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STAFF of Star Media Group (SMG) organised a volunteer programme in collaboration with Pertubuhan Tindakan Wanita Islam Malaysia (Pertiwi) Soup Kitchen to distribute food packs.

Called "Food for Soul", the corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme involved 10 employees from SMG.

The staff were from various departments – client brand marketing, corporate communication and social impact, marketing, technology and Chinese radio channel 988.

The volunteers assisted with packaging and distributing dinner rice packs of curry chicken, fried fish, prawn *sambal* and mutton curry for 250 people at Pusat Khidmat Gelandangan Medan Tuanku in Kuala Lumpur.

SMG also sponsored 250 packs of *bubur lambuk* for the event.

Run by Kuala Lumpur City Council (DBKL), the centre caters to transient folk.

In addition to providing a place to spend the night, food packs provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or those sponsored by corporate bodies are distributed at 12.30pm, 6.30pm and 9pm each day.

Long lines are often seen at the entrance of the service centre during lunch and dinner.

"We chose to volunteer because we saw it as a meaningful gesture, said Xuan Ng, 41, head of client brand marketing for 988.

"There is a Chinese saying that goes, 'Unless you have lived other people's lives, you won't know what they are going through.'

"So as part of a caring society, I believe that by giving what little help you can, it can make a difference," she said.

Helping to rope in volunteers for the programme was Divya Theresa Ravi, 23, a graduate trainee with SMG.

"We were supposed to keep applications open for four days, but within an hour of the notification being issued group-wide, all the slots were filled," said Divya.

Media group volunteers for soup kitchen initiative

CSR exercise assists Kuala Lumpur transients in spirit of Aidilfitri



SMG volunteers distributing food packs at Pusat Khidmat Gelandangan Medan Tuanku in Kuala Lumpur. — Photos: ART CHEN/The Star

"We are delighted at how eager our colleagues are to participate in this initiative."

SMG corporate communications and social impact senior executive Aida Zuriani Ahmad Idris, 47, said the programme was carried out in line with the company's environmental, social and governance (ESG) pillars as well as to mark Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

"It is important to realise that not everyone is lucky to have privileges in education and opportunities in life.

"This volunteer exercise is a reminder that everyone should

not forget to help the less fortunate," said Aida.

Representing Pertiwi was deputy president Laili Ismail, 65, who helped to transport the food packs to the service centre from a central kitchen nearby.

Laili, a mother of seven and retired university lecturer, said though she has known of Pertiwi for decades, she only became an active member of the organisation during the Covid-19 movement control order.

Pertiwi is a 50-year-old NGO set up to address social issues faced by marginalised individuals and families.



Volunteers at the food preparation centre carrying food packs to a waiting vehicle for delivery.