Foo, Chairman and CEO for Apex-Pal International said, “While we are delighted to be awarded the May Day Commendation Award, the recognition goes to everyone in the Apex-Pal family. Without everyone working cohesively as one big Team, we would not have come so far. I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their efforts and hope they’ll stay with us for a long time to come.”

12. Uncle Robert and Auntie Yok Bee will receive their awards from Mr Gan Kim Yong, Acting Minister for Manpower at the NTUC May Day Workers Award Ceremony on 10 May 2008 at the D’Marquee, Downtown East, 1 Pasir Ris Close.

About Apex-Pal International Ltd

Apex-Pal is a homegrown leader in providing innovative food and beverage solutions. With more than a decade of experience under its belt, the Group constantly breaks new grounds offering Singapore a taste of international dining through brands including Sakae Sushi, Sakae@Campus, Sakae Teppanyaki, Sakae Izakaya, Sakae Pizza, Hei Sushi, Sho-U, Crepes & Cream and Uma Uma Men. It is supported by Nouvelle Events, the only specialist caterer in Singapore that offers an award winning and unique patented portable *kaiten* (conveyor belt) *sushi* experience. In addition, the Group is involved in franchising its brands, food import and distribution as well as business-to-business supplies.

Listed on the Singapore Exchange since 2003, Apex-Pal manages more than 80 outlets in seven countries cover 12 cities -- Singapore, Jakarta, Chiangmai, Beijing, Chengdu, Hong Kong Shanghai, Manila, Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Selangor, and New York City. The Group remains committed to global growth by exploring new emerging markets such as the Middle East, Hungary, Mongolia and Vietnam. In FY 2007, Apex-Pal achieved a profit before tax of S\$3.5million on the back of a strong turnover of S\$83.8million.

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