

Press Release

## **Oman Avenues Mall wins gold at MECSC/MENA Awards for second consecutive year; qualifies for ICSC Las Vegas Global Awards**

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MUSCAT: Oman Avenues Mall has won the gold award in the 'cause related marketing' category for the second year consecutively, at the 2018 Middle East and North Africa Shopping Centre and Retailer Awards at a ceremony held at Ritz Carlton in Dubai.

Oman Avenues Mall won the coveted gold for the Let's Read children's library and charity bookshop project and is the only award winning mall in the Sultanate for the year. The Middle East Council of Shopping Centre Awards are designed to honour outstanding achievement in retail and marketing excellence, NOI enhancement, and the design and development of retail properties. The award is presented by International Council of Shopping Centres (ICSC) in association with Middle East Council of Shopping Centres (MECSC), which is the sole trade body for all malls globally. Since Oman Avenues Mall qualified in the Gold category, it is now nominated to participate for the ICSC Best-of-the-Best Global "VIVA" (Vision, Innovation, Value, Achievement) Awards which will be held at Las Vegas. This international award recognises and honours the retail real estate industry's leading properties that are providing innovative solutions and creative responses to market trends.

The 'cause related marketing' category of the awards recognises a single or on-going event, programme, or project undertaken by the winner that primarily benefits a charitable or community need, interest, or cause. The winner's goals should essentially reflect an altruistic intent.

Oman Avenues Mall recently opened the Dar Al Atta'a Let's Read reading facility and charity bookshop on the third floor of its premises. In March 2018, Oman Avenues Mall's management had joined hands with Dar Al Atta'a, Oman's inclusive charity organisation, to bring the 'Let's Read Library' to Oman's premier lifestyle destination. The Dar Al Atta'a Let's Read Programme, started in February 2007 in Oman, has been promoting reading and achieving its objectives by selling books, opening libraries, holding book drives, readathons and writing competitions.

Expressing joy over winning the award, Mr. Gogi George, General Manager, Development and Leasing, Lulu Group International said, "Oman Avenues Mall is delighted to win the prestigious award for the second consecutive year which recognises the highest level of excellence. It was a great opportunity for us to showcase our efforts in the field of 'cause related marketing campaign'. We believe it is enormously imperative for children to develop a love of reading. Children need access to good books at reasonable prices to develop a passion for reading. The Let's Read Library at Oman Avenues Mall will focus on helping children discover the amazing world of books."

The Dar Al Atta'a Let's Read reading facility and charity bookshop covers a substantial area on the third floor of Oman Avenues Mall. The area is covered with bookshelves, children's play area, colourful slides as props, comfortable seating areas, educational toys and a bus-themed bookshop to signify and promote the mobile bus libraries that Dar Al Atta'a runs across Oman to reach out to children who do not have access to libraries.

The books on display are available for purchase at a subsidised rate, and the resulting sale proceeds would be reinvested into the development and management of the project. Children are welcome to donate their own books to the Let's Read bookshop at the deposit boxes put up at key points in the mall, and inside the library too. The Dar Al Atta'a Let's Read reading facility and charity bookshop is open to public.

Management of Oman Avenues Mall offered space for the Let's Read Programme as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy and with an objective to achieve a positive impact on society. The entire fit out and project cost was undertaken by Oman Avenues Mall, while Dar Al Atta'a will manage the book collections and management of the project under a two-year, renewable management programme.

In the run-up to the launch of the 'Let's Read Children's Library', Oman Avenues Mall, and Dar Al Atta'a had conducted literary activities in the mall premises aimed at promoting early reading among children which would nurture a knowledge-based society. The activities such as storytelling sessions, book donation drive and Maktabati mobile library visits were being organised by the mall.

The Middle East and North Africa Shopping Centre and Retailer Awards was open to shopping centre and mall owners, developers, management companies, architects and designers, and retailers, and the panel of veteran international judges appointed to adjudicate the awards sought to recognise outstanding retail establishments.

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