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THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

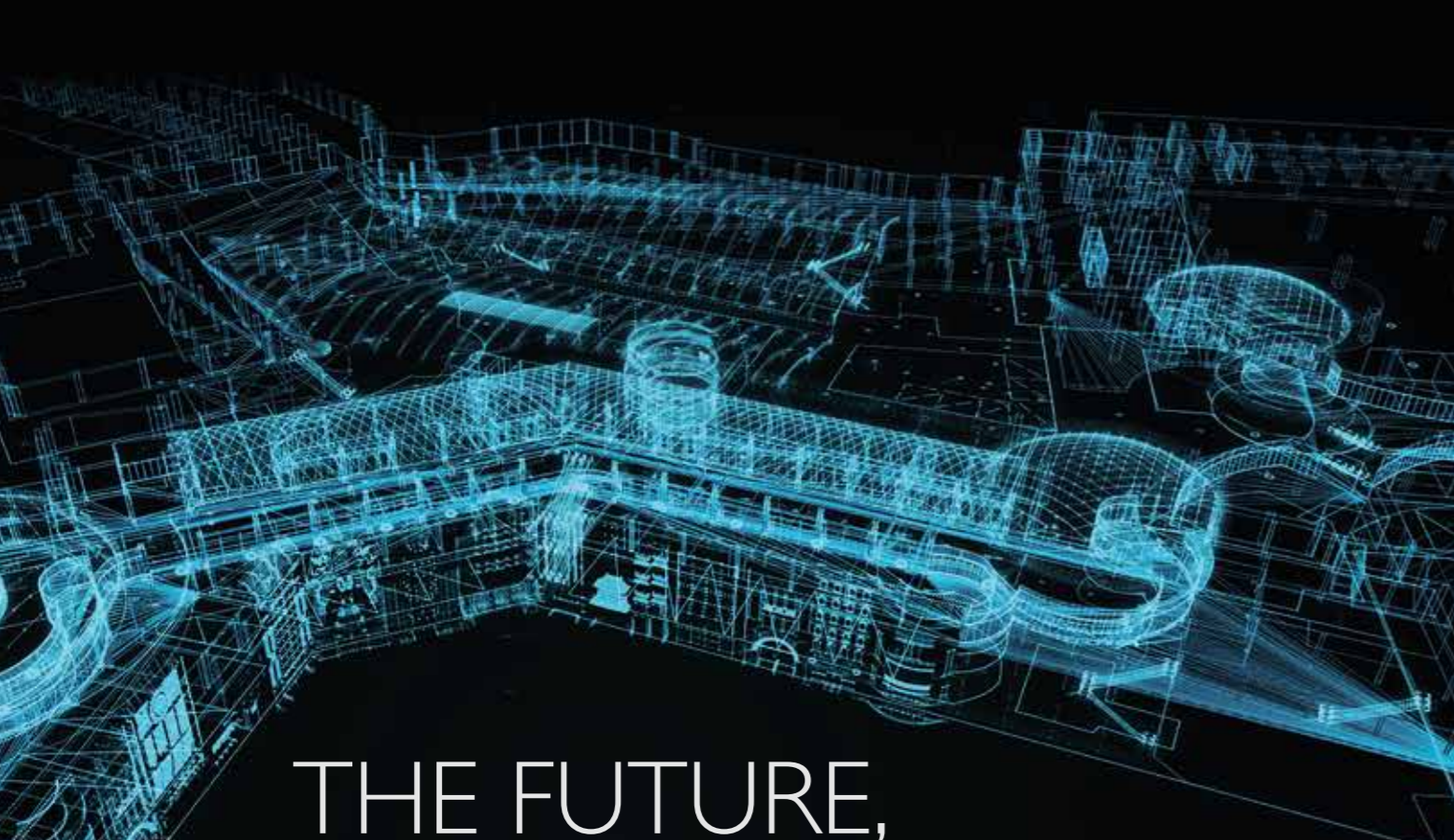


VOLUME 01 • THE INAUGURAL EDITION

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WelcomeNOTE



Since it was first founded in 1986, UCSI is, and has always been, driven by our students. And it is fitting that the inaugural issue of The UCSI Gazette focuses on all of you – your achievements, your events and your life on campus.

In this issue, we are also proud to highlight The Irish Connection that UCSI has worked hard to build. These valuable linkages are the results of months of hard work by UCSI and some of the best names in Irish tertiary education.

Among the outcomes is recognition by University College Cork for UCSI's Foundation in Arts and Foundation in Science programmes. This speaks volumes about the quality of our homegrown curriculum and the calibre of our students. Academic mobility, research collaboration and student exchange are some of the other advantages you can look forward to from our partners in Ireland.

In the first quarter of the year, our students have also met eight-time world champion in squash, Datuk Nicol David; CEO and Executive Director of AirAsia Bhd, Aileen Omar and CEO of Chatime Malaysia and one of Malaysia's top entrepreneurs under 30 years of age, Bryan Loo.

The UCSI Gazette will be published at the beginning of every semester, and we look forward to more achievements and news from all of you.

The Editorial Team, The UCSI Gazette

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FIRST
EDITION



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IMPERIAL PEDIGREE

Imperial College
London

In 2014, UCSI University sent a student to Harvard. Now, two students are headed to Imperial College London for intercalated research programmes. We catch up with Leon Tan Kuan Leong and Soh Wei Ming before they leave for London.



Wei Ming (left) and Leon can't wait to get started at Imperial.

Q: You have been selected for a research programme at one of Britain's best universities. How do you feel about this milestone?

L: I'm still elated. It's strange but I did not know too much about Imperial until this opportunity arose. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that they are one of the world's best universities in science and engineering. This is an invaluable opportunity for me and I'm happy that UCSI collaborates with universities of this calibre.

WM: I'm happy to be selected. There was a written test and an interview process that we had to go for and I managed to pass both. This process, by itself, was a good learning experience and I'm sure that I'll learn much more in London. I'm very thankful and satisfied.

Q: You will be working with Dr Jerry Heng – a Malaysian academic – who conducts cutting-edge research at Imperial. How do you feel about this and are you raring to go?

WM: Working with a leading academic can be daunting sometimes but Dr Heng struck me as a down to earth

person during the interview process. I could sense that he genuinely wanted me to learn something new. He inspired me to deepen my interest in science and I look forward to doing that at Imperial. I'm sure I'll learn much from Dr Heng and his team.

L: I'm very excited to work with Dr Heng. What he has done at Imperial shows that Malaysians can do pertinent work in science and I look forward to learning from him. He interviewed us via Skype and it was clear that he is keen to teach us more. His replies shed more light on the finer details of heat transfer and I'm sure I'll learn much from his tutelage and encouragement. It would be great if I could achieve like him in the future.

Q: What specific endeavours will you embark on at Imperial? Are there any expectations?

WM: My work with focus on functional particles – specifically on coal fly ash. There are many components in the ash and I'm trying to improve ways to extract cenosphere, a low-density particle with unique properties like high thermal resistivity. Cenosphere can be added into cement to improve its

properties. It can also serve as a filler in construction materials. Imperial has develop two methods to do this: spray drying and high temperature sintering.

L: The crystallisation of proteins. To understand the functions of antibodies in proteins, one needs to crystallise them first. Dr Heng has invented 3D nano templates that greatly help in the process and I look forward to make full use of this opportunity. Crystals with different habits are produced based on template surface chemistry. I'll be able to work with world-class facilities that no university in Malaysia can offer and I'm determined to get a result. I can't wait to start.

Q: Would you like to give a shout out to the UCSI community before you fly off?

L: Of course! The UCSI University Trust is sponsoring our accommodation, living expenses and air fare in London. The Engineering Faculty has also assigned supervisors to prepare both of us for the extensive research environment we'll be immersed in at Imperial. I'd also like to thank Assistant Professor Jully Tan for initiating this programme with Dr Heng and Imperial. UCSI has really gone out of their way to make this possible and I really appreciate everything that has been done.

WM: Leon basically said it all. I'd like to give a shout out to the University for doing so much for us. Leon and I have not been out of the country much so being able to go to London for three months to pursue a high impact research programme is a dream come true. I'd also like to thank Assistant Professor Jully Tan for getting me ready for Imperial over the past month. Thank you, UCSI!



RECOGNITION FROM THE WORLD'S FINEST UCSI'S FOUNDATION PROGRAMME ACCEPTED BY TOP IRISH TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTION.

In March this year, University College Cork – ranked in the top 50 worldwide in QS World University Rankings by Subject 2015 for Pharmacy and Pharmacology – began to accept UCSI's Foundation in Science students directly into its Pharmacy and Food Science programmes. Several other top tier Irish tertiary education institutions have also recognised and accepted UCSI's Foundation in Science and Foundation in Arts qualifications.

Foundation in Science

Cork Institute of Technology
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology Carlow
University College Cork

Foundation in Arts

Cork Institute of Technology
Dublin Business School
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology Carlow

UCSI Signs MoU with Waterford Institute of Technology

UCSI University expanded its internationalisation initiative by inking a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), Ireland on 13 March 2015.

The MoU was signed by UCSI Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs and Support) Professor Dr Teoh Kok Soo and Mr Robert Smyth, a WIT lecturer who was representing WIT's School of Engineering Dean Dr Ken Thomas.

The signing ceremony took place at the Embassy of Ireland in Kuala Lumpur and was witnessed by the Irish Ambassador, His Excellency Declan Kelly. The MoU emphasises collaboration in advanced standing or articulation arrangements for both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, curriculum development projects, online delivery pilot programmes, joint conferences, faculty and technological exchange programmes, as



well as joint research and development programmes between both institutions of higher education.

According to Mr Robert Smyth, the collaboration will contribute to invaluable experiences for the students and staff for both institutions of higher education, especially in the fields of engineering, architecture and built environment. "Ultimately, both parties will have a better understanding on the ways their countries are involved in the construction industry."

Waterford Institute of Technology is located in the oldest city in Ireland.



GROUP PHOTO: Standing from left – O'Farrell, International Development Officer, Waterford Institute of Technology; HE Kelly, Irish Ambassador; and Prof Dr Teoh, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs and Support, UCSI University.

Sitting from left – Mr Smyth, Lecturer, School of Engineering, Waterford Institute of Technology; Ir Assoc Prof Dr Mok, Dean, Faculty of Engineering, Technology & Built Environment, UCSI University; and Mr Abu Bakar, Vice-President, Group Legal Office and Registrar, UCSI University.



Discover Education Opportunities in Ireland

On 15 January 2015, UCSI University (UCSI) held the 'Discover Education Opportunities in Ireland Fair' in its KL Campus. The fair saw the participation of eight Irish institutions of higher learning including Dublin City University, Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin Business School, Galway-University of Limerick and Waterford Institute of Technology, to name a few. Notably the first-of-its-kind to be held in UCSI, the fair seeks to foster awareness of higher education opportunities in non-medical and health science-related disciplines – from ICT and arts to agribusiness and veterinary sciences – at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The event was a joint effort between UCSI and Education in Ireland – an Irish government agency appointed to promote and market higher education in Ireland. The latter was represented by its Manager, Mr Terry McParland.

"When we found out that UCSI was looking for international partners, we were very interested in a partnership as the University is a very enterprising, forward-looking institution," he added. UCSI Group Founder and Chairman Dato' Peter Ng was also present at the event.



From left: UCSI Group Founder and Chairman, Dato' Ng; Education in Ireland Education Consultant (Malaysia), Mr Kavanagh; Education in Ireland Manager, Mr McParland; and UCSI Vice-Chancellor and President, Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff posing for a group shot.



HE Kelly, Irish Ambassador to Malaysia (fourth from left) joined by Dr Murphy, President of University College Cork (UCC), Ireland (third from left) and Dato' Dr Khalid, Vice-Chancellor and President of UCSI (fifth from left).

UCSI SIGNS MOU WITH UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK



UCSI University signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with University College Cork (UCC), Ireland on 12 March 2015. The MoU calls for collaboration in research, curriculum development, mobility, and academic exchange between both universities. The MoU was signed by UCSI Vice-Chancellor and President, Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff and UCC President Dr Michael B. Murphy. It was witnessed by His Excellency Declan Kelly, the Irish Ambassador, and other delegates from both universities.

"UCSI and UCC are very similar in their academic offerings. There are quite a number of disciplines that we could develop research and student opportunities. Through this collaboration, we are keen to develop some research links here to take advantage of the European Union Horizon 2020 research funding programmes," said Dr Murphy.

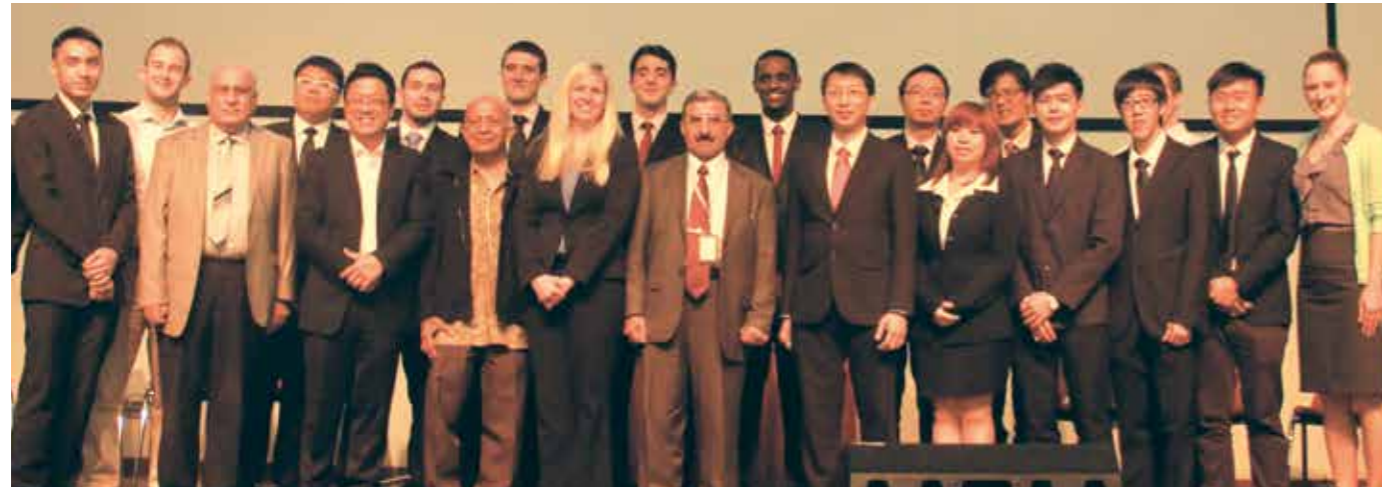
He added that UCC also looks forward to welcoming UCSI students to pursue their Master and PhD qualifications at its campus. After the MoU signing, Dr Murphy delivered a talk about Professor George Boole, the inventor of the

Boolean algebra and the first Professor of Mathematics of UCC.

UCC was named Irish University of the Year by the Sunday Times in 2003, 2005, and 2011. The 2011 QS World University Rankings assigned a 5-star rating to UCC, and ranked the university amongst the top 2% of universities worldwide. In the same year, UCC became the first university worldwide to achieve the ISO 50001 standard in energy management. The university also ranks fourth worldwide in terms of food research while its medical school was ranked in the top 200 for 2013.



Exchanging of the MoU was witnessed by the Irish Ambassador, HE Kelly (middle).



ENGINEERING STUDENTS INDUCTED INTO HONOUR SOCIETY

UCSI University's Faculty of Engineering, Technology and Built Environment (FETBE) achieved a new milestone on 10 January 2015. It had the distinction of having the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (IEEE) establish the first Malaysian chapter of its student honour society at UCSI.

The IEEE is the world's largest professional association dedicated to advancing technological innovation and excellence. The UCSI chapter, christened Mu Alpha, saw the induction of 12 students from FETBE.

Mu Alpha is the third IEEE – Eta Kappa Nu (IEEE – HKN) chapter in the Asia Pacific region, after Hong Kong University and the National University of Singapore. As the student honour society of IEEE, IEEE-HKN is committed to encouraging and recognising excellence in the IEEE-designated fields of interest. Dr Catherine Slater – Governor-at-Large from the IEEE-HKN Board of Governors – represented the IEEE at the induction ceremony. She was accompanied by five Harvard Business School MBA students who engaged the UCSI student

community during and after the induction ceremony.

"Today, we will recognise a select group of students for their contributions and achievements by inducting them into IEEE-HKN," Dr Slater said, adding that Mu Alpha at UCSI is IEEE – HKN's 232nd chapter

"But even more important is the fact that we are establishing a new chapter that will continue to honour and recognise many more students from UCSI in the years to come."

Also present at the ceremony was Ir Associate Professor Dr Jimmy Mok Vee Hoong, Dean of FETBE. "I believe this new chapter will foster closer faculty-student interactions and relationships, and provide myriad opportunities for students to work together with their peers on various projects and assignments," he said. Boasting alumni such as Google co-founder Larry Page, Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak, Intel co-founder and chairman emeritus Gordon Moore, Yahoo co-founder David Filo and internet pioneer Vint Cerf, among others, IEEE-HKN will

open avenues for UCSI students and staff in the area of internationalisation. UCSI students and staff can now look forward to student exchange programmes with other IEEE – HKN members, enhanced access to international competitions and active engagement with the world's leading universities. It is anticipated that the Mu Alpha chapter will also provide the ideal platform for students to participate in scholarly activities, community outreach programmes, science fairs and other events.

"With this chapter, our students will be trained to think globally and have the opportunity to tap into the resources of over 200 chapters around the globe, especially in the areas of knowledge and leadership," said Dato' Peter Ng, UCSI Group Founder and Chairman.

"We are really honoured and proud that this installation is held here."

"But even more important is the fact that we are establishing a new chapter that will continue to honour and recognise many more students from UCSI in the years to come."

Dr Catherine Slater,
Governor-at-Large, the
IEEE-HKN Board of
Governors

FUTURE ENGINEERS WITH A HEART

help flood victims in Temerloh



Over 60 students from UCSI University's Faculty of Engineering, Technology and Built Environment (FETBE) came together to help flood victims in Kg Paya Dalam, Temerloh, Pahang on 10 January 2015. The campaign, called OPS Bantuan Sukarelawan Banjir – led by FETBE head of department (Civil Engineering) Ir Assitant Professor Ahmad Bin Tamby Kadir – saw the clean-up of 35 flooded houses.

While several groups of students were cleaning up houses and throwing away strewn garbage and ruined furniture, a group of girls were assigned to clean dishes that the villagers reserved for special occasions. According to a student from Yemen, Enas Rajeh, over one hundred glass tableware

needed to be cleaned. "It took us the whole day to do the dishes but none of us complained. Malaysia is my second home and everyone here is my family," she said. "We went (to Temerloh) as a family to help our family." Another UCSI student from Jordan, Ahmad Adli Al Lulu, added that he felt great joy knowing he was part of the mission.

"The houses had a terrible smell and were layered with mud, even on the inside!" he said.

"There were also many walls to scrub but it was well worth the effort." To raise funds to buy essential items for the flood

victims, a booth to collect donations was also set up by UCSI students on campus grounds. A total of RM3, 600.00 was raised. Ir Assitant Professor Ahmad praised the students and said it was refreshing to see them volunteer for a good cause.

"I am very proud of our students. Although we only had a few days to pull this off, it was a success," he said.

"Personally, I believe it's very important for engineering students to be engaged in something like this. This is where they learn and gain deeper understanding of natural disasters and what we can do to prevent them in terms of construction. Responsible engineers are engineers who know what is good and safe for the people."

"This is where they learn and gain deeper understanding of natural disasters and what we can do to prevent them in terms of construction."

Ir Assistant Professor Ahmad Bin Tamby Kadir
Head of Department (Civil Engineering)



Three UCSI University (UCSI) students are determined to tackle poverty and their solution involves two simple components – housewives and soap. The Banggi Soap Project aims to train the housewives of Kampung Kalangkaman of Pulau Banggi, Sabah on the art of producing handmade soap bars. These bars will then be purchased from each housewife before being sold to consumers.

This method would provide housewives with an immediate source of income. Depending on their hard work, the housewives would be empowered to have control of their income and subsequently, plan their finances. Soap production does not require much resources and equipment, making it an ideal project as Kampung Kalangkaman, is accessible only through a nine-hour boat ride from Kota Kinabalu. To keep overheads low and make this plan easily implemented, the soap bars will be sold online and through collaborations with non-governmental organisations.

The idea was the brainchild of Eric Kong (23), Kelvin Choo (22), and Vivian Ng (23) who are students of UCSI's Faculty of Business and Information Science (FoBIS). The three are pursuing the BA (Hons) Marketing, BSc (Hons)

A solution to COMBAT POVERTY

UCSI students' soap project set to empower an island community in Sabah

Finance and Investment and BA (Hons) Accounting respectively.

On 19 January 2015, the concept for the Banggi Soap Project won one of the four cash prizes of RM10,000 during the WIEF Social Entrepreneurship Challenge 2014. The Challenge was part of the prestigious World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) Foundation supported by organisations including the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), and the Muslim Council of Britain.

During his interview on BFM radio after the competition, Tan Sri Dr Wan Mohd Zahid Mohd Noordin, Chairman of the

WIEF Education Trust, spoke highly of the team's pitching skills.

He shared that the team was very articulate and defended their idea even when they were grilled by the judges.

"They didn't collapse and just say 'yes' to us judges. They stood by their idea, and we thought we should give them a chance," he said.

Tan Sri Dr Wan Mohd Zahid shared that all four winning teams will receive support from the WIEF Foundation which is looking to perfect the selected ideas. Eventually, it is hoped that these ideas can be replicated in other WIEF member nations.



Concert and Education Fund for flood victims

RM30,000 raised through tickets, donations and student events.

UCSI University organised an exclusive charity concert on 22 January 2015 on campus grounds to raise funds for those affected by the floods in the east coast late last year.

The concert saw nine outstanding performances – from jazz to rock music – by students and alumni from UCSI's Institute of Music (IMus).

Renowned local artistes – like Astro Star Quest 2014 second runner-up Elaine Lee; Astro Star Quest 2013 second runner-up



Justin Ng; Astro Star Quest 2000 champion Winnie Ho and 8TV Ultimate Song Competition 2013 (Best Performance Award) winner Quek Shio Yee serenaded the concert-goers. The musical extravaganza also showcased Malaysian bands such as jazz piano trio the Toro Cheng Trio, and Malaysian bands like Dotters' Division and Drumline. Pianist Maxy Chan Mei Xuan, who won gold awards at the Asia Music Competition (South Korea) 2014 and Asia Music Competition (Taiwan) 2013 mesmerised on the piano. Lee and Quek are UCSI alumni while Ng and Chan are students from IMus.

Themed, "Together We Care", the event also witnessed the launch of the UCSI Education Fund 2015 for Flood-affected Families. The total amount pledged by UCSI University Trust – UCSI's scholarship arm – was RM700,000. Notably, the Fund provides educational assistance – up to full tuition fee waiver for the entire duration of study for most

programmes at UCSI – to flood-affected families in Terengganu and Kelantan who wish to pursue tertiary education at the University.

The launch was officiated by UCSI University Founder and UCSI Group Chairman Dato' Peter Ng.

"I want to commend the students, alumni and staff for the extraordinary work they've done to make tonight's concert possible.

"I also want to thank the Ministry of Education for taking the lead in coordinating relief efforts with private education providers. All of us need to chip in at such a time and UCSI is more than happy to do its part," he added.

Prior to the concert, UCSI students and staff also contributed to the cause in various ways, including organising fundraising events in the form of a food fair and haunted house. While student clubs and associations at UCSI also donated a portion of their event revenue to the cause, the Student Affairs and Alumni division joined efforts with Kelab Proton Perdana and Jabatan Tanah Banting to donate essential items to those in Gua Musang and Dabong Kuala Krai, two areas badly affected by the floods.

To date, UCSI has raised RM30,000 through the sales of concert tickets, donations from sponsors and student events. It is worthy to note that students from the University's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences alone raised almost one-third of that amount.



THE UCSI CHORALE HITS ITS HIGHEST NOTE YET



UCSI's choir becomes the first to perform with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, under the tutelage of world-famous conductor, Benjamin Zander.

The UCSI University Chorale reached the apotheosis of its performing history when it was selected to perform with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO) on 21-22 March 2015. Under the guidance of world-renowned conductor Benjamin Zander, they performed Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2, widely known as the Resurrection Symphony.

And by doing so, UCSI's 120-man chorale – a combination of the University's premier chamber and concert choirs – became the first university student choir to perform with the acclaimed MPO.

UCSI Institute of Music director Professor Dr P'ng Tean Hwa said that the Chorale's involvement was significant as the students could work closely with Zander, a Mahler specialist who is widely regarded as one of the world's best conductors.

"Performing Symphony No. 2, known as the Resurrection Symphony, with the MPO – a professional orchestra that brings together some of the best musicians from 25 countries – speaks volumes about the quality of the UCSI Chorale," said Professor P'ng.

"Our students received great exposure and it is a great honour for them to learn from Zander, an esteemed conductor who works extremely well with young musicians and performers."

"Our students received great exposure and it is a great honour for them to learn from Zander, an esteemed conductor who works extremely well with young musicians and performers."

*Professor Dr P'ng
Tean Hwa, Director
UCSI's Institute of Music*



Established in 2007, the UCSI Chorale stands out as one of Malaysia's foremost vocal ensembles. It has quickly developed a reputation at home and abroad, winning accolades at international chorale festivals and summits. Some of the Chorale's notable achievements are gold awards at the International Choral Festival Orientale Concentus III 2010 in Taiwan, the IFCM World Choral Summit 2012

in China, the 11th China International Choral Festival 2012, the 4th Hong Kong International Youth and Children's Choir Festival 2013 and the 7th Grand Prix Pattaya Festival 2014.

The Chorale is housed at UCSI's Institute of Music – Malaysia's foremost music school in both the classical and contemporary fields. It is directed by Professor Ian Lim Kean

Seng who is widely acknowledged as the doyen of Malaysian chorus masters and voice teachers.

The Chorale's milestone marks yet another achievement for the Institute. In December 2014, Jeremy Yeo and Wun Chern Zhi also performed with the MPO as piano soloists at the orchestra's Saint-Saëns' Carnival of the Animals concert.



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UCSI University launches UCSI-MINDS STUDENT CHAPTER

UCSI University (UCSI) has recently organised the UCSI-MINDS Installation & Induction Ceremony. The ceremony was held on 10 March 2015 to officially launch the UCSI University MINDS Student Chapter (UCSI-MINDS).

The ceremony was officiated by the founder of MINDS (Malaysian Invention and Design Society), Academician Emeritus Professor Tan Sri Datuk Dr Augustine Ong Soon Hock. It was also attended by UCSI's Vice-Chancellor and President, Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff.

The event featured a sharing session titled 'Innovation and Design in Malaysia' by Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ong, and Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid. During the session, they also spoke about their expectations for the UCSI-MINDS Student Chapter.

A man with scores of experience, Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ong affirmed that in the area of knowledge discovery, both experience and new ideas are mutually beneficial. "In this conducive environment, which the university members have created, my expectation for UCSI-MINDS is that there will be productive interactions between the experienced and the young minds," said Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ong.

He added that students can learn from professional members of MINDS because, "It is only through interactions with the experts that you will be bolder as you will be equipped with the guidance

"...my expectation for UCSI-MINDS is that there will be productive interactions between the experienced and the young minds," he said.

Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ong

and skills that you need to execute your ideas." The importance of hard work was something that was emphasised by Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid.

"To generate change and excellence and to provide solutions for society, one has to have a prepared mind, which requires a lot of hard work. There is no alternative to hard work." He added that he has no doubt that the UCSI-MINDS student members would be inspired to bring change in the world,

with motivation and guidance from MINDS. Established in 1987, MINDS is the largest body in Malaysia representing individuals, universities and companies that pursue excellence in invention, creativity, innovation, research and development, and industrial design. It is also designed to assist scientists and technologists to develop their ideas into inventions, and to commercialise the innovations. The UCSI-MINDS chapter was formed to promote the spirit of invention and design thinking among university students through events focusing on design, intellectual property (IP), and patenting.



(left to right) Dato Dr Khalid, Mr Koh Swee H. Yong and Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ong.



TEA WITH THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT

A-LEVEL TOP SCORERS MEET SENIOR PROFESSOR DATO' DR KHALID OVER A CUPPA.

"Put your heart and soul into what you are doing for your future because all those years ahead of you mean nothing unless you do something substantial today."

Those were words of advice from UCSI University's Vice-Chancellor and President Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff to the top scorers of the GCE A-Level November 2014 exam. He shared his words of wisdom during an informal tea session on 10 February 2015.

The session was a gathering of top scorers, their parents and UCSI academics including Centre for Pre-U Studies director Assistant Professor Dr Mabel Tan.

Notably, the University's A-Level Academy – under the Centre – has a long track record of high achievers

and this is backed by the fact that the Academy achieves – every year. In last year's November exam, the Academy recorded a 99.5% pass rate and almost 30% of its students scored straight A's. Two examples of its achievers are Neo Wan Qing and Kevin Yapp Jun Hao. Both students are academically outstanding – scoring 4A*s as well as 2A*s and 2As respectively – and are also notable out of the classroom. Wan Qing is the treasurer in UCSI's Hope Revive Club – one dedicated to organising charity events. She was also part of the committee for Go Green Week 2013, an event highlighting the importance of the 3Rs – Reduce,

Reuse, Recycle – among the students. Wan Qing credits her lecturers at the UCSI Centre for Pre-U Studies for making learning fun.

"The talks and career carnivals organised by the University, and conversations with the lecturers about my future plans – all these were also really motivating and kept me on the right path."

Kevin has the distinction of being the organising chairperson for UCSI's very first leadership forum – namely, "Meet the Leaders" – where Shanghai Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf business development director Phng Li Kheng shared her entrepreneurial story with the students. He enjoys the fact that at UCSI, the learning experience is not confined into the classroom and



"Put your heart and soul into what you are doing for your future because all those years ahead of you mean nothing unless you do something substantial today."

*Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff,
Vice-Chancellor and President*

Behind the lens Mass comm students win national video competition

A team of six UCSI University mass comm students recently bagged second place in the MyKRIS Inaugural National Short Video Contest. They edged out over 230 competitors from various private universities and colleges across Malaysia to win RM4,000 in the competition that ran from September to 15 December 2014.

Themed, 'Youth Creativity Prevails', the contest tasked participants with producing a short video or digital animation clip related to MyKRIS' business of high-speed broadband and managed service technologies.

The team – consisting of Chai Mei Kee, Ng Pui Lin, Chin Jing Ru, Tan Joe Yee, Quinn Kalindi Amalore and Della Devina – created a 60-second corporate video for MyKRIS that stood out from other themed entries like documentaries and animation.

"We were excited about the win because it was our first time joining a video competition, which provided us

with a rare opportunity to apply what we learned in class," says Mei Kee.

"We already learned how to do scriptwriting, storyboard creation and actual production in class. These definitely helped us with the competition."

Such glowing testimonies successfully illustrate the Faculty's strong commitment to intellectual rigour and creativity. A place where individual talents are honed, personal growth is stimulated and creative expression is encouraged, the Faculty continues to inspire students to work at the highest levels.

"We already learned how to do scriptwriting, storyboard creation and actual production in class. These definitely helped us with the competition."

*Chai Mei Kee,
BA (Hons)
Mass Communication*



provided him the opportunity to 'give back'. A member of "Hands of Hope", a community project initiated by UCSI's Scholars Club, Yapp has spent a month teaching underprivileged children from the Chin tribe in Burma.

"Everything I have experienced so far – from leading an event featuring top industry leaders to volunteering as a teacher to underprivileged children – are all new and incredible. I really made the right decision signing up for A-Levels at UCSI."



DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT HOLDERS GET PROFESSIONAL BOOST

UCSI signs MoU with the Malaysian Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators.



From left: Ms Chua, President of MAICSA; Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff, Vice-Chancellor and President of UCSI University and Prof Dr Teoh, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Affairs and Support.

UCSI University and the Malaysian Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (MAICSA) have signed a collaborative Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 3 March 2015. This sees UCSI's Diploma in Management holders receiving maximum exemptions for the MAICSA Professional Diploma in Corporate Administration (PDCA) programme. The MoU was

signed by Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff, Vice-Chancellor and President and witnessed by Professor Dr Teoh Kok Soo, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Support on behalf of UCSI. MAICSA was represented by Ms Chua Siew Chuan, President of MAICSA and witnessed by Dato' Heng Ji Keng, Deputy President of MAICSA.

"UCSI is an established educational institution and has a strong track record of university-industry engagement... We are very pleased that UCSI, through its Faculty of Business and Information Science (FoBIS), has gone the extra mile to collaborate with MAICSA on the PDCA programme," said Ms Chua.

With the signing of the MoU, Diploma in Management holders will obtain the maximum exemptions (six out of eight programmes) for the PDCA programme. By completing the last two subjects while studying, learners will graduate with two qualifications – UCSI's Diploma in Management and MAICSA's PDCA. With the MAICSA PDCA qualification, UCSI students

will be eligible for admission to the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators' (UK) International Qualifying Scheme (IQS). By completing the IQS and after the relevant qualifying experience, candidates can become full members of MAICSA and thereby become eligible to be appointed and to act as company secretaries.

"As of 31 December 2014, there are about 1,113,000 companies registered at Companies Commission of Malaysia and every company is required by law to appoint a company secretary," explains Ms Chua. She adds that Malaysia's Companies Act provides that only members of prescribed professional bodies or persons who are licensed by the Companies Commission of Malaysia are eligible to be appointed as company secretaries. MAICSA has been gazetted as a prescribed professional body and members of MAICSA are automatically recognised as being eligible to be named and appointed as company secretaries.

FoBIS drives innovation through collaboration with Steinbeis Malaysia Foundation

UCSI University has the distinction of being the first private institution of higher learning to be certified as a member of the Steinbeis TransferNetwork Centre. Through the Faculty of Business and Information Science (FoBIS), the collaboration was finalised on 4 March 2015. Steinbeis Malaysia Foundation, an extension of the German-based Steinbeis Foundation, is a system and organisation with a core focus to build a bridge between academia and the industry to promote effective and efficient cooperation. It is internationally recognised for transferring academic findings and knowledge into the field of business.

As a Praxis® University, UCSI advocates academic mastery that is balanced with

industrial application. The collaboration will pave the way for UCSI's academicians and students to work on consultancy, development and research projects with national and international industry players through the UCSI-Steinbeis Transfer Network Centre in the future.

"There has been a long-standing lament in the country that the industry does not know what the universities are doing and the universities do not know what the industry wants. Today we see this collaboration, that is all necessary and important to keep us in sync and benefit the growth of the country," said Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid, Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid along with Mr Mark Rozario, CEO of the National Innovation



Doite (M) Sdn Bhd CEO, Baharudin Bahari; UCSI Vice-Chancellor and President, Dato' Dr Khalid; and CEO of the National Innovation Agency Malaysia, Mr Rozario.

Agency Malaysia, as well as Dr Abdul Reezal Abdul Latif, Executive Director of Steinbeis Malaysia Foundation, officiated the ceremony by unveiling the UCSI-Steinbeis Transfer Centre Network plaque.

Right to Read

UCSI launches a year-long literacy campaign with renowned Malaysian writers



Amir Muhammad tickling the audience with his wit.

On 18 March 2015, UCSI University's English Language Students' Association (ELSA) launched a year-long campaign titled 'Right to Read: The Writer's Public Readings'. The campaign is held in collaboration with several renowned Malaysian writers and literary critics with the aim of encouraging the passion for reading and participation in creative production amongst the general public.

According to Vice-Chancellor & President of UCSI University, Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff, a country's progress is dependent on the literacy of its citizens. "We need literate youths to achieve our vision of becoming a high income nation by the year 2020. And today's event is a step towards the right direction," he said.

One of the popular activities under the campaign is the Writer's Public Readings series that featured several renowned names in Malaysia's literary world. The writers read excerpts of their books and had a question and answer session with participants on their creative process. The writers include Kee Thuan Chye – poet, journalist, and actor, Wong Ming Yook – book author and Amir Muhammad – a Malaysian writer and independent filmmaker.

As part of the campaign's reach, volunteer teaching by FOSSLA staff and students has also been initiated at the Home of Peace – an NGO that is home to underprivileged girls aged between 4-16 years. ELSA has also set up a book donation drive to encourage the local community to contribute pre-loved books to the children from the Home of Peace.

One of the instalments of the readings was attended by His Excellency J. Eduardo Malaya, the Ambassador of the Philippines to Malaysia. "Good communication starts with the ability to read, and I applaud UCSI on its campaign and on having the Home of Peace for girls as the campaign's beneficiary. Reading is a right and a necessity, never a privilege," His Excellency added.

"The choice of these two advocacies manifests the commitment of the UCSI to be relevant to and be of service to the society at large." The event also saw the launch of the Faculty's new postgraduate programme, the Master of Arts in English Language and Communication.



(Third from right) HE Malaya during one of the Right to Read campaign instalments.

UCSI STUDENT TO REPRESENT MALAYSIA AT THE 14TH ASEAN FOOD CONFERENCE

Research on kenaf seed oil wins her golden ticket to the Philippines.

Cheong Ai Mun's research on the antioxidant properties and bioactive compounds of kenaf seed oil saw her edging out participants from 13 public and private universities in Malaysia to win first prize at the 9th MIFT Food Science and Technology Seminar.

Apart from addressing the kenaf's medicinal properties, Cheong's research focused on creating a stable solution of kenaf seed oil extracts for human consumption.

The quality of her answers in a gruelling Q&A sessions also impressed the panel of adjudicators from the Malaysian Institute of Food Technology, a non-profit professional body of food technologists, scientists and educators.

Cheong, who is currently pursuing UCSI University's MSc Applied Sciences, will now represent Malaysia at the 14th ASEAN Food Conference in the Philippines in June. It is the first time a student from a Malaysian private university has won this accolade.

"My research supervisor and the environment at UCSI pushed me to go beyond my comfort zone," said Cheong. "This was crucial and I was prepared to answer the questions that came my way."

"Winning this competition affirms my decision to pursue my passion in research and development. I look forward to further my academic interests at PhD level and I look forward to making more contributions to the advancement of science."

Cheong was working at a global food and beverage company before she decided on postgraduate studies at UCSI.

Apart from Cheong's big win, UCSI students also bagged first runner-up awards in the Innovative Product Development Competition, the Oratory Competition and the Postgraduate Poster Competition.

UCSI is a pioneer of biotechnology and food science in Malaysia's private higher education landscape.

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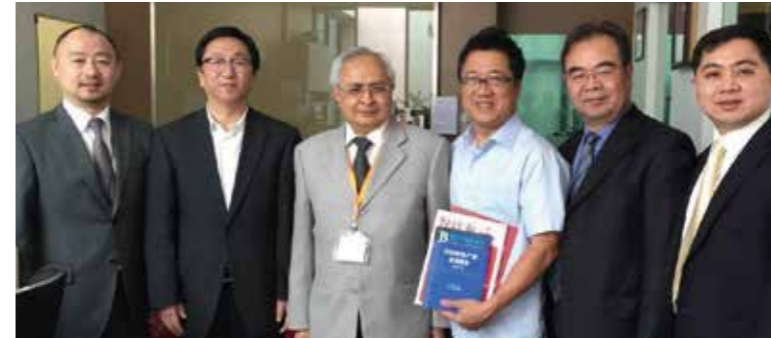
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INSIDE UCSI



(From left) UCSI's Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management Dean, Assoc Prof Dr Li; UCSI Group Advisor and visiting professor and China Europe Hotel Management Education Group President, Prof Dr Li Li; UCSI's Vice-Chancellor and President, Dato' Dr Khalid; UCSI Group founder and chairman, Dato' Ng, World Association of Chinese Cuisine (WACC) Special Advisor and former Chinese Ambassador to Austria, Lu; and Deputy Secretary General of WACC, Mu.

The Higher Education and International Development of Asian Culinary Arts forum was held in Malaysia, co-organised by UCSI University's Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management and China Europe Hotel Management Education Group. The event took place on 24 March 2015.

The objective of the forum was to establish a platform for Asian culinary arts education, to promote an Asian culinary culture that is interactive and collaborative and to nurture quality talents and professionals for the field. With the increasing prominence of China, there is also a high demand for more culinary professionals who specialise in Chinese cuisine. Held in UCSI, the prestigious event was attended by industry-acclaimed professionals, such as Lu Yonghua, special advisor to the World Association of Chinese Cuisine (WACC) and former Chinese ambassador to Austria; Mu Dongliang, deputy secretary general of WACC; Prof Dr Li Li, UCSI Group advisor and visiting professor and president of the China Europe Hotel Management Education Group.

UCSI advances

ASIAN CULINARY ARTS

The other attendees included Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff, UCSI's Vice-Chancellor and President; Dato' Peter Ng, UCSI Group Founder and Chairman; Associate Professor Dr Li Jianyao, dean of UCSI's Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management; and Professor Dr Teoh Kok Soo, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Support.

UCSI also discussed a potential partnership with WACC and the establishment of an Institute of Asian Culinary Arts in UCSI. "A collaboration with WACC, which is ratified by the Chinese government to promote Chinese cuisine globally, will give our students an edge as they pursue a culinary education with an Asian focus," said Associate Professor Dr Li.

During their visit to Malaysia, Lu and Mu also met with Malaysia Oversea Restaurant Enterprise chairman and vice-president of WACC, Yu Soo Chye; Selangor & Federal Territory Ku Su Shin Choong Hung Restaurant Association representative and WACC Deputy General Secretary, Xu Jinfang.

Dream BIG

Over 600 UCSI University students brought inspiration to life during the University Life Final Showcase on 24 March 2015. The theme, Dream Big, saw students set up booths to showcase the achievements and stories behind some of the world's most inspiring figures.

Officiated by UCSI Vice-Chancellor and President, Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff, the exhibition had 66 booths set up at the Multi-Purpose Hall. Among the leaders

chosen was Dato' Peter Ng, the Founder and Chairman of UCSI Group.

"Personally I'm inspired by his determination. In different stages of his life, Dato' Peter had different dreams. Today we share one of his dreams – to make a difference in education. He shared with us that there is no loser in this world but a winner in the making," said the group leader, Timothy Tay who is currently reading BEng (Hons) Chemical Engineering.

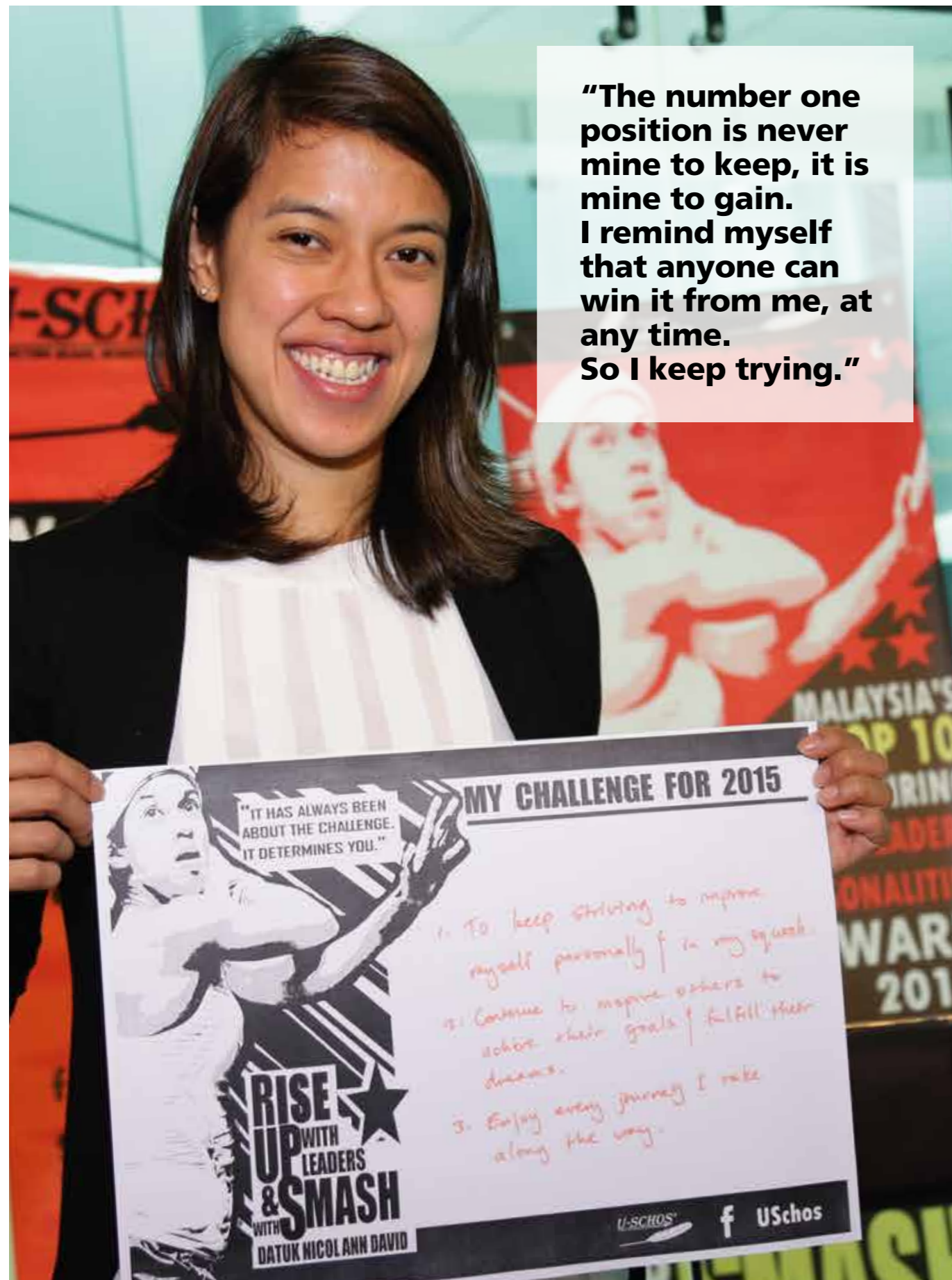
The Showcase also saw 18 amazing performances comprising of dance, drama, fashion show, pantomime, talk show, musical drama, storytelling and vocal performances by the students.

Also present on that day was Associate Professor Dr Toh Kian Kok, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Quality Assurance and Enhancement and Vice-President of Group Human Resource.

This activity was the final year assessment for the subject University Life. University Life is a course offered by the Centre of Excellence



for Learning & Teaching (CELT) for first year students. The main focus of the course is to integrate theoretical coursework with hands-on experience – in line with UCSI's Praxis[®] approach that advocates the application of theory to practice. This provides students with skills such as identifying learning styles, effective study techniques, presentation skills, as well as communication and leadership skills that will bring them far in their careers.



"The number one position is never mine to keep, it is mine to gain. I remind myself that anyone can win it from me, at any time. So I keep trying."

Give your best shot

Datuk Nicol David's winning advice for moments on the court and in the exam hall.

World number one squash player Datuk Nicol David is a firm believer of preparation. Whether it is training for a tournament or studying for an exam, on the big day, all you have to do is give it your best shot.

"You have to understand that you have worked hard. On the day of a match, I tell myself that I have done all the work necessary – I did not miss a single day of training – and I just give my best," said the eight-time World Open title champion.

How does she maintain the feat of being the world's number one in women's squash and being the first Asian woman to achieve this? With a chuckle, she shares that the trick to being number one, is to never expect it in the first place.

"The number 1 position is never mine to keep, it is mine to gain. I remind myself that anyone can win it from me, at any time. So I keep trying."

Datuk Nicol shared her winning insights with more than 50 scholarship students of the UCSI Scholars Club, on 6 January 2015 at the UCSI University KL Campus. Her talk was in conjunction with her receiving the Malaysia's Top 10

Most Inspiring Young Leaders and Personalities Award. Initiated by USchos', the award honours exemplary individuals who have inspired young Malaysians through leadership, business, sports, and community service.

She received her award from Dato' Peter Ng, UCSI Group founder and chairman. The award winners were chosen by students of local and private institutions of higher learning in Malaysia as part of a three-day leadership lecture series organised by U-SchoS last year.

The leadership lecture aimed to provide a platform for tertiary education students – to not only learn about leadership practices from top leaders, but also how they positively impact the community through their roles.

In total, 31 candidates were nominated for the award by Malaysian students – between 16 and 25 years old – from local public and private Institution of Higher Learning. Other winners of the award are Air Asia Bhd CEO Aireen Omar, Chatime Malaysia CEO Bryan Loo, Groupon Asia Pacific international vice-president Joel Neoh, singer and songwriter Shila Amzah, actress and pop singer Lee Sin Jie, pop singer Fish Leong, and YouTube sensation Jin Lim (Jinny Boy) to name a few.

8 Fun Facts about Datuk Nicol Ann David

By Nurul Atikah Bnti Ramli, BA (Hons)
Mass Communication

- 01 She likes to draw – fitting since her mother was an art teacher.
- 02 She started to have an interest in squash since she was five.
- 03 At the tender age of 11, she had already won two international titles – the Hong Kong U-13 and the Scottish Junior Open Under 12.
- 04 Her favourite quote is, "We keep on striving hard even though we are at the top of our game".
- 05 Nicol's best subject in school was Mathematics and she scored 7As for both her PMR and SPM examinations.
- 06 She has been a United Nations Development Programme National Goodwill Ambassador for the last six years.
- 07 She describes herself as "more of an island person" and not a "big city person" because she is from Penang.
- 08 Her nickname in the world of competitive squash is 'Duracell Bunny' because of her speed.

Believe in what you do

Bryan Loo, CEO of Chatime Malaysia,
on how to find business success.

His first business venture was selling comic books that he drew when he was six. Today, Bryan Loo is the CEO of Chatime Malaysia, a popular beverage chain that serves more than 1.5 million customers annually.

Loo's down to earth persona saw him taking a casual approach to demystifying entrepreneurship during his talk organised by the UCSI Scholars' Club (U-SchoS) at the Kuala Lumpur Campus on 6 January 2015. Chuckling at the memory of his younger self selling comics, Bryan acknowledged that passion is important for an entrepreneur.

"You must know your true passion and interest, and have realistic goals. Find out why you want to start a business, the kind of product you want to sell and the kind of services you want to offer," said the young millionaire candidly. To succeed, it is important for entrepreneurs to understand the business that they plan to venture into.

Despite being one of the country's most successful entrepreneurs and the recipient of numerous awards, he shares that being selected for the Malaysia's Top 10 Most Inspiring Young Leaders and Personalities Award, was something he holds close to his heart.

"Receiving this is an honour and being voted by the students makes it even more special," Loo enthused.

"This is definitely something that will continue to motivate and inspire me."

In addition to a game, there was also a 15 – 20-minute session that saw participants interacting with Loo on what they learned.

Sharing her thoughts on the event, organising chairperson Amanda Yin said that it really boosted her confidence. "There were a lot of new experiences and I definitely learned a lot from this event, especially in terms of teamwork and communication," she said.



"You must know your true passion and interest, and have realistic goals."

"I'm very glad that today's event went well and gladder still that I had the opportunity to meet Bryan. He's truly an inspiration to all of us."



Fly high but remain grounded

Aireen Omar, CEO and
Executive Director of
AirAsia Berhad tells UCSI
scholars what it takes to
reach for the sky.

With her background in finance and economics – she started her career with Deutsche Bank Securities in New York – Aireen Omar's career was soaring. But she decided that she wanted a career that could make a difference. So in 2006, she joined Air Asia.

On 24 February 2015, she shared her career journey and views on leadership with the UCSI Scholars' Club (U-SchoS) through a candid one-hour interview. Aireen explained that she found the trading and investment banking industry exciting at first because it was 'thrilling to play with huge sums of money and make millions' for her team.

"But later", she said, "I wanted to be part of something real (that would give me the opportunity) to help people, the community or (even boost) the country's economy".

AirAsia gave her that opportunity.



"(Back then), travelling by air was only for the rich but now, everyone can fly because we found a way to make it affordable," she said, adding that her biggest challenge as the CEO was in managing people.

"Communication is key but apart from that, you need to trust your staff or colleagues to do their job well. You need to empower them, and what comes with empowerment is accountability and ownership."

In addition to the interview, Aireen also received the Malaysia's Top 10 Most Inspiring Young Leaders and Personalities Award from UCSI.

"I feel very honoured (to receive the award) because these young people are the future of the country. I always enjoy talking to the younger generation," she said. "In a way, they bring more energy

and new ideas to what we already have." Having presented the award personally to Aireen, organising chairperson Bernard Chin Kai Yang enthused that the CEO was a really inspiring person. "She was very humble and willing to share her experience with us. It's not easy to move from one industry to another – it's a tremendous shift, and to be able to cope (and come out on top) with all that just proves she's a very capable leader," said Bernard.

"Our 'U-SchoS' Rise Up with the Leaders" series provides a great platform for students to get up close and personal with leaders like Aireen. It's hard for students to approach such distinguished people otherwise so in this, I feel it's really meaningful."

"Communication is key but apart from that, you need to trust your staff or colleagues to do their job well."



CAREton Project @ UCSI University

Students' recycling initiative collects 100kg of drink cartons.

CAREton Project @ UCSI University has recently held the Carton Collection Competition January 2015. The Prize-Giving Ceremony on the 27 March 2015 marks the closing of the Competition.

The Ceremony was officiated by Associate Professor Dr Chan Hor Kuan, Dean of the Faculty of Applied Sciences (FoAS). With a collection of 12kg, the first prize winner for the Competition was Jess Ong, a student from the Faculty. The first runner-up with a collection of 6.9 kg is Andrew Morgan Tennant, Head of Department (Biotechnology), from FoAS. The second runner-up is Chan Kian Hao, a student from the School of Nursing with a collection of 5.3 kg of used beverage cartons. The consolation prize winners were Lee Yuen Shin and Tan Wenn Fei, students of the Centre for Pre-U Studies (A-level) with a collection of 2.5kg each.

A total of 100kg of used beverage and food packages were collected during the Carton Collection Competition this year. This reflects a steady increase since the annual Competition was first supported by UCSI in September 2013. The inaugural competition collected 10kg of used beverage cartons, increasing to 20kg last year. The Competition is the flagship event under the CAREton Project



@ UCSI University, which supports Tetra Pak's collaboration with Nestlé to recycle used beverage cartons into roofing tiles. The tiles will then be used by non-governmental organisation – EPIC Homes – to construct homes for Orang Asli families in need.

"The Competition is one of our efforts to help Tetra Pak build homes for Orang Asli families and encourage the practice of cartons recycling among the community," explained Teoh Ai Ni, Assistant Project Manager of the CAREton Project @UCSI University.

The BSc (Hons) Food Science with Nutrition student added that the 100kg collection was made possible by engaging the community and restaurants for their support.

"We managed to get six nearby restaurants to give us all the used cartons that they have. Besides that, we also have recycle bins around campus made especially for the collection."

UCSI is the first university in Malaysia to be a CAREton Project Family member and the collaboration was initiated by Assistant Professor Dr Crystale Lim Siew Ying, a lecturer of FOAS and the advisor of the CAREton Project @UCSI University.



UCSI supports the search for Malaysia's next shoe designer

UCSI University joined the initiative to revolutionise Malaysia's fashion industry by hosting the semi-finals of the 8th Malaysia Footwear Design Competition (MFDC). The event was held on 30 April 2015.

It is the first time a private higher education institution has been selected as a supporting partner for this prestigious event organised by the Selangor and Kuala Lumpur Shoe Industry Association. According to UCSI University Group Corporate Affairs' Vice-President Leong Sat Sing, UCSI's collaboration with the Selangor and Kuala Lumpur Shoe Industry Association is the perfect opportunity to expose the younger generation to the industry's lofty standards.

"We believe that talent must not, and cannot, only be taught. It must be challenged and given opportunity to shine," he added.

Soo Khoon Poh, Selangor and Kuala Lumpur Shoe Industry Association President said that the competition would go far to elevate Malaysia's fashion industry to greater heights.

"The MFDC is not just about discovering and nurturing young talents," he said. "This competition is all necessary and important to keep the universities and industry in sync, to introduce students to the business and benefit the growth of the country."

The MFDC has received over 70 entries from institutions of higher learning from all over the country and UCSI is well represented with 10 entries. The competition is part of the larger KL artREKA Festival 2015 that aims to provide a platform for local talents to showcase their creative works. Leow Yong Seang, Permanent Honorary President of Selangor and Kuala Lumpur Shoe Industry Association and Woo Sooi Peng, Vice-President of Perak Footwear Industry Association along with Nelissa Hilman, Director of Creativity & Innovation of Malaysian Footwear Manufacturers Association were among the representatives from the various associations present at the event.

The awards ceremony for both the MFDC and the De Institute of Creative Arts and Design (ICAD) mySENI 2015 Painting Competition will be held on November 28, 2015.



Linking students to dream jobs

UCSI gives students an edge with LinkedIn talk

To give students a head start in achieving their dream jobs, UCSI University organised a career talk with LinkedIn – a professional networking service that is widely believed to be the largest in the world. Titled "Discover Possibilities at LinkedIn", the talk was held on 3 March 2015 and was well received by UCSI students across all faculties.

The guest speaker was Daren Yoong, a LinkedIn relationship manager responsible for building long-term relationships with companies across South East Asia to improve the way they hire and retain talents. With his experience liaising with companies to hire the best and the brightest, Yoong shared valuable industry tips to the participants.

"Many of the employers that I have met commented on the Gen-Y's lack of enthusiasm towards their careers. The impression is that Gen-Y students want less stress or responsibility but higher pay," he said. He added that having a

strong drive will impress employers and increases the chances of being hired by promising companies.

Yoong also advised UCSI students against limiting themselves to academic achievements only.

"Employers want to hire well-rounded individuals and not just graduates who only mastered their majors in university."

The talk was enthusiastically received by participants, who voiced their satisfaction towards the event. According to BSc (Hons) Finance and Investment student Leevya Geethanjali, UCSI does a great job of organising talks such as this as it gives her more insight on how to transition from student to working professional.

"The talk was certainly useful as I was able to understand LinkedIn better and how it can help me to achieve my dream career. I am going to open an account once I get back home!" she said.



A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY

By **OOI PEI BOON**, Senior Director, Student Affairs & Alumni Division



Life as a university student can be challenging as you experience a major life transition. This involves changes such as leaving the familiar comforts of home to live with total strangers. From having a textbook assigned to you to needing to download your own notes and books. In addition to being independent, you are required to work in teams and subsequently, deal with the social and cultural differences of various team members.

All these may be challenging but your university life is a microcosm of the working world. Take this chance because as a student, you are allowed to make mistakes and learn from them.

University life is completely different from your secondary school life. In the university, you are given the platform to discover and unleash your own potential. You are challenged to think out of the box. You are no longer confined to just classroom learning but you are expected to integrate what you have learned into practice and most importantly, use what you have learned in your engagement with the community.

Your knowledge is truly tested when you undergo industry placement through our Co-Op Education Placement Programme (Co-Op). For two months of every academic year, you will work with industry experts and you will learn from them. Eventually, you will develop a professional identity within your own field. There are various stages in the university life and Lin (2010) discusses it in the Counselling Psychology Quarterly – an international journal. In his article, he divides the university experience into seven stages –

- 1) different phases of university life,
- 2) academic performance,
- 3) career preparation,
- 4) extracurricular experience,
- 5) interpersonal relation,
- 6) impact of the environment and
- 7) self-development.

In this issue, the topic of discussion surrounds the different phases of the university life. In the beginning of your university life, without realising it, you may allow yourself to be involved in many activities. You are excited about signing up for clubs and wanting to be part of the committee. You volunteer for any event that can be a platform to showcase your talents.

However, your core responsibility as a student is to ensure that you graduate on time and also with good grades. Academic achievement should be given top priority even as you attempt to expand your horizon through new experiences. The key to a holistic university life begins with a “B” – Balance. Always be mindful of how you spend your time. Are you dedicating too much of your time to extracurricular activities? Are your grades affected? Are you too focused on something to the extent of losing touch with what is happening around you?

Your body will tell you when you are stressed and coping beyond what you can and should. Some of the physical signs of stress are trouble sleeping, losing concentration, and being easily irritated. You start to miss deadlines and group discussions. You start to ponder about your academic performance. These are indicators that you NEED to reach out to seek help. Counsellors, lecturers and friends are there for you. Reach out to them.

Before you know it, time goes by and wow – you are now a senior in your university. What you have learned will help you prepare for life after graduation. Naturally, you will be curious about the compensation and benefits your seniors have received for their work. You will ponder if you could get the same benefit, if

not better. When it comes to compensation and benefits from your first job, it is vital to start right. In this, your Co-Op education experience becomes vital. Through this, you have the opportunity to build a good network with external parties and start to work on your own portfolio – one that is impressive and convincing to your dream employer.

Like many of our students, you may be offered a permanent job continuing from your internship if you manage to impress your internship employer. In-demand traits include punctuality, willingness to learn, good interpersonal skill and good academic results (at least As & Bs in your transcript).

Having said that, life is like an empty canvas, and your time at university takes up a large portion of that. What legacy your university life leaves, is up to you. Just remember that you are never alone into this journey and the University provides you with various support channels – be it academically or emotionally.

Some of our popular workshops focus on goal setting, stress management, how to say NO, and finding your learning style. All these will help you understand yourself better and



enhance your knowledge and skills while maintaining a positive attitude when facing the challenges of work. In UCSI, our goal is to provide you, our students, with a positive and diverse experience. This means equipping you with the nine UCSI Graduate Attributes, which are; communication skills, creative and critical thinking abilities, ethical and civic responsibility, knowledge of disciplines, interpersonal skills, lifelong learning, knowledge to be a global citizen, leadership as well as entrepreneurship and management skills. Your university journey is an exciting and challenging one, but it can be your launch pad to greater things.



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HOLIDAY CAN GO.**



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