

THE UCSI GAZETTE

THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

**INTRODUCING
UCSI UNIVERSITY'S
NEW VICE-CHANCELLOR:
PROFESSOR DATUK IR
TS DR SITI HAMISAH**

VOLUME 32

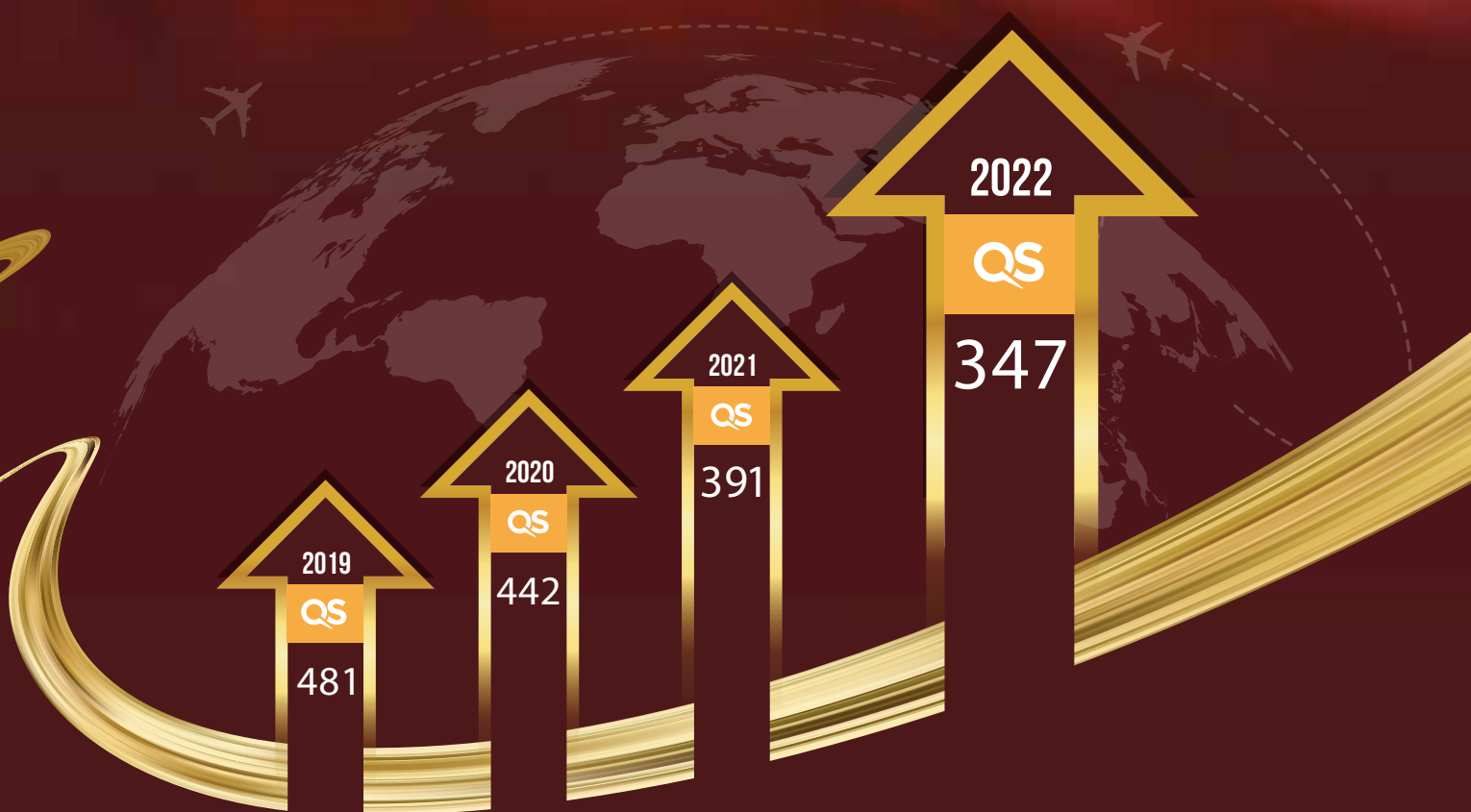


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A STEADY RISE TO THE TOP



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Greywater Matters



The Green Up Awareness Talk is a series of webinars covering topics related to the environment by guests who have experience in the field. In order to cultivate environmental awareness among participants, UCSI staff, students the public can access the webinar through the Green Up Project Facebook page. The series of talks are organised by the UCSI Green Up Project, which is one of the collaborations under the Scholar Enrichment Program.

“ We need volunteers, we need numbers that come from all of you to serve either in the community or in the non-governmental organisations.

- Professor Dr Razman Bin Salleh -

The inaugural launch of the series began with the Green Up Awareness Talk Series #1, which was held on 26 June 2021, was conducted to raise awareness about water consumption and greywater. It aimed to educate on the Sustainability Development Goals involved in the ongoing environmental, production and consumption issues. Additionally, it allowed the new Green Up members to experience event management activities and learn leadership skills.

The webinar was moderated by Mariam Khaled, a UCSI Chemical Engineering student, who is working on synthesising photocatalysts that are useful in the degradation of dye effluents when treating coloured wastewater.

The first guest speaker, Professor Dr Razman Bin Salleh from the Faculty of Engineering Technology and Built Environment of UCSI, spoke on the topic entitled Wastewater Reuse and Recycling for Water Conservation. He called upon the attendees to join the community of volunteers and members of non-profit organisations such as the Malaysian Water Association (MWA) and the Malaysian Society of Waste Management and Environment (MSWME) that promote good practice within the water and wastewater industries.

“We need volunteers, we need numbers that come from all of you to serve either in the community or in the non-governmental organisations,” he said.

The second guest speaker was Mr Haji Mansor Ghani, the Deputy Honorary Secretary of Friends of Rivers Malaysia.

“ ...promote good practice within the water and wastewater industries.

Friends of Rivers Malaysia is a non-governmental organisation that promotes public participation in river rehabilitation. He stated that besides rubbish, 40 to 70 per cent of the pollution of urban rivers in Malaysia is caused by greywater.

Greywater, also known as sullage, is wastewater that drains from places such as bathrooms and kitchens. In contrast with black water which drains from toilets and is heavily contaminated with human waste, greywater has a lower level of contamination and can be easily treated to be recycled for use. Mr Ghani also added that although there is a sewerage system in place to collect and isolate the greywater, there are still leaks into the environment due to activities such as land clearing. He further elaborated on cases where homeowners renovate to extend their homes and conveniently add pipes that lead into open drains instead of the sewerage. The wastewater then ends up in water bodies such as rivers without treatment.

“ Do planning for these events, and make them our Habit and Behavior, Culture and to our DNA like the Japanese.

- Ir Haji Mansor Abdul Ghani -

Other sources of river pollution are landfills and open dumps. Sanitary landfills are built in such a way that any leakage from rubbish is trapped and drained into water treatment facilities. However, open dumps are illegal sites where rubbish is disposed of in a way that does not protect the environment. Leakages from the rubbish, with the help of rain, enter open drains and eventually end up in water bodies. This can also happen when landfills overflow or are not functioning properly.

Mr Ghani also emphasised that public participation is needed to change the situation for the better because overcoming pollution is everyone's responsibility. If members of the public spot rubbish clogging a river, the drainage irrigation department or local authorities such as the municipal councils can be notified for help. Friends of Rivers Malaysia also organises various activities such as plogging, tree planting, urban gardening and picnics to get the public engaged. In engaging with these efforts, it is hoped that the public's habits and behaviours towards the environment will improve, become ingrained into our culture and eventually develop into an irreversible norm. More information on the activities organised by Friends of Rivers Malaysia can be found on their Facebook page.

“Do planning for these events, and make them our Habit and Behavior, Culture and to our DNA like the Japanese, they have this concept of preventing the water pollution in their DNA,” said Mr Ghani.

Recycling In and Out of Malaysia

On 26 June 2021, Green Up Project, UCSI University organised a second online awareness talk series, Recycling In and Out Of Malaysia. A total of one hundred participants had joined the talk given by the invited speakers, Au Yong Tien Sing, the COO of Icycle-Global, and Eby Lau, the founder of SLAN. The objective of this talk was to raise awareness about the environmental issue to the public, staff, and students. A lot of opinions and insights were shared by the speakers which encouraged the participants to be more environmentally friendly.



Au Yong Tien Sing,
COO Icycle-Globa, Malaysia

"Disposal was yesterday, while recycling is the thing of the future and upcycling is the latest trend," said Au Yong Tien Sing. According to him, stand pouches, multi-laminate packaging, plastic coffee cups, PET plastic cans, and cans of plastic film are able to be recycled. Black plastic containers, takeaway cups, ointments, metal tubes, transparent plastic boxes, and plastic shrink film on the bottle are the types of plastics that cannot be recycled. To impress students, he had prepared an interactive quiz that tested the knowledge of recycling among the participants and to make the talk more memorable.

Disposal was yesterday, while recycling is the thing of the future and upcycling is the latest trend.

- Au Yong Tien Sing -

Meanwhile, according to the research, 24% and 23% of carbon dioxide were emitted by procurement and electricity respectively. Hence, Eby Lau had suggested several ways to reduce carbon emissions. Some of them are by unplugging electronics not in use, switching to LED bulbs, doing full loads of laundry, and shutting the windows when the air conditioner is on. If each person were to apply one of the suggestions, it could make a big change to society. As the saying goes, small steps lead to a big impact. Overall, the talk has enhanced the knowledge and changed the views of participants towards recycling. The Green Up Project of UCSI University will continue to organise more of this type of talk in the future to motivate more people to go green.

..small steps lead to a big impact.



The Recycling In and Out of Malaysia 2.0 was held by UCSI Green Up Project on 31 July 2021 was open to the public, staff, and students to increase the awareness of their responsibilities for better waste management results. This talk is a continuation of the previous talk series, Recycling In and Out of Malaysia.



Eby Lau, Media Relationship
Officer of Carbon Base
Founder of SLAN, China

The objective of the talk is to educate the participant about the reality and importance of recycling as part of the measure to reduce waste and the idea of carbon offset. It also inspires more people in starting to take waste sorting more seriously. Aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the topics of the talk involved the ongoing environmental, production, and consumption issues that contribute to water issues.

..aims to increase awareness of different recyclable items and how to sort them accordingly.

In this talk, Brandon shares about different types of paper, e-waste, and plastic, and which are recyclable and usually collected by recycling agents. He also shares about the challenges of local recycling agents and different business models if the public is wondering and is curious why some collect without fee, some with and some even offer a rebate.

He explained about the recycle mobile application, a platform for consumers to post their recyclables so that the available and nearest collector in the area can reach out to them. The number of recyclables will be recorded in the application, a function which many companies need to generate yearly statements.

A platform for consumers to post their recyclables so that the available and nearest collector in the area can reach out to them.

This awareness talk series aims to increase awareness of different recyclable items and how to sort them accordingly. The participants will be able to understand the challenges in recycling and be inspired to reduce consumption of items that are not recyclable-worthy by rethinking their daily routine and lifestyle.



UCSI celebrates WORLD PHARMACISTS DAY & its annual BOOK PRIZE CEREMONY

UCSI University Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences recently celebrated three landmark occasions - its annual Book Prize Awards Ceremony in conjunction with World Pharmacists Day along with a soft launch of two new programmes.

The event was officiated by the newly elected Vice-Chancellor Datuk Professor Ir Ts Dr Siti Hamisah Binti Tapsir. She is the former Higher Education Ministry director-general with 34 years of service in various portfolios within the government under six different ministers. She said that the faculty will soon be launching the Packaging Science and Technology diploma, a first in Asia, and diploma

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A first in Asia.

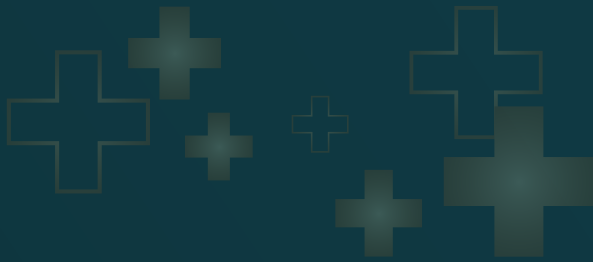
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in Cosmetic Science which is in line with the University's efforts in providing skill-based and job-ready education to its students.

UCSI's pharmacy graduates have achieved 100% graduate employability by continuously engaging in the industry to produce employment-ready graduates. The Faculty commemorates excellence in pharmacy education by recognising students who have performed remarkably in academia, extra-curricular activities, soft skills and have values pertinent as in the Oath of Pharmacist. This is done through the annual Book Prize awards where outstanding students are selected to each receive RM1000 cash awards named after the participating industry, who are the core praxis partners of the faculty.

The four industry partners in attendance had several words of wisdom to impart to the pharmacy students and audience. Tammy Lin Choon Moi (Director of Regulatory Affairs, Medispec) and Wong Hooi Fen (Chief Pharmacist, Caring Pharmacy) both agreed that the recent COVID pandemic has highlighted the important roles of pharmacists as front liners. Sarah Ho Lee Mun, who is the Executive Director of Hovid Sdn Bhd said that there is a shortage of appropriate local talent in the pharmaceutical industry and that Hovid is looking forward to initiatives to close this gap, give opportunities to local pharmacy graduates and help support the local economy. Xepa-Soul Pattinson Executive Director, Ch'ng Kien Peng commended efforts by the university to put in place new and effective methods for students to complete their studies and overcome recent adversities.

Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences' Dean Associate Professor Dr Mogana Sundari Rajagopal said these two industry-relevant programmes would give students the advantage of joining the workforce sooner than expected. She added that "the Diploma in Packaging Science and Technology offers students intensive Praxis hands-on approach and attachments to industries for enhancement of skills in consumer and industrial products. Their expertise is



very much sought after in the pharmaceuticals, food and chemical products related packaging, regulatory and safety aspects to meet the growing industrial demand of innovative packaging design and protection.”

“Meanwhile, the global cosmetics market is forecasted to go beyond 412 billion USD by 2024 where Malaysia’s market is growing at a speedy 4.7% annually. Graduates of the Diploma in Cosmetic Science will be able to embark as entrepreneurs in cosmetic business, establish successful SMEs, and be equipped with the skills in developing their own formula and business,” she added.

The event is a testament to the Faculty’s continuous efforts in ensuring excellence in pharmacy education and in providing opportunities for students to network and collaborate with industry partners well before graduating.

“

Graduates of the Diploma in Cosmetic Science will be able to embark as entrepreneurs in cosmetic business, establish successful SMEs, and be equipped with the skills in developing their own formula and business.

- Associate Professor Dr Mogana Sundari Rajagopal -

”



First row, left to right:

Wong Hooi Fen (Chief Pharmacist, Caring Pharmacy), Tammy Lin Choon Moi (Director of Regulatory Affairs, Medispec), Ch’ng Kien Peng (Executive Director, Xepa-Soul) Pattinson, Sarah Ho Lee Mun, (Executive Director, Hovid Sdn Bhd)

Second row, left to right:

Datuk Professor Ir Ts Dr Siti Hamisah binti Tapsir (Vice-Chancellor, UCSI University), Associate Professor Dr Mogana Sundari Rajagopal (Dean, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, UCSI University), Hardave Singh Bhall (Manager, FPS Lab), Yap Vi Lien (Book prize winner)

Third row, left to right:

Joanne Yap, Lee My Chi, Lee Sue Kei, Tan Lee Fang (Book prize winners)



In and Around Campus

Clickbait in the Contemporary Online Journalism Industry – September 17, 2021

Organised by UCSI's Student Affairs & Alumni and Mass Communication Student Association, this virtual talk featured Nazvi Careem, who has over 30 years of journalism and communications experience, spoke on the challenges faced by journalists in reaching readers virtually while maintaining their integrity.



Health Matters: Health is Wealth – 19 September 2021

This is a non-profitable event organised by the Quantity Surveying Club of School of Architecture and Built Environment (SABE), UCSI University, aims to maintain a healthy mindset and physical well-being during the pandemic. Stephanie Yap, Founder of Namaste Physiotherapy Centre shared the importance and techniques to lead a healthy lifestyle while Angeline Beh, Air Yoga Instructor and Manager of Namaste Yoga House Shala, demonstrated enjoyable workouts to do at home during the half-day virtual event.



Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) – 15 November 2021

The talk organised by the Faculty of Business and Management featured Assistant Professor Dr Dazmin Daud as the speaker to educate fellow young social scientists on postgraduate level fundamentals to apply relevant statistical analysis. The participants gained a better understanding of the modules designed to match with postgraduates' needs in their education.



Gifts of Love & Care: Special initiative by UCSI – SDG Sayangi Campaign - 1 November - 15 December 2021

UCSI Group started a campaign to put a smile on the faces of over 150 children and old folks from this year's homes namely Persatuan Rumah Sayangan, Bodhi Homecare, Pertubuhan Kebajikan Kanak-Kanak Yatim dan Miskin Wawasan Port Dickson and Rumah Sejahtera Jimah. This year's UCSI Christmas Gift Bank received more than 400 gifts.



New Programme at UCSI University

BSC (HONS) APPLIED MICROBIOLOGY

(N/421/6/0059) (09/2026) (MQA/PA 14527)

A microbiologist is a scientist who studies microscopic life forms and processes. This includes study of the growth, interactions and characteristics of microscopic organisms such as bacteria, algae, fungi, and some types of parasites and their vectors. Microbiology essentially overlaps with other areas of biology such as genetics, molecular biology and immunology. Careers in this field are aplenty as you could venture a rewarding career in healthcare, environment, food and beverage, petroleum, pharmaceutical, biotechnology, forensic science, research, and the academia. As one of the pioneers in teaching applied sciences in Malaysia, the Faculty of Applied Sciences has a reputation of producing quality graduates with over 80% of its lecturers at PhD holders.



Tan Sri Omar Abdul Rahman Centre for STI



On 17 August 2021, UCSI University launched the Tan Sri Omar Abdul Rahman Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy studies. The formation of this centre serves as a stepping stone towards realising the national agenda of science, technology and social innovation that is aimed towards a harmonious, prosperous, progressive and sustainable Malaysia.

The main purposes of the centre are to plan, promote and implement the policies related to STI. The centre will also guide related agencies in fulfilling the agendas of STI as well as educate and create awareness among the public on the roles of STI.

The centre's eponym is Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr Omar Abdul Rahman, a distinguished academician and corporate figure. In his launching speech, the renowned member of the UCSI University Council said that the centre will additionally be tasked to advocate the establishment of a National STI Action Council. He further explained that the centre will strive to achieve its goals by raising awareness, facilitating comprehension, encouraging commitment, advocating appropriate action and mandating evaluation.

“A stepping stone towards realising the national agenda of science, technology and social innovation.”

“The big challenge is implementation. Translating intention into action and successful completion require an optimal capacity, involving a whole host of dedicated players and competent enablers. So, when UCSI University decided to establish a centre for STI policy studies, it is a wish come true for me. To have the centre named as it is, is a great honour and I thank the University most sincerely for its magnanimity,” he said.



The establishment of the centre also received praise from the UCSI University Founder Dato Peter Ng, who called it timely and much needed especially during a time where the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted various parts of how mankind goes on with life.

“The past one-and-a-half years show that sound STI policies are sorely needed, not only in Malaysia but around the world. The way Covid-19 was handled – or mishandled – says it all. The formation of the centre will spur their efforts and connect them to their peers around the world. I would like to applaud the management of UCSI University for taking the initiative to establish a consortium on STI Policy Studies,” he said.

He also added that the formation of the centre will also be another invaluable launchpad for the UCSI staff and students, especially to the University's growing postgraduate cohort.

The launch was moderated by UCSI's Environmental Management Professor Datuk Dr Ahmad Ibrahim and included several guests that were invited to speak on the topic of “Powering the Nation's Agenda for a Harmonious, Prosperous, Progressive and Sustainable Malaysia - the Strategic Role of Science, Technology and Social Innovation”. The panel of speakers included Malaysian Green Technology and Climate Change Centre

chairman Professor Dato Dr Abu Bakar Jaafar, The Petri Dish founding editor-in-chief Datin Dr Mahaletchumy Arjunan, 27 Advisory executive director Girish M Ramachandran and Professor Dr Mohd Tajuddin Mohd Rasdi from the School of Architecture, UCSI University.

“To have the centre named as it is, is a great honour and I thank the University most sincerely for its magnanimity.”

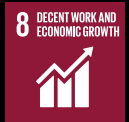
- Professor Emeritus
Tan Sri Dr Omar
Abdul Rahman -

33RD & 34TH CONVOCATION

26 - 29 NOVEMBER 2021



UCSI University celebrates 33rd and 34th Convocation Ceremony



UCSI University kicked off its 33rd and 34th convocation ceremony at its campus here from 26 November 2021 until 29 November 2021. Both ceremonies had to be merged due to the pandemic and were held over six sessions to maintain physical distancing at all times

A total of 7,011 students collected their scrolls and since both classes were combined, there were two Pro-Chancellor gold medallists, and two valedictorians.

The Class of 2020 gold medallist and valedictorian are Michelle Chang of the Mass Communication major and Yap Jane Yee who studied Bachelor of Chemical Engineering respectively. Meanwhile, the Class of 2021 gold medallist and valedictorian are Tay Chee Sin who scored distinction for Doctor of Medicine, and Alton Wong of the Bachelor of Contemporary Music (Hons) respectively.

Snippet of VC's Speech

Dear Graduands,

Having gone through the new norm of online learning, examinations and living with Covid-19, I believe UCSI's guiding principles of excellence, audacity, integrity and perseverance will continue to be your true north in mitigating the trials and tribulations of your life in the future. One of the most valuable lessons from the pandemic is giving back to the community, as many of you have by volunteering at the vaccination centres and supporting each other through #kitajagakita initiatives to keep everyone safe. With your time, dedication and contribution, UCSI's vaccination centres have continued to play a role in the nation's fight against COVID-19. I hope you will continue to uphold these values in your life, give back to society and leave a significant impact in your communities.

As UCSI graduands, you learned and experienced exactly what it takes to strive for excellence. You have created a solid foundation for yourself at UCSI. Now, it is about soaring higher, and I am confident that you will continue to achieve greater heights when



you step out of here. Today is not the end of your learning journey but the beginning of a journey filled with valuable experiences. Life will continue to offer us lessons and it is up to us to continue as life-long learners.

“
You are all alumni of UCSI and our doors will always be open to you.
- Professor Datuk Dr Siti Hamisah Tapsir -
”

I hope UCSI has enriched you with profound campus and academic experience that you would treasure in the time to come. You are all alumni of UCSI and our doors will always be open to you. Once again, congratulations on completing your study. I wish you all the very best for your journey ahead. I leave you with this quote: Nothing is guaranteed in life, but anything is possible if you put your heart and soul into it.

A Closer Look at Our Graduands



It was the happiest moment for Geow Ah Kow to watch his son, **Geow Ching Hong** graduate with a PhD in Engineering.



Roginiwary R. Shanmuganathan and her fiancée, Dewa Harendran (right) is off to a hopeful future after completing her Doctor of Medicine (MD).



Goh Dean Jett, Ang Beng Shen, Ng Siong Kien, Tan Zheng Er, Cheah Jun Hong, Ong Chun Chung and alumnus, **Wong Yoon Hang** were happy to have obtained their degree in actuarial science at UCSI University.



It was a special moment for parents **Kanan** and **Parameswari** as they witnessed their daughter **Monisha Sri Kanan** graduate with First Class Honour for her Bachelor of Arts (Hons) English Language & Communication during the graduation ceremony.



Heliodora Agustina Okenve Nchama from Equatorial Guinea has a lot of memories to cherish after completing her Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Computing with her new friends in Malaysia.



Balancing work and studying for a Master's in Child Psychology was a delicate affair for **Karen Choo** but celebrating her graduation with her husband and daughter at UCSI's 33rd and 34th Graduation Ceremony was worth the effort.



Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Psychology graduate, **Vinitra Pillai Ravindran** believes finding the right group of friends is important in achieving your dreams.



Bachelor of Civil Engineering with Honours graduate, **Alicia Eriana Range Majikil** gets a surprise celebration from her sisters on graduation day.



Cancer Survivor and Para-Swimming champion **Dawnette Yeo Yi Lin** score another win with Bachelor of Classical Music (Hons) at UCSI University's 33rd and 34th Convocation Ceremony.



Nur Farhanah Binti Abdul Manap who came all the way from Kota Kinabalu, Sabah to study Foundation in Art (Management & Information Technology) before progressing into Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Business Administration at UCSI University Kuala Lumpur campus.



Cheah Jun Hong graduated with a Bachelor of Science (Honours) Actuarial Science at UCSI University last week with his fellow mates and couldn't be more thankful for all the help and support he has received from his parents.



Rubendran Purusoithman, received his Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business Administration alongside his mother, Susila and his girlfriend Bhaamaa, an alumnus who graduated from UCSI University in 2004.



A former civil servant with over 34 years of service in various portfolios within the government under six different ministers, with a longer stint with the Higher Education Ministry, Professor Datuk Ir Ts Dr Siti Hamisah Binti Tapsir has been appointed as the fourth Vice-Chancellor of UCSI University.

What is your educational background?

I am a Civil Engineering major with a PhD from the University of Leeds (United Kingdom). I have also undergone leadership and management trainings with Harvard University and Razak School of Government in collaboration with the University of Oxford.

As the Vice-Chancellor, what are your aspirations for UCSI students?

At UCSI University, our priority is to provide students with holistic education and a conducive environment for learning, where they can embark on their self-discovery journey. We strive to encourage students to pursue their own interests and find new ones, as well as provide the necessary tools to help students tap into their inner potential to succeed. I hope we will be able to nurture our students to become responsible citizens of the world who contribute to the society and make a difference within their local and global communities.

Describe your typical day here at UCSI University?

I usually arrive before 9AM. and have an early start by attending meetings with the various departments within UCSI Group as well as the University. As we welcome the new year, the UCSI team is working hard to continuously explore ways to add value to our students' journey on campus. With significant changes in the higher education landscape brought by this pandemic, numerous challenges faced by students, lecturers and other staff members at the University came to light. Our priority is to address these challenges and adapt to the ever-changing circumstances to ensure that we are ahead of the curve.

What is the most valuable lesson you learnt in life?

Having worked with people from all walks of life. I learnt many valuable lessons and one of them is that "no man is an island". Working together as a team is a meaningful and rewarding journey. There's a saying which goes "If you want to walk fast, walk alone. But if you want to walk far, walk together".

What moment taught you the most valuable life lesson?

Leaders aren't afraid to get their boots on the ground and become a beacon of inspiration. When my tenure as the Secretary-General in the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) was extended earlier this year to ensure the smooth implementation of the National COVID-19 Immunisation Programme (PICK), I learned a lot from people around me. We had to constantly remind ourselves of the impact our actions have and be quick to adapt while mitigating challenges and unexpected issues along the way. Managing a crisis not only requires leaders who aren't afraid to get their hands dirty and help those in need, but also involves teams to work together to make the dream work.

During those six months, I also witnessed volunteers from all walks of life from government, private and non-profit organisations coming together to give their time, effort and money. Malaysians saw no gender, no race, no colour. All I can say is that humanity is alive and thriving.



What made you want to become an advocate for education?

Having worked at the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) for over 11 years, I strongly believe in the importance of providing the access to all levels of education to the general public. In Malaysia, people have different backgrounds and various starting points in their lives, but education is the key to unleashing the potential for a better life. Education provides an opportunity for people to better themselves economically, build character through values and training, enhance the quality of life, think critically as well as gain knowledge.

What are your other interests?

At 60 years old, I always look forward to learning new skills and gaining new experiences. Currently, I'm learning a new language and trying to practise speaking more often until I become fluent!

What do you like to do in your free time?

I love to hike and explore the outdoors. Once, I hiked for 11 hours from Tanjung Malim, Perak, to Lata Lembing, Pahang. I also like reading self-development books such as "True North", "Alchemy" and more, which helps me reflect and practise self-awareness.

Do you play any musical instrument?

I love classical music which inspired me to learn piano a few years ago and now I am trying to practise whenever I can. Before the pandemic, I used to go to the Rainforest World Music Festivals regularly.

Who is your role model, and why?

I was fortunate to have worked with a number of amazing leaders, staff and other individuals throughout the years. All of them have taught me different things, both personally and professionally. Their commitment, dedication and passion in everything that they do inspire me in my career. One of my favourite quotes is that "With great power comes great responsibility". I believe that each and every one of us has our own role to play in the society.

What is your proudest achievement?

There are a few. Being a mother, all the work I have done over the years, rolling out the national vaccination programme, and leading the development of Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint.

What is your greatest fear, and how do you manage fear?

I used to be afraid of heights, but I overcame it by doing activities such as abseiling and flying fox. Like how my father used to tell me, which I now tell my daughters, "When you are afraid, you have to face your fear." Because that's the only way you will overcome it.

What is the one piece of advice you would give to the future leaders of UCSI University?

Always look for the bigger picture and potential around you. Seize the opportunities at UCSI University and make sure you work as a team.



Assistant Professor Dr Mohamed Khan Afthab Ahamed Khan

For this year-end UCSI Gazette issue, we shine the spotlight on **Assistant Professor Dr Mohamed Khan Afthab Ahamed Khan** from the Department of Mechanical Engineering at UCSI University who has been living in Malaysia for over 26 years since he left his motherland, Chennai, India. So, let's take a closer look at his career and achievements.

What made you choose engineering as a career?

When I was doing my pre-university course, I scored 100% marks for both Mathematics and Advanced Mathematics. I also scored 93% for my Physics so my brothers advised me to go for engineering. It has always been my dream to become an engineer as well.

If not engineering, what would you have pursued?

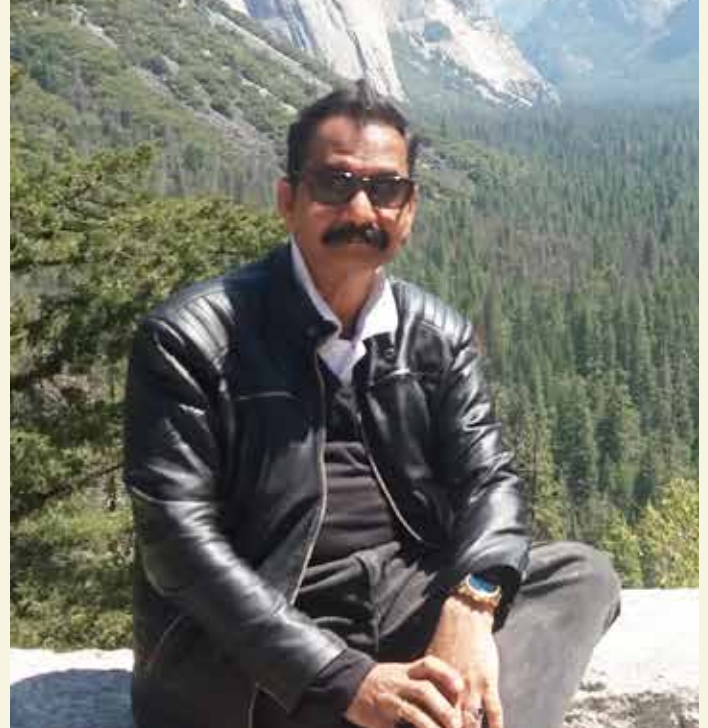
I would have been a medical doctor since my parents and my siblings are all doctors.

Describe your typical day at the engineering faculty?

Teaching students is my top priority, so I always make sure I prepare well in advance before class. Apart from that, I spend time doing research, going through many advanced trending topics and getting ready for any research publications, which became part of my daily routine. I also spend a lot of my time interacting with colleagues and students whenever they need my support. Additionally, as the Chairman of the IEEE Robotics & Automation Society Malaysia Chapter, I must regularly attend meetings and offer advice for the betterment of the department.

How did being an engineer affect your career and life?

My areas of expertise are electronics, control, and robotics. As you can see my background is in line with the current trending technical areas, where people talk about IR 4.0. It is very interesting to be an engineer and contribute to society. I am proud to say that I am an engineer, the motivation I got from others and when I see the world is changing fast due to technology, it truly inspires me. There is no end to learning new things, as long as you have the desire to learn and offer good ideas to the community. I am happy to attempt new challenges and inspire the younger generations.



Dr Khan enjoyed travelling across the globe prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

What is the best thing about Engineering?

It is the backbone of every country's economy. We, as current engineers, construct the world and offer great solutions for humans to live in a better environment.

What personality traits make a great Engineer?

One must be a team player, have the passion to continuously learn, can analytically and logically think, critically solve problems, effectively communicate and lastly, be able to pay attention to details.

What is your greatest fear, and how do you manage fear?

Everything you have ever wanted is on the other side of fear. So, let's be brave and have faith in yourself and God. Once you overcome fear, use that experience to face any other problems with confidence. Death is a common occurrence to all, what matters is what you have achieved during your short stay on earth. Live a meaningful life and leave behind great memories. We all have fears, and we can find ways to overcome them. Think about what you can do to combat your fears and do it. Use your fear and coping strategy as a formula to succeed in life.



Dr Khan at the The Golden Gate Bridge, California, USA.

Three things you would tell your younger self, and why?

Believe in yourself, trust your soul, and look for joy as these 3 things will mould you to become a better person and give you the confidence to go beyond borders.

If you could turn back time, when and what would you do differently?

Interesting question! I would invent the time machine and provide it to the entire human race, letting them travel to the past and back to the future to realise whatever dreams they have.

What plans do you have for the Department of Mechanical Engineering in the next couple of years?

I plan to create an excellent research network with some of the best universities in India and organise conferences as well as international robotics competitions.

What is your advice to students who chose to study Engineering at FETBE?

Be hardworking and spend extra time in the library to read different textbooks, solve complex problems and stay updated with the latest global technological and political news. Also,

make time to have fun with friends and family. Ultimately, do all you can to stay healthy and safe.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

I want to start my own educational learning centre to help poor students across the nation.



Dr Khan received many awards for his achievements as an engineer specialising in electronics, control and robotics.

The Vegan Alumnus



Eric Yee is an alumnus who graduated from UCSI University in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science (Honours) Nutrition in Food Science and is now the Managing Director and founder of Nature Delite Sdn Bhd. He established the company solely for vegans, vegetarians or as he would call them, “meat-free lovers” because he believes that saving the planet by reducing meat consumption is more meaningful and has a sustainable future.

How did the Covid-19 pandemic affect your business and lifestyle?

Before the pandemic, I was under a lot of pressure and was advised by the doctor to take a break, so I had to sell off a few of my companies to my partners and focused only on Nature Delite. Hence, I think everybody had ample time to self-reflect during the pandemic. I read a lot of books on how to maintain a balanced lifestyle. Thanks to the pandemic, I am healthier physically and mentally.

As an entrepreneur, what are the personal personality traits that make a great entrepreneur?

You must be humble and never stop learning so that you can grow your mindset as well as your character and behaviour. Fully understand yourself because we can only understand others and relate to them if we understand ourselves first.

What are your plans for the future?

Our vision for the next couple of years is to aggressively promote the plant-based lifestyle and as an alumnus, we will be collaborating with UCSI University. I hope one day, Nature Delite can play a role in combatting climate disasters and be globally recognized.

Apart from the physical store located nearby UCSI University, approximately 21 types of meat-free products ranging from cooking sauces, ready-to-eat meals, freeze-dried fruits to beverages such as coffee and yoghurt drinks are also available on the online store, “VMart” and through the app, “GO Meat-free”.

Why did you choose this career?

I found some books that I read were meaningful and inspirational, especially this one particular book written by Bill Gates, “How to Avoid a Climate Disaster”, which promotes “Go Green Diet”. So, it made me want to promote a sustainable lifestyle and align it with the Sustainable Development Goals.

If not this career, what would you have pursued?

Lawyer as I am very good at talking and negotiating. I want to help people in positive ways.

What is your daily routine?

I wake up every day at 5.30am to meditate for 5 minutes. I value every second I have so while I brush my teeth, I would listen to the news on business models, marketing, health, psychology to name a few. I will also exercise before I start my day at work and will be asleep by 10pm.

Do you have a role model or an influencer?

Elon Musk because he is doing something for the future of mankind. However, I don't really idolise him. I would say, I admire his mission and vision more.

How did Nature Delight affect your career and life venturing into this business?

I am very passionate when it comes to my business because I know that I am doing something good for this planet. We knew that as long as we promote a green lifestyle, we believed that we are saving the world that is being destroyed by climate change.



Eric hopes Nature Delite can play a role in combatting climate disasters and be globally recognised.

Mastering Computer Science, Enhancing Quality of Life

The role and benefits of computers are ubiquitous in current scenarios. Nowadays, computers eventuate and materialise bank transactions, virtual online communications, machine interactions, satellite imagery processing, healthcare, infrastructure, economic development, national security and much more. Computer software is considered to be the brain of education, medical science and infotainment since it is involved in all aspects of our daily necessities. The data processing required in manufacturing, production, and problem-solving expertise, completely depends on computer science for efficient results and successful outcomes. Therefore, Computer Science as a profession imparts a wide range of roles and opportunities ranging from research and development, programming, data scientist, digital marketing, system analyst, database administration, multimedia developer and information scientist.

It was only through the advancements of Computer technologies that the world was able to overcome the hurdles caused due to COVID-19 pandemic ranging from virtual communications in education, healthcare to monitoring the status of collateral damage and crisis management in the post-COVID-19 scenarios. As technology advances, it thereby brings forth rapid changes to the global education sector creating more demands and venturing to new horizons of a progressive society. Hence, mastering Computer Science through upper-level courses can enhance the quality of life and provide promising solutions to the world of computer technologies. The focus of these courses is to deepen and broaden the understanding of Computer Science through research and development. This will further allow the graduate to master the core of Computer Science in an applied project, giving them the accessibility to select engaging and real-time scenarios. Therefore, students can benefit from these programmes which foster an innovative, interesting, creative and interactive learning experience. The teaching method integrates research-oriented activities, applied project development, paper publishing training and faculty interactions to fully support and deliver a supreme quality learning experience.

The postgraduate programme at the Institute of Computer Science and Digital Innovation (ICSDI) at UCSI University provide opportunities for computer learning enthusiasts to enhance and broaden their existing fundamental knowledge through research-oriented advanced courses covering the fields of Computer Science, Software Engineering, Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality and Data Science. It has been aimed to produce skilled postgraduates through real-time engagement in scientific research activities, thereby producing innovative ideas and knowledge that can be tailored to the needs/demands of society and impart to the knowledge base of computer technologies.



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...aimed to produce skilled postgraduates through real-time engagement in scientific research activities.

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Currently, the University offers a teaching and learning experience that incorporates interactivity, progressive methods and real-world applications to fine-tune the skills of future-ready technologists and researchers.

The ICSDI comprises ten computer labs at KL's campus which are equipped with over 400 PCs and 15 servers connected through the local area network. UCSI University and RICOH Malaysia have established an industrial partnership to encourage research in information technology. RICOH has established the IT R&D Lab that comes with equipment including Windows-based laptops, Macbooks, iPhones, iPads, iPod Touches, and Android-based smartphones. This lab is specifically built for postgraduate and final year IT students to work on their projects. Mastering in the core fields of Computer Science through research makes the graduating student competent for current as well as future job roles. The job landscape in the post-COVID-19 era is shifting in favour of a wide variety of fields and therefore, will create more demand for employees in trade industries, inventory, fitness, healthcare, software engineering, research and development and much more. The pandemic has brought with it a lot of destruction but by hoping that there will be the awakening of phoenixes from the ashes of the crisis, we can fill the gaps and challenges of the society through transformation of the educational sector and by producing knowledgeable and skilled postgraduates.

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...equipped with over 400 PCs and 15 servers connected through the local area network.

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ESSAY WINNERS WIN CASH PRIZES AND BURSARIES FROM UCSI UNIVERSITY-PUBLIC BANK



The National English Language Essay Competition 2021 hosted by UCSI University and Public Bank, held for the second time, was based on theme of Independence Day amongst youths and how '30 August 1957' would monumentally affect the growth of Malaysia today.

The competition was open to high school students aged between 16 and 20 years old.



Deputy Education Minister Dato Dr Mah Hang Soon emphasised that English is widely spoken by many in the world and it is important to be good at the language.

“...an event not only for youths to have their voice heard, but also a platform to showcase their flair for writing.”

- Dato Dr Mah Hang Soon -

All top five winners received a trophy and a certificate. Other consolation prize winners bagged RM400 cash and RM2,000 tuition fee waiver as well as a certificate.

Deputy Education Minister Dato Dr Mah Hang Soon, who graced the event, described the competition as an event not only for youths to have their voice heard, but also a platform to showcase their flair for writing.

“English is widely spoken by many in the world and it is important to be good at the language. It is also the language that is commonly used in various spaces whether you are learning, working or traveling.



All top five winners received a trophy and a certificate. Other consolation prize winners bagged RM400 cash and RM2,000 tuition fee waiver as well as a certificate.

The winners and their winning prize:

	Cash Prize	UCSI University Tuition Fee Waiver
First Prize: Lee Chee Yew <i>Kuen Cheng High School, KL</i>	RM5,000	100%
Second Prize: Nashat Zaman <i>Tenby School Ipoh</i>	RM3,000	RM10,000
Third Prize: Muhammad Zaim Bin Afendi <i>Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Jalan Empat, Bangi</i>	RM1,500	RM8,000
Fourth Prize: Ahmad Marzuki Bin Azman <i>SMK (L) Bukit Bintang, KL</i>	RM1,000	RM5,000
Fifth Prize: Tan Hui Xin <i>Chong Hwa Independent High School, KL</i>	RM800	RM3,000

“I am particularly amazed by some of the essays written. They are very well articulated and good command of English,” he said.

UCSI University Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Siti Hamisah Tapsir thanked Public Bank for supporting the University for the second time in organising the event.

“I must thank Public Bank for its support and kind contribution in making this national competition a reality,” she said.



Deputy Education Minister Dato Dr Mah Hang Soon and UCSI University Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Siti Hamisah Tapsir graced the event.

Turkmen Alumna's Delightful Scented Candles



Anastasiya Korchagina, an alumna of UCSI University has been recently featured in the local newspapers for her love in creating scented candles in early 2021 amidst the Movement Control Order (MCO) in Malaysia.

The 24-year-old began her journey with UCSI when she pursued Foundation in Arts programme in 2015 before progressing to the bachelor's degree in Computing at the University and graduating in January 2021.

What is your newfound venture all about?

During the lockdown, I started creating my own scented candles. My sister and boyfriend loved them so much that they encouraged me to sell them, so I spent four months experimenting. From purchasing the ingredients, testing out the scents, types of wax to everything to achieve the best quality candles.

What is the story behind the name "Nace Lab"?

Nace lab stands for N-Nastya, which is my nickname, whereas the "ace" refers to The Ace of Spades, the highest and most valued card in the deck of playing cards.



Her customers often say that the scent is aromatic and the candles are too beautiful to burn.

What makes your scented candles different from others?

I create one-of-a-kind designs, where you can customise and choose to have your name on the candle. It is also customisable to any colour. I mix colours to get the perfect shades for my customers.

How does your product impact society?

When people buy my candles, the first feedback I get is that the scent is aromatic and the candle is too beautiful to burn so I guess, I provide beauty and serenity for them.

What was your inspiration?

It was just a hobby at the beginning, but my sister and boyfriend believed in me and inspired me to sell them.

Are your products environmentally sustainable?

Absolutely! I changed my business to be 100% eco-friendly as everything I use is from natural ingredients.

What do you love about studying in Malaysia?

I loved my university life! I have lots of international friends and was exposed to many cultures. Nice university, with good people. Plus, Malaysia has beautiful lakes, mountains, and islands, which I love.

What knowledge did you learn at UCSI that contributes to your current business venture?

Since I completed my studies as an IT specialist, I was able to create a website for my business.

What is your take on the lecturers and peers at UCSI?

All my lecturers were very friendly, enthusiastic and helpful. They always made the classes fun and interesting.



Anastasiya graduated with a bachelor's degree in Computing back in January 2021.



Anastasiya Korchagina, an alumna of UCSI University makes her own scented candles.

What plans do you have for Nace Lab moving forward?

I will continue my business and it would be great to have a shop someday.

What advice would you give to young entrepreneurs out there?

Never give up, follow the trends. Once I wanted to stop my business because there were not many orders, but out of the blue, my reel on Instagram became popular and I had more orders.



The candles are customisable from shapes, scent to colours according to the customers' preferences.



Anastasiya hopes to open a physical candle store in the future.

RCE KUCHING: WORLD RIVERS DAY 2021 – ASIA PACIFIC FORUM

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Our goal for the forum was to build awareness around the broad array of current issues of river pollution and maintain our role as landfill owners in achieving sustainability living beyond zero waste.

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Natural resources facilitate the ecosystems by supporting the provision of services such as climate regulation, flood control, natural habitats, amenities, and cultural services. These are important to develop man-made, human, and social capital. However, unmanaged development and human behaviour have impacted the environment to a greater or lesser extent especially the pollution in rivers, water, and their ecosystems. Moreover, the United Nations World Water Development Report 2020 reported on the interrelations of water and climate change. Among the highlights are the effects of climate change on waterways including the effects of increased water temperature in water-borne infections, effects of water withdrawal for agriculture, pollution from industry, agriculture and land waste from human activities, food waste and agriculture stress, deforestation for agriculture, climate change effects on water sanitation processes, and the threats to mangroves and wetlands. It calls for an integrated effort of the consumers, communities, governments, industries and businesses in mitigating the situations, with SDG education and promotion as one of these efforts.

Hence, RCEs are translating global objectives into the context of local communities and serve as an effective platform to enhance the awareness of rivers and water ecosystem health. To achieve the goals, a thematic collaboration among RCEs in the Asia-Pacific region focused on the above issues is of great importance. The "Rivers, Water and Livelihoods (RWL)" working group was formed during the 13th Regional Meeting of the Asia-Pacific RCE (Nov 2020). This joint effort culminated in RCE Asia-Pacific celebrating World Rivers Day 2021, traditionally held on the fourth Sunday of September.

As an annual event, a virtual forum of "World Rivers Day 2021: Asia Pacific Forum" was organised by RCE Kuching as the convening RCE for the thematic collaboration of RCE Asia-Pacific on "RWL" on 27th August 2021. This event was chaired by Professor Dr Yeong Siew-Wei. She is currently Vice-Chairperson RCE Kuching and Lead Conveyor for the RCE Asia-Pacific "RWL" theme. To make this event successful, it was supported by the "RWL" working group committee from RCE Kuching and lecturers

from UCSI University, Kuching campus. They are Dr Hiew Lee Chea from the Faculty of Business and Management as well as Assistant Professor Azizan Yatim, and Miss Tan Sze Ling from the Centre of Pre-U Studies. In addition, the RCE Kuching secretariat and Youth Ambassadors contributed to the success of the event.

Our goal for the forum was to build awareness around the broad array of current issues of river pollution and maintain our role as landfill owners in achieving sustainability living beyond zero waste. Moreover, this may bring together and form a collegial partnership within the communities of the RCEs in the Asia-Pacific region for rivers and water ecosystem health concerning SDG 6 Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 14 Life Below Water, SDG 15 Life on Land, and SDG 17 Partnerships for Goals.

The event gathered 149 participants from 17 different nations, as well as 13 RCEs from the Asia-Pacific region. During the forum, distinguished speakers (both keynote speaker and panellists) from different disciplines and RCEs shared their experiences in research, community programmes, and environmental projects. Their details and topics shared during the forum were as follows.

The chairperson and moderators of the online forum:

Professor Dr Yeong Siew-Wei

Event Chairperson, RWL Committee, RCE Kuching

ChM Nur Aida Nur Azman

Natural Resources and Environment Board Sarawak

Assistant Professor Azizan Yatim

RWL Committee, RCE Kuching

Tan Sze Ling

RWL Committee, RCE Kuching

Dr Hiew Lee Chea

RWL Committee, RCE Kuching



The forum was led by the keynote speaker, Dr Kalithasan Kailasam, Global Environment Centre and fellow panellists namely Dr Abdhesh Kumar Gangwar, Jen Dollin, Professor Dr Muhammad Ataur Rahman and Mukhvinder Kaur Sandhu.

During the forum discussion, four panellists introduced their respective RCEs and shared what initiatives they are conducting regarding water use efficiency and water quality in their regions. Furthermore, they discussed the challenges and limitations they have been facing in recent times, most of which involved reduced face-to-face contact with local communities due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the panellists also mentioned that perhaps during the Covid-19 lock down the river condition has become better. In short, all panellists provided a lively exchange on possibilities for future collaborations within RCE Asia-Pacific. Moreover, the forum was well received by the participants who generally indicated that the forum was indeed informative. They also emphasised how it had made them look at rivers as an important resource that should not be taken for granted.

To conclude, the RCE Asia-Pacific "Rivers, Water and Livelihoods" Virtual Forum was a success. Relevant programmes, projects, issues, and incentives were reviewed, and possible collaborations were considered. Likewise, bonds between the RCEs were deepened. We look forward to stronger ties, continued productive discourse, and partnerships within the RCEs in the Asia-Pacific region toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 6: Water and Sanitation for all by 2030.

“...stronger ties, continued productive discourse, and partnerships within the RCEs in the Asia-Pacific region.”



Several RCEs attended the virtual forum, including RCEs from Greater Dhaka, Greater Western Sydney, Srinagar, Ilocos, Waikato, Mumbai, Southern Vietnam, Hangzhou, Dobong-Gu, Lucknow, Greater KL, Melaka, and Chandigarh.

For further information, you may refer to the following links:

Video link: <https://bit.ly/Recording-WRD2021>

Photo Link: https://bit.ly/RCE_KCH-WRD2021

THE UCSI GAZETTE

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