Partnering with industry leaders

THE government is stepping up efforts to transform Malaysia into a high-income nation by 2020 and through the Economic Transformation Plan (ETP). It is evident that it has roped in universities and key industry leaders to move closer to the goal.

In line with this effort, the Faculty of Engineering, Technology & Built Environment (FETBE) at UCSI University (UCSI) is building on strong tie-ups with both parties.

One such example is the recent Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing between UCSI and the Department of Polytechnic Education (DPE) under the Higher Education Ministry on March 19. It is a joint effort to foster greater cooperation in technical education and training.

Under the MoU, both UCSI and DPE agreed to exchange best practices in research, curriculum and content development for various study programmes. It is also to create more articulation opportunities for polytechnic students.

It is anticipated that the collaboration will also result in increased academic mobility between UCSI and polytechnics for teaching staff, researchers and students.

Organised by FETBE, the MoU signing ceremony was officiated by MOHE secretary general Datuk Ab Rahim Md Noor, UCSI deputy vice-chancellor (Academic Affairs and Research) Prof Emeritus Dr Lim Koon Ong and representatives from Sunway College Kuching and EC-Council Academy.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin, who was present to witness the ceremony, said: “I am certain that today’s MoU will help (enhance) the polytechnic students’ learning process and (will be useful in) their future career.”

DPE director general Mejar (K) Haji Md Nor Yusof echoed the same sentiment.

He added that polytechnic students had received many benefits from the previous MoU in terms of articulation opportunities, industrial placements and professional certifications.

Through this collaboration, he said, he hoped that students would take advantage of the opportunities to enrich their learning experience during their studies.

The DPE tie-up is one of FETBE’s many efforts to produce quality graduates who are well-versed in both technical knowledge and industry know-how.

The recent 100% electric Nissan LEAF model showcase on Feb 25 at the university is yet another successful illustration of how the faculty incorporates real-life industry learning into its programmes.

By drawing automotive leader Edaran Tan Chong Motor Sdn Bhd (ETCM) into the picture, the showcase provided an excellent learning platform for the participants, particularly engineering students, who were able to gain practical insight from industry experts during a sharing session.

During the session, students were able to apply theoretical knowledge to practice by directing technical questions at the experts, who provided interesting responses.

Attended by more than 200 students, the event aimed to raise greater awareness on the importance of reducing fossil-based fuel consumption, carbon emissions and other noxious gases.

The “eco-friendly” campaign received glowing feedback from ETCM executive director Datuk Dr Ang Bon Beng, who said: “We hope that the LEAF showcase at UCSI will help create greater awareness on the importance of reducing our carbon footprint through zero-emission transportation.”

Dr Lim was also quick to heap praise on the initiative: “Today’s showcase successfully illustrates the importance of collaborative efforts between industry and academia.

“This partnership marks a key milestone for UCSI and ETCM, and portrays how the two parties can work together to generate higher awareness and start instilling ‘green mentality’ among the younger generation.”

Notably, such tie-ups are testament to the fact that the faculty boldly underscores the importance of academia-industry-government collaborations.

And if the nation aspires to produce more leaders who have an intimate understanding of the intricacies of the industry, UCSI is where it all begins.

To find out more about the faculty’s programmes, call 03-9101 8882 or e-mail www.ucsiuniversity.edu.my/onlineenquiry. Scholarships are available via UCSI University Trust. Log on to the faculty’s website at http://www.ucsiuniversity.edu.my/foetbe/
Dr Lim (third from left), UCSI FETBE dean Ir Assoc Prof Dr Jimmy Mok (second from right) and Edaran Tan Chong Motor personnel with UCSI students during the Nissan LEAF showcase.