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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WORLD CUP TO BRIDGE LIVES
-Republic Polytechnic and Marsiling Youth Executive Committee holds “Bridging Lives” to raise funds to help early school leavers

Come early Monday morning, when millions of people across the world are watching the final match of the FIFA World Cup Finals, some 400 generous soccer fans in Singapore will be doing more than just enjoying their favourite game. They will also be supporting a charity drive by Republic Polytechnic (RP) and Marsiling Youth Executive Committee (YEC).

Capitalising on the soccer mania that has spread across Singapore, RP and YEC has organized an event called “Bridging Lives”. The event will feature football related activities throughout the day and culminate in a live screening of the final in the RP auditorium.

The event aims to raise $20,000 for Project Bridge - a youth centre in Woodlands that provides guidance and assistance to early school leavers aged between 13 and 19 years old. It is expected to attract more than 1,000 RP students and members of the Sembawang community.

“Soccer is one of the most well-loved sports in Singapore,” said Professor Low Teck Seng, Principal and Chief Executive Officer of Republic Polytechnic. “It bridges age, language and culture and I am pleased that today, it is helping to bridge the divide between our students and those who have fallen outside of the educational system.”

“We chose to support Project Bridge because the number of youths-at-risk has risen significantly over the last few years. The project team feels that prevention is more effective than rehabilitation in reducing youth crime. This is a project by young people for young people. Through this initiative our students and staff are doing their bit to support the community.”

200 staff and students from RP and 40 volunteers from YEC are involved in organizing the event. The event is open to the public. Some 10 youths from Project Bridge have been invited to take part in the event.

Starting at 2.00pm, participants kick off with a street soccer competition hosted by Woodlands Wellington Football Club. A team of S-league stars including Goh Tat Chuan, Daniel Bennett, Agu Casimir, Itimi Dickson, Lucian Dronca, Basile Essa, Abdelhadi Laakkad, Park Tae Won and Yazid Yasin will play a game against RP
staff. The Woodlands Wellington Under 16 team will play against other teams. Each team fielded will donate $35 to the cause.

Other highlights include the painting of plywood boards for $50 a board; a juggling competition; a carnival and movie screenings culminating in the live telecast of the final match for the World Cup.

Tickets for the live screening of the match in the 400 seat auditorium are at $2,000 for 20 block seats or $100 per ticket. RP students are charged at a nominal rate of $5 per ticket. Food and beverage will be provided for the audience.

Mr Hawazi, Member of Parliament of Sembawang GRC is the Guest of Honour for the event.

Bridging Lives is organized under the Citibank-YMCA Youth for Causes programme. The funds raised will be managed by YMCA Singapore to provide alternative learning opportunities for out-of-school youths. It aims to provide young people with social, vocational, academic and recreational skills.

The event will also feature an exhibition on Project Bridge to raise awareness of the needs of reaching out to out-of-school youths and youths-at-risk.

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About Republic Polytechnic

Republic Polytechnic is the first educational institution in Singapore to fully adopt the Problem-Based Learning approach. It is a progressive polytechnic with five schools offering 19 diploma courses. This includes courses in Engineering, Information and Communications Technology, Applied Science and Technology for the Arts and Sports, Health and Leisure.

Republic Polytechnic is committed to nurturing innovation and entrepreneurial learning in an environment that develops problem-solving skills and a lifelong learning attitude. Its holistic, broad-based curriculum, covering culture, enterprise development, and personal development prepares students for an active, meaningful role in society.

Republic Polytechnic’s quest for excellence is recognised through various national and international accreditations such as People Developer Standard, ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001, Singapore Quality Class and the Family Friendly Employer Award.

For more information, visit www.rp.sg
About the Citibank YMCA Youth for Causes Programme

Citibank-YMCA Youth For Causes, a community initiative by Citibank and the YMCA of Singapore, sponsored by the Citigroup Foundation, aims at being a catalyst to promote social entrepreneurship among youths in Singapore. The programme functions as a "social venture capital fund" to provide youth, aged 15 to 35 years of age, with seed funds and resources to execute creative ideas which they believe will benefit and support Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWO) of their choice.

Piloted in 2002, it will select 100 youth groups (comprising 4 individuals each) this year to develop and implement their projects with 'seed' funding of S$1,600 each, over a period of 16 weeks. The groups will not only raise funds but also promote public awareness for the social causes of the participating VWOs. Mentors from Citibank and YMCA will impart advice, creative inputs and provide project management supervision throughout the duration of their projects from 22 May to 2 September 2006. Awards will be given to the top projects, based on how they best leverage their seed money and resources.

This programme is part of the continuing efforts of Citibank and YMCA of Singapore to build up volunteer resources for the community, encourage volunteer work among youths in Singapore and help to develop in our youths, the passion and enterprise needed to become the country's next generation of community leaders.

Project Bridge

Project Bridge is a youth centre situated in Woodlands that is specially designed to provide early school leavers aged between 13-19 years with proper guidance and direction. Officially launched on 10 June 2000, it is managed by YMCA of Singapore and supported by the Inter-Ministry Committee on Youth Crime and the North West Community Development Council (NW CDC).

Project Bridge provides alternative learning opportunities for out-of-school youths. The programmes and activities organised are aimed at developing the youths in social, vocational, academic, life and recreational skills as well as to nurture and leave a positive and lasting impact on their lives. The academic route aims to prepare youths who are keen to continue their studies for the GCE 'N' and 'O' levels examinations. Tuition for academic subjects, personal coaching to develop learning skills and effective study methods are some of the components of the academic syllabus provided.

Assisting the early school leavers in gaining a chance to be re-admitted to learning institutions and at the same time, preventing the potential ones from leaving the education system are constantly looked into. Vocational training opportunities in service and technical skills are also available for those keen in these areas but are subjected to confirmation by corporations and institutions.

Staff and volunteers create a conducive environment where the youth are encouraged to exercise their innate leadership qualities and take on responsibilities at annual camps and during projects and activities.