

## Building the Largest Cardboard Structure in Singapore



*APSN Delta Senior School (DSS) students and staff, as well as volunteers from the built environment sector with the completed dome-shaped cardboard structure that would become a mobile art gallery for the school.*

It was a celebratory moment for the staff and students of APSN Delta Senior School (DSS) on 28 July, as they set a new record in the Singapore Book of Records for the largest single cardboard structure.

Together with volunteers from the built environment sector, APSN DSS students and staff pieced together 101 triangular cardboard panels to form a dome-shaped cardboard structure that would become a mobile art gallery for the school.

The event was part of a corporate social responsibility initiative jointly organised by the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) and APSN DSS, a post-secondary school operating under the Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN).

The idea of setting a new national record came up when the school was brainstorming for a Youth Day activity that could instil the value of resilience in its students. The 5m by 5m by 3m cardboard structure is meant to be a green gallery which showcases APSN DSS students' art pieces and handicraft.

The design of this structure has also been cleverly engineered in such a way that it can be dismantled and reassembled for future exhibitions at other locations.



*17-year-old Priyadarshani d/o Jeyabalan (centre) was among the 40 APSN DSS students who participated in the activity. The architecture and civil engineering teams were led by Ong Jian Liang (left) and Vanessa Koh (right) respectively.*

Close to 70 participants — including the staff and students of APSN DSS, young leaders in the built environment sector, industry professionals, students from institutes of higher learning, and BCA staff — were involved in this record-breaking feat. They were divided into two teams (architecture and civil engineering) and worked closely together over two months to conceptualise and build the structure.

27-year-old Ong Jian Liang, an architectural associate at a consulting firm, explained that the design was inspired by traditional Southeast Asian triaxial weaving techniques as “a subtle appeal to protect our heritage even as we embrace technology in the building and construction industry”. Vanessa Koh, an executive manager at BCA’s manpower planning department, attributed their success to the great team effort by the volunteers and students.



*An official from the Singapore Book of Records (right) presents certificates for the record-breaking achievement to BCA CEO Mr Hugh Lim (left) and APSN DSS principal Mdm Aslinah bte Ahmad (centre).*

In a note congratulating the participants, BCA CEO Mr Hugh Lim said: "It's really very encouraging to see built environment professionals and students taking time out from their busy schedules to lend their expertise and guide the students from DSS in this meaningful activity. I take my hat off to the participants for their creativity and dedication in producing this beautiful and functional dome-shaped structure, using only cardboard as the basic building material. This goes to show that anything is possible if we put our heads, our hearts and our hands to it, and I hope this brings us a step closer towards building an inclusive society."

Mdm Aslinah, Principal of APSN DSS, said: "We were extremely thrilled by this collaboration as it provided opportunities for our special needs students to interact and work with industry professionals. Despite knowing the challenges in executing this task, we felt that this project is an authentic platform to inculcate our school value of resilience in our students. The students are very happy to complete the structure and are grateful to have learned from the volunteers during this activity."