



# CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

Annual Report 2013



The Association of Muslim Professionals (AMP) was established on 10 October 1991, as an important resolution of the First National Convention of Singapore Malay/Muslim Professionals which was held on 6 and 7 October 1990. The Convention was attended by 500 Malay/Muslim professionals who met to brainstorm new directions for the community. AMP was formed with core programmes in education, human resource development, social development and research.

AMP is a registered charitable organisation and is accorded the status of an Institution of Public Character.

AMP is guided by its core principles of being independent, non-partisan and working in critical collaboration with all parties that share its mission to bring about a ***Dynamic Muslim Community*** in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. AMP will partner with any player who identifies with and supports AMP's mission in society and will support government policies which serve to advance the community and the interest of the people at large.

## ASPIRATION FOR THE COMMUNITY

A dynamic Muslim community

## VISION

A model organisation in community leadership

## MISSION

To be a thought leader, problem solver and mobiliser for the advancement of the community

## CORE VALUES

### CONVICTION

We are committed to serve the community with passion. We take pride in our role in society.

### INTEGRITY

We place community interest before self and maintain high moral values and discipline.

### PROFESSIONALISM

We aim for excellence in our work and add value to what we do.

### CREATIVITY

We champion creativity and dare to explore new ideas to overcome challenges.

### TEAM-ORIENTED

We work as a team, believe in shared responsibility and value partnerships with others.

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# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



The process of stepping back to assess an organisation's performance over the past year is important. This will provide a better perspective in formulating strategies in moving forward. In this light, the Board of Directors at AMP reviewed its programmes and services in relation to the outcome and impact they have had on the community over the years. The Board felt strongly that it was time for AMP to relook and reassess its position and offerings to stay relevant.

AMP was formed 22 years ago where the social, economic and political landscapes then were different from what they are today. There was a deep sense of unease within the Malay/Muslim community with the state of its economic and educational progress. At the same time, many felt their needs and aspirations

were not fully met by the government. There were even sentiments that the community was being marginalised. As a result, there was a strong call for an alternative voice. This, coupled with the dire need for a strategic direction for the community, was the basis for the 1<sup>st</sup> National Convention of Singapore Malay/Muslim Professionals held in 1990. A year later, AMP was formed.

Two decades later, the political landscape has changed. It is now more open and engaging. Political leaders now engage citizens directly via various social media platforms. Official government responses to current issues are no longer issued exclusively through statements in the media, but are posted expeditiously on Facebook. The advent of social media platforms provides us the opportunity to communicate with authorities in real time. Feedback and suggestions are made almost instantaneously, giving rise to a new dimension of idea generation. The widespread use of social media also means that individuals can now successfully rally others for support towards a shared cause to make their voices heard. With the role that social media now plays in political and social activism, this has and will continue to reshape the political landscape.

With a more open and collaborative style, it is evident that the government today is more comfortable with dialogue and discussion over direct confrontation. Acknowledging this, we need to adapt the approach that we take in charting and executing our strategies. With the community's interest always in mind, AMP has to reassess its position in the community and determine how best to engage the relevant authorities. Ultimately, our success should be measured by the outcome and the benefits that the community gains. In short, AMP has to reinvent itself in order to be effective as well as to stay relevant.

With this, the Board developed a new vision for AMP, that is, to be a model organisation in community leadership, with the long-term aim of steering the community into becoming a dynamic Muslim community.

The community has made significant progress in its educational and socio-economic development. However, gaps still exist when compared to other communities. We are playing catch-up. AMP remains committed towards making education and families its top priority. A lack of focus on either could lead to many social issues. Already, we are facing many issues such as poor educational performance, juvenile delinquency, dysfunctional families and debt.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Convention of Singapore Muslim Professionals that was held last year was aimed at identifying strategies to help catalyse the community's progress in education, and social and economic development, among others. Of the 18 strategies, AMP has implemented three; the enhanced Community in Review forum to discuss national issues; the formation of the Muslim Expatriates Network (MEX) to help Muslim expatriates successfully integrate into the local Muslim community and Singaporean society; and the formation of the Debt Advisory Centre (DAC) which offers practical advice to those saddled with debts.

Our research subsidiary, RIMA, has underscored its focus on research on community issues following its relaunch in April 2013. In working towards its vision of becoming a centre of research excellence for the advancement of the Malay and Muslim communities here and in the region, we are looking at strengthening its role in providing useful data and empirical analysis towards resolving the community's problems. This will give AMP and other community organisations a better understanding of the landscape that we are operating in. This will help us to modify and adapt our strategies to better meet the needs of the community.

Education remains a significant challenge for the community to overcome despite 30 years of intense efforts by Malay/Muslim organisations and political leaders. We must explore strategies which can offer a quantum leap to uplift our community's performance in education.

Data released by the Ministry of Education in November this year revealed that performance of Malay students is reaching a plateau. Improvement has not been significant over the last few years in order to close the gap with other ethnic groups. Many tweaks have been made, yet the improvement has been insignificant. This might indicate that our education system may have reached its systemic limit. Similar to any engineering system, a new systemic limit can only be attained if the current education system itself is reviewed. AMP will continue to work with and make proposals to the authorities to tweak and enhance the current education system to improve the education performance of our Malay students.

Moving forward, AMP will continually reassess and review its role in the community. We must ensure we remain relevant at all times. We have to reinvent ourselves in the new operating landscape. We hope to fulfil our aspiration for the community, which is for it to be a dynamic Muslim community in Singapore. Together with our stakeholders, we look forward to working for the community in the years to come.

### **Azmoon Ahmad**

*Chairman  
AMP Group*