

Never too old to learn: Hong Kong's elderly get to grips with digital technology

American Express staff celebrate Christmas with senior citizens and pledge donation of tablets and printers

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American Express staff members paying a holiday visit to Chung Hok Elderly Centre in Sheung Wan.

Photo: Dickson Lee

In many ways, the saying, 'give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; show him how to catch fish, and you feed him for a lifetime' describes well the attitude embraced at the [Chung Hok Elderly Centre](#). But the robust senior citizens who belong to the centre are hungry not for seafood, but an iPad.

"Let me be the first one on the list to learn how to master it," said Lee She-yuen. "I'm ready."

"I'm old but that doesn't mean I don't learn," the dramatist and painter, added.

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Magdalen Leung Lai-Kam, a retired English teacher from Marymount Primary School, said learning hi-tech devices at the centre with contemporaries like Lee was a pleasure compared to learning at home.

Leung, a Cantonese opera singer, said she was at first intimidated by the tablet, but warmed up to it.

"The staff here have been very patient with me and answered any questions I might raise," said Leung, 70.

"My children at home lacked patience and said I asked too many questions and learned nothing. That was very discouraging."

Aaron Fung Yi-lun, a social worker at the centre located in Sheung Wan, said he had a special way to get the elderly excited about the new devices.

“We want to thank our donors for offering us tablets and printers in the near future, which will enable us to do away your eye bags and wrinkles in photo-editing,” he announced at a Christmas party held yesterday at the centre, comprising 1,100 registered members and run by the Women’s Welfare Club.



The centre, focused on activities for the elderly, comprises 1,100 members.

Photo: Dickson Lee

Fung’s remarks drew loud cheers from all 25 elderly volunteers, ranging in age from 70 to 88.

The club was a beneficiary of this year’s Operation Santa Claus charity fundraiser, jointly organised by the *Post* and RTHK.

Susanna Lee, vice president and general manager of card services for American Express, a four-time donor in the Operation Santa scheme, said the charity drive aligned with the company’s corporate values in every way. “We believe in good citizenship, and activities like this enhance our team spirit as we work together to pay tribute to our elderly for their contribution to society,” she said.

In all, more than 20 staff members of the financial services company played games with and distributed presents to the cheerful senior citizens.

Lee added: “If we do well in community work, that will conjure up a positive attitude among our team members, which is a key element to success.”