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Dr Ganeshsree

On *Life and Learning*

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UCSI Medical Outreach Programme (UCSIMOP) + *The Parcel Box Project*



Children during the teeth brushing session.

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give", Winston Churchill, former British Prime Minister once said.

Holding to the sole purpose of giving out of goodwill, UCSI University's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and UCSI Medical Students' Association (UCSI MedicSA) have been actively involved in various outreach programmes throughout the years.

In 2017, UCSI University launched its very first outreach programme in collaboration with Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) at Kampung Orang Asli Temuan, Sungai Buloh and the response was overwhelming and positive.

This year in conjunction with the Asian Medical Student Association (AMSA) Malaysia Health Day 2019, UCSI MedicSA, AMSA and the Faculty of Medicine, UiTM once again collaborated and organised another outreach programme - the UCSI Medical Outreach Programme (UCSIMOP). The theme was "AMSA Malaysia Health Day 2019: What About Us? - Inclusivity in Healthcare".

The Programme was chaired by UCSI's representative for AMSA Magdalene Lee Ming Hwei, with Professor Dr Hoh Boon Peng as the advisor.

Health care accessibility is one of the important components in achieving an adequate and equitable health care system in any country. It is shown that geographical location, income and age played big roles as accessibility determinants to the primary health care system.

There is an inequity which relates to the doctor-population ratio in the urban and rural areas. The disparity of health care access in rural and low-income communities are also most likely due to unaffordable medical treatment.

Owing to this challenge, the organising committees of the UCSIMOP attempted to provide medical health care to the communities with lower socio-economical status that are inhabiting the Klang Valley area.

Under this initiative, health screenings and health education were provided for the community members. Additionally, the participating organising committees went from house to house to distribute items of need.

The donation campaign called 'The Parcel Box Project' targeted the community in Kampung Orang Asli Bukit Lagong. Items such as food, clothes, school supplies, sanitary items and toys were donated by staff and students of UCSI University.

The Parcel Box Project chaired by Natasha Tsen Pei Pei, UCSI's Public Health officer for AMSA and guided by UCSI MedicSA club advisor Associate Professor Dr Cheah Shiau Chuen, was carried out throughout the month of October 2019.

A total of 52 boxes filled to the brim with donated items were sorted and given to the 52 participating families. Meanwhile, each participating child were given school supplies and toys packed into the school bags.



Dr Rafezah and Dr Kyu Kyu Win helping to draw blood from the villagers.



UCSIMOP committees and children of Kampung Orang Asli Bukit Lagong.

The UCSIMOP took place on 24 November 2019 at the community hall of Kampung Orang Asli Bukit Lagong and was divided into three sub-events: health screening, educational talk, lucky draw session and a distribution of the goods and donations.

Counters and booths were set up inside the community hall to accommodate the health screening segment in which the villagers participated in various screening tests such as waist to hip ratio measurement, BMI measurement, blood pressure test and blood glucose level test.

UCSI's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Basic Medical Sciences head of department Associate Professor Dr Kyu Kyu Win and Dr Thuhairah Abdul Rahman as well as Dr Rafezah Razali both from the Faculty of Medicine, UiTM helped in conducting blood tests for all participants.

Dr Thuhairah counselled the villagers on how important it is to be responsible for their health. Meanwhile, dentistry students from Padjadjaran University, Indonesia, Wong Weng Shung and Leena Losheene Vijaya Kumar together with UCSI Year 4 Medical degree student Su Yik Peng shared their knowledge through two separate talks called "The

Importance of Dental Hygiene" and "What is Dengue? - Awareness and Prevention Methods".

The programme later continued with a question and answer session where participants who managed to answer the questions correctly were awarded with prizes. In addition, a lucky draw session was carried out for the villagers in which the grand prize worth up to RM200 was presented. Lastly, all the donated items were then distributed to families in accordance to the family census.

With the success of the UCSIMOP, AMSA UCSI is looking forward to officiating this into an annual event and planning more community service projects in the near future. It is hoped that excellent primary health care and social

services will be provided to communities with lower socio-economical status through the Programme. Education and awareness of the importance of immunisations among the communities will be emphasised to prevent future potential outbreaks of communicable diseases such as measles.

It is believed that long term collaborations between governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations will be the successful determinants of this project as constant and continuous positive impact is the key in creating health care awareness in our society.

*By Nivasheini a/p Saravana Ganesalingam
(UCSI Year 2 Medical degree student)*



One of the volunteers from UCSI MedicSA checking the blood glucose level of a fellow villager.

CORRECTION

We would like to apologise for errors made in the Gazette Volume 23, page 05, column 2 paragraph 5 in the article "Harmony Moments". The corrected paragraph should read:

He is the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) Founding President and current Senior Fellow, the Islamic World Academy of Sciences (IAS) Founding Fellow, The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) Fellow, the Kryghyz Republic Academy of Sciences Honorary Fellow and the Chair of the Organising Committee of the 'Dialog Rakyat for National Cohesion & Unity'.

Professor Tajuddin Receives 7th Civil Society Award



UCSI University's School of Architecture and Built Environment Professor Dr Mohd Tajuddin Mohd Rasdi was recently selected as one of three winners of the 7th Civil Society Award 2019 by the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall.

He received the award mainly as a result of two of his books entitled 'Not The Islam I Know' and 'Rethinking Malaysia – Politics, Extremism and Education'. A synopsis of the first book describes it as a reflection about Islam in the present time from the perspective of a Muslim academic, a Malaysian and a Malay. It is a journey of self-discovery related to the meaning of religious life, spirituality and the place of Islam in the context of human civilisation, history, architecture and politics.

From this synopsis, it is evident how Tajuddin peels off cultural, racial, institutional, political and educational layerings of the concept of Islam as a way of life. To the author's simple understanding, the great religious traditions like Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism provide a picture of Man standing as equal to any other regardless of race, social status or economic measures. This publication hopes to inspire reflection, not condemnation, of the practices, values and attitudes about Islam in modern society.

A review of the second book describes it as a collection of writings from Professor Tajuddin in a period of political change and turmoil in the aftermath of Malaysia's 14th General Election. The review goes on to note that in a time of hope and renewal, as well as of increasing conservatism and extremism, the book features Professor Tajuddin's personal and honest musings about issues of religion, politics, and education in relation to Malaysia's ongoing project of nation-building.

The review ends by summarising the book as Professor Tajuddin's call for a process of nation-building which is inclusive of all races, religions and regions and which produces a



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Date: 10/12/2019

Dr. Mohd. Tajuddin Bin
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Pay To: 达祖丁拉斯迪教授

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► Professor Tajuddin is one of three winners of the 7th Civil Society Award.



Professor Tajuddin has written on the topic of Islam as well as other current controversial issues.

meaningful Malaysian identity, as well as a call for all religions to work together to produce a more prosperous, just and inclusive nation for future generations.

It comes as no surprise then that Professor Tajuddin is a proponent of getting communities together and strongly believes that Malaysians should be awarded for fighting for the civil rights of the people.

In 2019 alone, Professor Tajuddin has written for six major Malaysian media and is cited for “daring to speak against religious extremism”, even against Malays in terms of corruption. He says that derogatory names and terms should not be used according to Prophet Muhammad.

“I am personally pleased to receive the award. I believe that research is important in academia to solve major problems and not for self-glorification. Research should be conducted to propagate knowledge and action,” he said.

Generally, Professor Tajuddin’s two books address irresponsible politicians and the ignorant mass. Moreover, he asserts that the media is a platform for change in a democratic society. Most importantly, he says that one should change himself or herself before attempting to change others and that academics should be able to understand pertinent issues that deal with a moderate and progressive Islam. Tajuddin strongly opposes the narrow perspective of Islamic framework.

“We need to come out of our shells and seminar halls and be enlightened and awakened individuals. We need to question the fabric of society for the betterment of society itself,” he said.

“As far as UCSI University is concerned, there must be the freedom to engage in nation-building issues. Measurements such as KPIs of lecturers should incorporate new ones which are more impactful to society,” he remarked.

In his opinion there should be more forums, more books and more media involvement. Writing should be more impactful and redefined. Academics should be trained to be critical and clear. Malaysians, as a whole, should be able to adopt, adapt and accommodate.

Undoubtedly, Professor Tajuddin has made his mark in academia as well as civil society in his somewhat controversial writings including the popular “A Meaningless Merdeka” which addresses the state of affairs in the nation and the questioning of freedom itself.

He is recognised as an open-minded Malay Muslim elite that can support structural reforms of society in new era Malaysia. One example of Professor Tajuddin attempting to break racial stereotypes is found in one of his articles, which as he puts it, “serves as a reminder to my many Malay friends and relatives that what they think they know about

the Chinese is simply false – images and constructs created by unscrupulous politicians, questionable religious leaders and their own arrogance and ignorance.”

“I lived among the Chinese and I never felt any anger towards me, nor did they cause me to fear them. This article is meant to put some questions and thoughts to Malay society in this country. What does it mean when a small Malay boy in a sea of Chinese students goes through five years of schooling without once being bullied or having a racist word uttered against him?” he asked.

“Where is this hatred coming from? Is it from politicians in UMNO, PAS, their ustazs or perhaps from their own stupidity, arrogance and malice about a society they think they know a lot about but truly have not the faintest idea at all? If only they had lived a few years among the Chinese like I did,” he said.

Professor Tajuddin studied in the US where he embarked on a self-study of religions and read many books on the sayings of Buddha, the New Testament of the Bible, the Bhagavad Gita and the Tao Te Ching. He also read books by Muslims like Abul a’la Maududi, Sayyid Qutb and Ali Shariati.

“Before I answered the call for Islamic Reformation, I had a grounding in other faiths. My reading has convinced me of the universality of all faiths. And as a Muslim, Islam to me was an open and tolerant religion based on my reading of the five books of the hadith and three Quranic interpretations,” he said in one of his articles.

“Thus, I have no problems with going to a church for tea with the Christian community, sitting and eating with those of other faiths, and even listening to sermons and lectures of others about their religions,” he added.

“It boggles my mind that some Muslims are frightened of crosses, words of ‘Allah’ in Malay, and Christian sermons preaching simple and universal values expounded by Jesus. That many of those shouting Christianisation are academics, triples the boggling of my mind,” he remarked.

Professor Tajuddin’s urge to avoid complacency has resonated in the lives of many. Thus, as he puts it, change must come from within and with this comes a better life, a better vision and better hope for the future.

Embrace China December 5, 2019

In commemorating the 45th anniversary of Malaysia-China diplomatic relations, UCSI University co-hosted a Musical Variety Show "Embrace China" from Jiangmen, Guangdong jointly with The Malaysia-China Silk Route Business Chamber and the Malaysian National ZTE Foundation at its Kuala Lumpur Campus. It was a fest of art and culture including songs, acrobatic performances, a magic show, Sichuan face-changing opera and other amazing acts.

Rumah Charis Children Visit UCSI University December 16, 2019

46 children from Rumah Charis visited UCSI University for a half day of food, fun, games and a little bit of learning. Essentially, the event was held for UCSI staff and students to engage with the community, especially underprivileged children promoting the mindset that "we are all equal" despite our different backgrounds.

MoU Signing between UCSI and ICAN December 30, 2019

The signing ceremony was between UCSI Group CEO and founder Dato' Peter Ng and YAM Tunku Dato' Seri Zain Al-Abidin Ibni Tuanku Muhriz. Six of UCSI's programmes will be offered at the College:

- Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons)
- Bachelor of Nursing (Hons)
- Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Biotechnology
- Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Food Science with Nutrition
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Business Administration
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Marketing

**Orientation Day** December 30, 2019

A day of new beginnings and endless possibilities for students to realise their true potential in academics as well as community and social involvement. Welcome new students and all the best in your future endeavours!

Testimonies of Students from Telkom University, Indonesia

"UCSI University, to be fair, has exceeded my expectations. I wish I could have stayed a little longer so that I could explore deeper and get to know more about UCSI. However, the little time I had here was spectacular; from the hospitality, the bright and friendly students to the helpful international office staff. The marvellous and brilliant lecturers as well as speakers were all so insightful and played a significant role in shaping my personal goals. My most delightful moment was the chance to meet the founder of UCSI Group and hearing first-hand his journey of becoming what he is today. I couldn't wish for anything more."

By Ayuba Jobarteh



"Thank you UCSI! If we have a chance to come again, we would definitely come in a heartbeat!"

By Natalia Violi (second from left) and Maria Laurantcia (third from left)

"My friends and I are so excited to be here. Since day one, we have been guided patiently by able staff with commendable enthusiasm. I loved the lecturers that embraced us and took time off their busy schedules to speak and share their insights that transformed our lives. They not only taught us theory, but also shared their experiences and tips in doing business and in entrepreneurship. We feel lucky to have received such knowledge. My main take away from the whole event was the advice not be shy (as we usually are) and to make the best of the time we have in the university to shape a bright future for ourselves."

By Daniel Alexander Polli (right)



"It's been a great experience visiting UCSI, experiencing new stuff like recording and learning new material from the speaker. I had a good time in this programme."

By Noval Nur Alif



"My group and I were delighted and excited to experience creating a project first-hand in UCSI."

By Richard Putra Sudiasa (left)

UCSI Gives Back to The Community



UCSI Group Corporate Affairs Vice-President, Leong Sat Sing (first from left) and UCSI University's event co-ordinator, Lucas Lim (second from right) with the occupants of Persatuan Rumah Caring Kajang.

Christmas is a time when we look forward to presents, decorations, great food and happy times. It is when we share the joy of togetherness and the peace that the season brings. Images of Santa Claus, reindeer and snowmen may fill our minds while Christmas carols, Christmas trees and turkey dinners pervade in our homes. But Christmas is certainly more than just this. One of the most important aspects of this season is goodwill toward mankind.

Hence, we must be aware of the people around us, what kind of situations they are facing and whether they need help of any kind. Then, we need to do our part, however small, in making their lives a little better. Whether it be through gifts, spending a bit of our time with them or wishing them a friendly 'Merry Christmas', you never know when your little demonstration of love will change their lives.

While all the good things about Christmas should not be forgotten, it's important also to realise that Christmas isn't just about 'ripping' that wrapping paper open on Christmas morning, but about being kind to others. Investing a little time or money in giving some charitable Christmas gifts is a great way to underline the true meaning of Christmas.

In contrast, for some people, Christmas can be a time of sorrow. There is no money to spend on presents for the family and friends. Furthermore, many are sad when their loved ones cannot make it home for Christmas. Some are alone and don't feel wanted.

In a world where 'time and tide waits for no man', our lives are cluttered with things to do and people to see. We lead busy lives and seldom have the time to think about those in need. However, a pocketful of spare change or a few hours of our time can make a big difference in the lives of others. This is a great time of year to introduce some sweet Christmas traditions that involve giving to those less fortunate or helping charities, all while making it a fun part of the build-up to Christmas.

The UCSI-SDG Sayangi campaign was established with a sole purpose in mind – to put a smile on the faces of over 100 children from community homes and bring them good cheer.

This campaign saw homes for these financially disadvantaged children and orphans receiving gifts and essentials from UCSI Group as part of the Group's efforts in giving back to the community.



Four charity homes in Cheras and Kajang, namely Persatuan Rumah Sayangan, Bodhi Homecare, Rainbow Home, and Persatuan Rumah Caring Kajang, were selected in the Group's campaign titled "Gifts of Love and Care".

The one-month long campaign saw staff and students contributing to a wish list from over 100 children who desired all kinds of gifts ranging from bags, clothes, toys, essentials to electronic items.

The wishes were collected by the committee from the UCSI-SDG Sayangi Campaign in November before putting them each on a wish list card. The wish cards were then displayed at the foyer of UCSI University's new Block G during the campaign period for students and staff to pick a card, buy and deliver the chosen gift at a designated counter.

This campaign is in accordance with the promotion of Goal 17 of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal that aims to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalisation of global partnership for sustainable development.

UCSI revolves around the notion of a purposeful journey. As such, connecting with the community and espousing sustainable goals for a prosperous and an equitable future are some efforts the Group and its subsidiaries strive for.

Recently, UCSI University held a beach cleaning initiative at Damai Central in Kuching, Sarawak. The drive that was held in partnership with Reef Check Malaysia included over 40 RCE Kuching Youth Ambassadors and staff.



A joyful time of singing carols.



Honouring and Enjoying One's Vocation

Ikigai moments with Margaret Soo – Director, Centre for Languages

(Note: The word "ikigai" is explained in the article)



Margaret Soo receiving the "National Outstanding Educator Award – Highly Commendable" in 2019.

When did you start your career at UCSI University? Please describe your transition to becoming the director of the Centre for Languages.

I first joined UCSI University in 2010 as Chief Operating Officer (COO) to establish the UCSI Foundation which is now called the UCSI University Trust. I was also the COO for Alumni Relations. My responsibilities were to unite the alumni and set up a foundation to raise endowment funds for students' scholarships; but due to the urgent need at that time to organise the University's 25th Anniversary celebration I was roped into also taking up the position of Vice-President, Group Corporate Affairs. I held those three portfolios for two years, and since the demands of the job was taking a toll on my health, I decided to go to our Terengganu campus to help set up an English teaching function where I taught some first year courses at the School of Education. That led me to do what I am doing now upon returning to Kuala Lumpur's main campus one year later. I set up the Centre for Languages in January 2014 and have been the Centre's director for what is now the seventh year.

How would you describe your journey as an academician in the field of English language teaching?

I am an accidental academic. Beyond teaching preparatory English to selected government scholars at Institut Teknologi MARA (ITM) upon returning from Canada in the mid 80's, I had never planned for a career teaching English at the tertiary level. I first qualified in English Literature and Linguistics and had postgraduate credentials in educational administration and TESOL – I was trained to be a high school principal! My strength has always been in general management, having served the Malaysian Institute of Management (MIM) for twenty years before joining UCSI. When the offer came for me to start and manage a language teaching function for the University, I put my best foot forward. I still wish I could do more teaching as I enjoy the dynamics in a classroom.

What excites you the most in your career?

Being on an international university campus! I am basically a campus person – I like interacting with students and professors, especially international students and staff from other parts of the world. Having been a foreign student most of my life, I hope to stay within the same environment with global citizens where the purpose is towards academic pursuit and international development. You can say that being with students makes me feel younger and being with academics keeps me humble. I have so much to learn from everybody every day.

What motivates you to keep going?

My work! People say if you enjoy your work you don't have to work a day in your life – this best describes me when it comes to my attitude towards work; once I am "in the flow" I can really be tinkering away happily and be very focused. Nothing excites me more than a productive day at work! **The Chinese call this mental state jing ye le ye (敬业乐业) – respect and enjoy your vocation while the Japanese call this ikigai (生き甲斐) – having a reason to get up in the morning.** The Vice-Chancellor's clarion call for standard keeps me awake and my small academic team as well as over 3,000 students who need my direction give me the compulsion to be at work. I call my direct reports my A team – an amoeba-sized team of active people high in the affective domain. They are my backbone at work.

Please elaborate on your A Team.

Taking the "A" from "Affective domain" which is one of the original three domains in Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning, I encourage my teachers to stay focused on this learning domain when teaching English to students from more than 100 nationalities and backgrounds. Students, wherever they come from, have values, attitudes, feelings, learning habits, hopes and fears as well as different levels of motivation; if teachers are sensitive about these affective functions they could usually develop better interpersonal relationships with their young charges using positive emotional intelligence. **Teachers who love themselves and their students often lead successful classes.**

The manners in which language teachers receive and respond to students emotionally could often determine the learning outcome. To me, second language acquisition is a lot less cognitive and a lot more affective. **Just like toddlers learning to speak or comprehending their mother tongue, second language learners need emotional scaffolding to succeed, and the teacher's job is to provide that.**

What advice do you have to people who want to teach English?

Aside from getting the necessary academic qualifications you must first ask yourself if teaching language suits your temperament – many people think that they can take up teaching of English as a profession or as a part-time job in retirement, but when they start interacting with students from a different linguistic background, they often find it difficult to impart what comes easily to them but not to the students. Learning a foreign language takes time and **teaching English to speakers of other languages requires empathy, tons of patience and a love for bridging cross-cultural understanding.**

What do you do in your leisure time?

I am a chartered member of a Rotary e-Club based in Tokyo where I last attended graduate school and a trustee of Khind Starfish Foundation (KSF). These two social engagements allow me to serve the larger society through my vocation and using my own sphere of influence. Aside from Rotary and KSF, I am a supporter of and regular donor to the National Kidney Foundation, Hospis Malaysia, Cancerlink Foundation and now War On Cancer, another initiative to help cancer patients. I am grateful to be able to do good while working full time at the university.

How has UCSI impacted your life and career?

UCSI is a very resilient organisation. From humble beginnings to now being ranked as the top private university in Malaysia it is led by a set of four strong core values: **Audacity, Perseverance, Excellence and Integrity.** Amongst these four founding values I have learnt to respect the word "Perseverance" – I have become more resilient and tenacious in my daily pursuit. I do not give up easily on what I believe is good and worthy of doing. UCSI has taught me this and I am grateful for that.

Finally, to what or whom do you attribute your success?

Everyone around me – my A Team, my students, my supervisors and colleagues at work and Rotarians all over the world who gave me two international postgraduate scholarships. They have come into my life to bless me with so much that I can only repeat what I always say: "A child who is raised in love will always be loving and affectionate." It's been a great journey and I am grateful.



Margaret Soo has learned to be perseverant, not giving up easily in what is good and worthy.

mySENI 2019

painting competition



Dato' Mohd Yusof Ahmad examining one of the participant's artwork at the exhibition for mySENI 2019 Painting Competition.

UCSI University recently hosted the mySENI 2019 Painting Competition to encourage students in expressing their ideals of "going green" to ensure a sustainable, prosperous and equitable future.

The competition also allowed for the identification of young Malaysian students who can demonstrate artistic excellence in Visual Arts. The campaign themed "Green City" was held in accordance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at UCSI University, KL Campus.

A total of 40 finalists were shortlisted in the slightly more than two-month long annual campaign. Jeannie Tew won the grand prize that came in the form of a UCSI Bursary worth RM10,000, RM2,000 in cash and a certificate of participation.

"I feel incredible, especially receiving recognition in a competition of this scale. It is a big encouragement for my artwork to be recognised by professionals," said the 18-year-old from Hin Hua High School, Klang.

"My inspiration for my drawing came from having a balanced ecological, economic and social need to ensure a clean, healthy and safe environment for all members of society and new generations to come," she added.

Moreover, her drawing depicted how a sustainable green city works where green infrastructure can be applied including characteristics of the city meeting with nature, restoring values of urban ecosystem, minimising resource and energy consumption as well as taking advantage of the ecosystem service.

Besides Jeannie, prizes were given to the first runner-up, the second runner-up and five others as consolation prize winners. Each winner walked home with bursaries and scholarships from UCSI, as well as cash prizes from event partner, Guocoland. UCSI allocated a total of RM735,000 in bursaries and scholarships for the event.

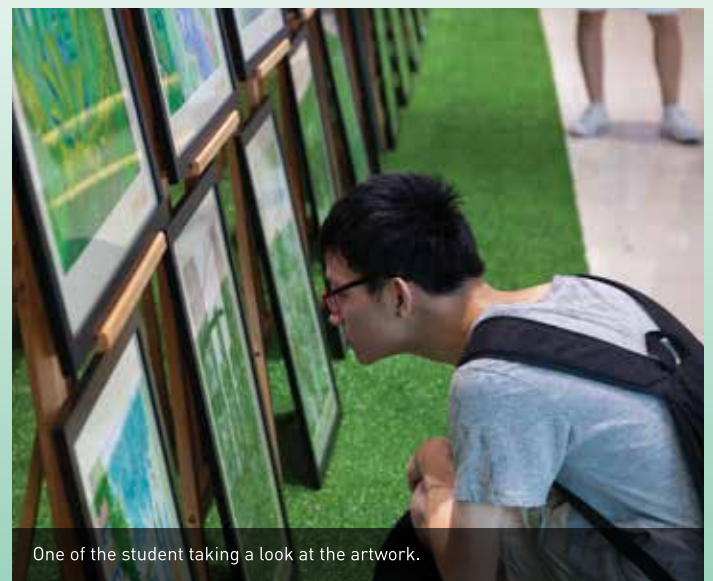
The ceremony was attended by former director-general of The National Art Galley Malaysia Dato' Mohd Yusof Ahmad, UCSI Group Corporate Affairs Vice-President Leong Sat Sing and De Institute of Creative Arts and Design (ICAD) director Assistant Professor Dr Khairul Azril Ismail.

Mohd Yusof described the event as a meaningful competition that acknowledged the artistic talents of the younger generation, especially in articulating their ideas and ideals of the country.

According to Mohd Yusof, youths, comprising 1.8 billion of the world's 7.2 billion population are the assets to develop a brighter and better future for a country. A special edition of the United Nations Creative Economy Report by UNESCO and the United Nations Development Programme indicated that the world trade of creative goods and services amounted to more than USD600 billion in 2018. These creative goods and services include arts, design, music and advertising amongst others.

"I am hopeful that amongst all the young talents here today, we have those who will highlight Malaysia's name on the world map through their creative talents. Congratulations to UCSI and ICAD for going a step further in shaping the minds of the younger generation and future leaders through education," he added.

Meanwhile, director of ICAD Assistant Professor Dr Khairul Azril Ismail stated that the mySENI 2019 painting competition shares the aspiration of bringing people together with common interests apart from acknowledging different perspectives from different groups of people.



One of the student taking a look at the artwork.



Students' creative expressions through painting.

"The best part is to observe these works; and realise that these students have big ideas and want to explore further. These thoughts, if properly channelled, can lead to much more innovative creations," he said.

"I am sure each one of us loves art and if we cannot actually give life to anything on canvas we can at least appreciate it. We, at ICAD believe that Arts and Design activities help transform ideas into values and link creativity to innovation and production. We are looking forward to developing future creative generations," Dr Azril added.

"One of the aims of the competition is to contribute to the revitalisation and the natural intuitive nature for these youngsters of the future in visual delights and fantasies; by discovering new artists in them, fostering their talents and in the mean time promoting the nurture of creative practice as an extension of their persona," he remarked.

Dr Azril said that art teaches people to see using their imagination, to think in one's own path, to admire life that is here and for what will be, to enjoy every day and pass this joy to others through artwork. It teaches not to be afraid and not to imitate but to realise one's own identifiable personal self.

"A single picture can paint a thousand words. For this reason, the mySENI 2019 Painting Competition is an important avenue for us to hear and see - as well as be amazed - at what our young Malaysian school students are capable of," said mySENI competition chairperson Lucas Lim.

Moving on to next year, he added that the mySENI 2020 Painting Competition entitled "Malaysian Landscape" will emphasise the beauty of the country.

"I am hoping for these young artists to share their creative and extravagant ideas in promoting Malaysia as a tourist destination in the Visit Malaysia 2020 campaign," he said.

Besides Hin Hua High School, other participating schools were Keat Hwa Private High School, Kedah, SMK Kepong, Kuala Lumpur, SMJK San Min, Perak, SMK Arau, Perlis, SMJK Katholik, Selangor and Chung Hwa High School, Muar, Johor.

Overall, the competition brought out the best in the young artists and showcased their unique talents in coming up with creative and captivating artwork. UCSI University will continue to have similar events to encourage and motivate youth to blossom in their capacities as artists.



Dato' Mohd Yusof Ahmad during his opening remarks for the mySENI 2019 Painting Competition Awards Ceremony.



Dr Ganeshsree

On Life and Learning



Dr Ganeshsree finds her job challenging and exciting.

With Associate Professor Dr Ganeshsree Selvachandran, it is all about numbers and Mathematics. She is straightforward and to-the-point. When she first started out in her postgraduate studies, her main interest was in pure mathematics, which means that she loved to pour over things such as mathematical theorems and algebraic expressions rather than dwell on computations and applications of mathematics in practical aspects.

Dr Ganeshsree was appointed deputy dean of UCSI University's Faculty of Business and Information Science in November 2017 and she has not looked back ever since. Her career at UCSI began in January 2014 when she was a lecturer and then became an Assistant Professor in 2015 and an Associate Professor in 2017. Currently, she is also the Faculty's Head of Research.

"I find my job challenging and exciting. Teaching itself is exciting because you get to mingle with students but it can be monotonous. Being deputy dean, no day is ever the same and each day brings with it new challenges. Sometimes things go smoothly but of course difficult situations and problems crop up sometimes and this is where you have to step up and work together with the dean and

the rest of the management team to solve the problems," she said.

When asked who she attributes her success to, she mentioned her parents and good mentors. According to her, Professor Dr Ooi Keng Boon who is the dean of the Faculty helped her by sharing a lot when it came to research, publishing papers, applying for grants as well as climbing up the career ladder. She said that he shared a lot of his experiences as well with her.

Dr Ganeshsree has always been interested in numbers so it was a natural decision for her after Form Six to pursue Mathematics. Subsequently, she obtained her Bachelors and Master's degree as well as her PhD from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

After attending many career talks as a student, she realised that in the corporate sector, she could not pursue her love in Mathematics because everything is automated and the mathematical component cannot be clearly seen and she would not be able to pursue research in mathematics. During her final year as an undergraduate, she found that she liked doing research and was told she had a 'knack' for it. That was when she decided to go into

academia and pursued her Master's degree right after her undergraduate degree.

What excites her most about the field is that one can never know enough as the field is constantly evolving. Every time one reads a paper, there is more to be learnt. She also got the chance to venture into new areas such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning and evolutionary computing.

"The beauty of it is that in any piece of research there is always the component of Mathematics. I became versatile where I even explored areas such as medical diagnosis, concrete manufacturing, environmental forecasting and the impact of generational change in the running and sustainability of businesses," she said.

"With Mathematics, you can go anywhere. I love that there is never a dull moment. It keeps you on your toes. In this field, you cannot be complacent. I have to constantly read to keep up-to-date with the developments in my field. If you stop reading for a few months, something big might happen and you might miss it," she added.

As for her areas of expertise, Dr Ganeshsree says that it has been a transition from algebraic and hyperalgebraic theory and theoretical study of fuzzy sets (pure mathematics) to fuzzy logic, AI, machine learning and evolutionary computing. She comments that AI is now very prevalent where one may read about developments in the field where people are doing brilliant things; the kind of things you would only see in the movies. She also says there are lots more things to be explored and many of these are being used in our daily lives without us even being aware of it.

To date, Dr Ganeshsree has published 58 papers consisting of 44 journal articles, 3 book chapters and 11 conference papers, from the year 2010 to present.

As for her current projects, one of them has to do with developing an AI system that uses fuzzy logic for the automated detection of diabetic retinopathy. This involves retinal scans where the blood vessels and spots that appear in the retina are examined and algorithms are created to detect abnormalities in the eye.



Dr Ganeshsree says that you need to have passion in what you do.

Machine learning is used to train the AI system in which retinal scans are input into the system to facilitate the learning process of the system, after which the AI would be able to detect signs or symptoms of diabetic retinopathy in any given retinal scan.

When asked about what motivates her to keep going, she says it is her love for Mathematics and research. "I love to study and doing research, to me, is like studying. It is something that excites me because I honestly believe that if you have no passion in that specific area, you are not going to last long," she said.

In terms of how UCSI has impacted her life and career, Dr Ganeshsree says "...in a lot of ways". She says that the good thing about UCSI is the fact that there are so many people with expertise in research; very experienced people and very inspirational people from whom she has learnt a lot and many of whom have really helped mentor her.

"My advice to students who would like to pursue a career in business or any other area for that matter, is to ask themselves how much they like doing what they do. Two important things are passion and talent. It must be a combination of both. With these two elements, you can succeed in any field," she remarked.

According to her, to succeed in the field, one must be dynamic, have a good attitude, be disciplined and have good soft skills. With good soft skills you will go a long way, she said, adding that employers these days value these more than just paper qualifications.

"My journey as an academican in this field has been very good so far. I am progressing well and am on track. I have to attribute this to the

conducive atmosphere in UCSI – the environment, the people I work with and the direction of the university as a whole," she said.

"You can have the passion but if you are in a place not conducive for R&D, it is hard to succeed. If people are just happy being where they are, not dynamic and focused on teaching alone, you can't go very far. It is a blessing to be at UCSI because there are many people who are very established in research who are there to guide and mentor you, provide linkages, networking and collaboration opportunities as well as opportunities of grants, awards and publications. All staff should utilise these opportunities to the fullest to progress in their careers," she added.

Dr Ganeshsree revealed that during her leisure time, she likes to watch TV and see movies especially romantic comedies and super hero movies. She likes to read too but, she says, she doesn't get the chance to do much of that. She tries to finish one book by the end of every year.

The person she admittedly admires the most is Tun Mahathir. She admires his boldness, his bravery and his ability to think out-of-the-box. She describes him as being sharp and clear, extremely intelligent and having the ability to hold a dialogue with anyone without preparing beforehand. She is also reminded by him that if one wants to stay sharp, they have to read.

Her personal goals are to have a successful career and a happy personal life. Her biggest goal in life is to stay healthy her whole life.

"I am persistent and determined; if I want something, I will go all out and get it. I have a certain level of stubbornness which I stick to

because whatever decision I make, it should be on my terms. Even if it is the wrong decision, it will be my mistake. I will not let other people run my life or direct me. I do listen to people but take selective advice only. I have very strong instincts. If I don't think something is right, I will not do it."

Finally, on the topic of racism and peace, Dr Ganeshsree firmly says that she can't stand racism. Her personal opinion is to treat everyone nicely and if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say it. This, to her, solves a lot of problems. She also says that it is important to have a certain level of tolerance. She firmly believes the adage of "to each his or her own", which means that everyone has the right to make their own choices, and we should not judge others by their choices.

"Essentially, I am a peace-keeper. Issues can be solved without violence and condemnation. We can solve things through discussions like adults. Another thing is don't do anything when you are angry. Take some time to calm down first, and once the anger and frustration has dissipated, talk about it," she says.

Dr Ganeshsree has achieved a lot since her appointment as deputy dean and she continues to be an example in terms of leadership at UCSI University. Her future is bright and as she focuses on her career, it is certain that she will succeed in anything she puts her mind to.



Projects For Happiness 2019



Guests, speakers and participants at the event.

UCSI University, the collaboration partner for Khind Starfish Foundation's (KSF's) 'Projects For Happiness 2019' event, is ardent in its commitment of contributing to the community. The University has been continuously championing the UN SDGs and, moreover, is at the forefront of peace and unity advocacy.

Held on December 7, 2019, the first part of the 'Projects For Happiness' event was the student exhibition which featured 24 teams from different universities, all showcasing their projects for the benefit of society.

Present at the event in the afternoon were Director of the Academic Excellence Division from the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education Associate Professor Dr Wan Zuhainis Saad, KSF chairman Cheng Ping Keat, UCSI University's Vice-Chancellor and President Academician Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff and KSF trustee Margaret Soo.

There was also a presentation ceremony where the top three projects were announced as well as the winning project. Speakers Anas Zubedy and Yusuf Hashim each inspired the audience on changing the lives of others and making an impact in society.

In her speech, Dr Zunainis emphasised the importance of learning and teaching in the

education industry as well as the need to learn, re-learn and unlearn.

"Students have to reflect to gain understanding of topics and get a broader understanding of disciplines. One of the important skills is 'sense-making' including analytical thinking where students can expand their potential. I foresee the increase of self-directed learning as well as peer-directed learning and cyberology among others," she said.

According to Cheng Ping Keat, KSF is based on solving the needs of the community where over the last six years, it has sponsored over 125 projects.



Associate Professor Dr Wan Zuhainis Saad giving her speech.

"It is hard to decide on the top three projects as every team is a winner. But the goal is to make a difference in the life of others. Also, the students themselves improve on problem-solving skills, leadership and communication skills as well as learn from challenges and obstacles," he said.

Academician Senior Professor Khalid, in his speech, said that it is important to reflect and to think before doing anything.

"Undoubtedly, technology will expedite processes and procedures. But we cannot miss the essence, that is, the needs of the future and human beings. Have we been brought closer to each other? It seems that the keyboard has replaced the hand shake. We need to bring meaning and value to higher education. If not, we reach the tipping point of a disaster," he said.

"UCSI is taking bold steps in championing the SDGs. Hence, congratulations to KSF! We are indeed at the cusp of great change. Together we can make a difference," he concluded.

The top three projects were MindFlu from UCSI, Green Sustainable Environment: Mangrove Setting from Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia and Chicken Coop by Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.



Anas Zubedy inspiring the audience.



The audience listening attentively during the event.

The winner, project Chicken Coop, aimed at educating the Orang Asli to rear chickens for both the needs of families and also for selling purposes. However, some of the challenges they faced were the rainy season, the lack of experience and the death of Uma, the main beneficiary. Despite this, the team managed to use their project to promote sustainability.

Project MindFlu from UCSI was about creating awareness on mental illness and to stop the stereotyping on this issue, targeting teenagers and youth.

Their activities involve a volunteering programme which is a collaborative project between MindFlu and the Malaysian Mental Health Association (MMHA) aiming to bring individuals who have gone through psychiatric rehabilitation programmes back to the society and help them adapt to the working environment.

Their second activity is the Virtual Reality (VR) Programme, an interactive computer-generated experience that creates simulated environment for visual exposure. MindFlu is in the process of building their own personalised VR for depression simulation. The baseline story for their VR Project involves a day in a life of a secondary school girl named Amelia who suffers from depression. They strive to raise awareness about depression among the public and to educate them about depression by letting people see things in a different perspective.

The third activity is the UNplugged Stress Workshop which could be symbolised by an

electrical plug. Too many plugs could lead to a blow out just like how a stress overload leads to a breakdown. The "UNplugged" workshop serves as an insight on how lifestyle choices fuel stress which could lead to depression. Participants would learn how to curb or 'unplug' preventable stress factors through sharing by speakers.

"Our mission is to unite and involve youths in mental well-being advocacy and literacy. It is also to encourage social inclusion of people with mental afflictions. Throughout the duration of our advocacy the one thing that kept us going was passion," said Lee Li Ching of MindFlu.

For Li Ching and her team, even a small role can make a difference in someone's lives and whatever they do today will leave an imprint in

this world for future generations. Additionally, Li Ching said that she and her team will try their best to create a more understanding and accepting generation in terms of mental well-being.

The first speaker of the event, Anas Zubedy, is the founder of Zubedy Sdn Bhd and is a unity advocate promoting moderation. The company's goal is to "Add Value" through the management of talents and guiding Gen Y. Their campaign "Say Something Nice" rises over politics, ethnicity and other barriers and is an annual campaign that promotes unity and positivity.

"Life is a gift; people and culture are important. You need to be in touch with your internal as well as external self, perhaps through travelling. We also help with unemployed graduates - we train them in sales for six months and teach them life skills," he said.

Yusuf Hashim, known as a gypsetter (combination of a jet-setter and a gypsy), had a lot of useful and interesting information to share. He talked about leadership, where he said that one third is born, and two thirds are made. He also emphasised attributes such as honour, honesty, integrity and morality.

To him, life is a series of passages where often, there is a conflict between the inner self and the outside world. His advice to students was, "Live, don't just exist". He shared many of his adventures with the audience as well as breath-taking photos of his travels to Antarctica, Africa and Patagonia including a bike trip from Kuala Lumpur to London.

The event proved to be engaging and many students were positively impacted by the presentation of the top three teams as well as the speakers. UCSI University will continue to support causes such as these and play its part in making Malaysia a peaceful, sustainable and united nation.



UCSI's Project MindFlu is about creating awareness on mental illness.

Vancouver Summer Programme at University of British Columbia

By UCSI University Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences Outbound Students
July | August 2019



Group photo taken outside the Faculty of Forest Science.

We were glad to represent UCSI University in the Vancouver Summer Programme at the University of British Columbia (UBC) for one month. It was mostly an academic-based programme with lectures, notes, mid-terms and a final exam. Interestingly, we also had lab sessions and hands-on activities.

Some of the social events organised by the faculty were visits to Granville Island and Vancouver TheatreSports, Vancouver's only professional improvisational company where we watched a comedy which we enjoyed thoroughly. Granville Island is a peninsula shopping district and it is located across False Creek from Downtown Vancouver under the south end of the Granville Street Bridge.

We also went to the Vancouver Aquarium which is located in Stanley Park. It is the largest aquarium in Canada and one of the most visited sites in Stanley Park. Besides, it is widely respected for its research, conservation, marine animal rehabilitation and stewardship. It also incorporates professional naturalists into the galleries to interpret animal behaviours.

Then, we moved on to Stanley Park itself. Before that we went to a rental shop to rent bikes. Stanley Park is a 405-hectare public park that borders downtown Vancouver and is mostly surrounded by waters of the Burrard Inlet and English Bay. We cycled along the scenic 8.8 km Seawall that circles Stanley Park. We successfully completed the loop around the park's coastline which boasts fabulous views of the city, northern mountains, beautiful beaches, lakes, Lion's Gate Bridge,

cultural and historical landmarks. We enjoyed the scenic views of water, lakes, mountains, sky, and majestic trees along Stanley Park's famous Seawall.

We were very fortunate to be able to experience the newest teaching modalities in health education at UBC by the use of Human Patient Simulators (HPS). Here, a simulation scenario creates a software programme vignette in which nursing, medical, pharmacy and other students interact with a mannequin to practise caring for patients in a risk-free environment. The simulators manifest vital signs as well as clinical signs and symptoms such as coughing and breathing. With life-like features and responsive physiology, we are able to detect the simulator's pulse rate. Thus, this allowed us to develop critical thinking, communication and clinical skills without risk to real patients.

During the lab sessions for the subject of personalising medicines with genomics and biotechnology, we learned a lot about the buccal swab DNA. A kit was used while performing the lab sessions. The ChargeSwitch@gDNA Buccal Cell Kits allow rapid and efficient purification of genomic DNA from human buccal swabs. After preparing the lysates, you may purify DNA in less than 15 minutes using the ChargeSwitch@ Technology. Samples may be handled individually or using a liquid handling robot. The ChargeSwitch@gDNA Buccal Cell Kits are designed for isolation of genomic DNA from human buccal cell swabs or pelleted cells from a mouthwash. Samples can be stored for up to 2 weeks at 4°C before processing. The



Loading of DNA samples into the gel electrophoresis.



Demonstration of gel electrophoresis.

purified genomic DNA is suitable for use in downstream applications such as Polymerase Chain Reactions (PCRs).

After having dinner at Nelson Street one night, we moved on to the Kitsilano Beach to catch the Honda Celebration of Light 2019. The Honda Celebration of Light is an annual musical firework competition in Vancouver. The celebration is one of Vancouver's largest and most well-known festivals, and is recognised as the longest running off-shore firework competitions in the world.

We were glad to have the opportunity to visit the BRI (Biopharmaceutical Research Inc.) laboratories and animal facilities which were part of the course 'Discovery of New Medicines'. BRI is a contract research organisation (CRO) based in Vancouver, that has been providing research services such as discovery, preclinical, and clinical drug development programmes to pharmaceutical, nutraceutical and biotechnology industries in Canada, USA and Asia since 1999.

Finally, we enjoyed the farewell lunch and received the certificate of completion. We gained lots of new knowledge and experience and had lots of fun in Vancouver. We were glad to have joined this programme. We would like to express our appreciation to UCSI University's Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences for giving us the chance to join this programme and also our parents for sponsoring us.



Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto

Student Exchange Programme



Lunch at a local cafe.

From 1 to 27 July 2019, we (Gan Likee, Bong Zheng Chao, Aleen Chai Yeehui and Koh Yih Yen) from UCSI's Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences were selected to complete our Community Pharmacy Internship Programme at Universitas Muhammadiyah of Purwokerto (UMP) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

The morning after our arrival, we were introduced to the staff members from UMP's International Office and the Faculty of Pharmacy, which included Dr Agus (Faculty Dean), Dr Nunuk (Head of Professional Pharmacist Programme), Dr Didik (Head of Pharmacology Laboratory and Pharmacy Clinic) and others.

Souvenirs were exchanged as a display of partnership between UCSI University and UMP. The opening ceremony was followed by a campus tour led by Dr Nunuk where we saw many impressive facilities such as the Pharmacology Lab, Biology Lab, Organic Chemistry Lab, Pharmacy Technology Lab, Chemical Analysis Lab, Botanical Lab, and Drug Compounding Lab.

On the third, fourth and fifth day, numerous briefings were delivered by the faculty staff on the technical aspects of the community pharmacy system, the history of the Pharmacy Faculty at UMP, universal health coverage, community pharmacy internship, and laboratory work for stem cell therapeutic effect on cancerous cell research. In addition to

that, we paid a visit to a public health office in Banyumas called Dinas Kesehatan Kabupaten Banyumas, which operates solely within the field of healthcare such as monitoring the community health, food cleanliness, drug distribution, diseases treatment services and others.

On the 6th and 7th day of our stay, all four of us were sent to separate community health centres, which are mandated by the Indonesian government and serve to provide healthcare services on a sub-district level. During our visit at these respective centres, we learned the ways to prepare and fill drugs according to the prescriptions ordered by the physician on duty.

On the 8th to 17th day, we took turns to carry out our internship at Apotik Prima Farma and Apotik Patikraja. We were taught the local dialect known as NgaPak/ Banyumasan, which is widely spoken in Purwokerto. We also learned how to use both stethoscopes and sphygmomanometers to obtain patient's blood pressure value and to perform simple blood tests.

Throughout our internship at Apotek Prima Farma, we were given training on pharmaceutical care and inventory management. We also learnt self-medication assessment, the way a pharmacy operates, inventory management, documentation and pricing of incoming goods, disposal of expired drugs, and translating prescriptions.



Group photo with the pharmacist and trainees at Puskesmas Banyumas.



RCE Kuching Wins Two Recognition Awards In 2019



UCSI University, being the first private university in Malaysia to be recognised as a Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE), has made its mark yet again in championing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As such, RCE Kuching has won two Recognition Awards in the year 2019. The Award, in its eighth year, represents recognition for innovative projects on education for sustainable development within the Global RCE Networks. Its aim is to honour RCEs globally in addressing sustainable development challenges in their particular region.

RCE Kuching's 5Rs School Campaign Project won the "Acknowledged Flagship Project" category for SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production. The 5Rs (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repurpose) School Campaign Project was led by RCE Kuching Education and Programme Taskforce deputy lead coordinator, Sherrymina Kichin.

"We are absolutely delighted by the award. It recognises all of the hard work by our team and collaborators such as UCSI University, RCE Youth Ambassadors, WormingUp, National Resources and Environment Board (NREB), Governance, Art, Marketplace, Education, Sport and Social (G.A.M.E.S.) PLT and many others," said Sherrymina.

According to her, this on-going campaign is a two-year project that aims to teach young people and school students to implement the 5Rs concept in their schools and villages as to minimise the impact of pollution and dumping of waste. The 5Rs sessions were conducted once a month and the campaign comprised of three phases which were (1) Knowing phase (August 2019 - February 2020), (2) Doing phase (March 2020 - August 2020) and (3) Being phase (September 2020 - August 2021).

The campaign kickstarted in 2019 and had a total of 172 school students from three schools namely SMK Siburan, SK St Paul and SK St Bernard. Numerous ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) activities were conducted such as hands-on activities relating



Students from SK St Bernard learnt how to make 'plant pots' from recyclable materials.



The students from SK St Paul learnt how to make 'greeting cards' from recyclable materials.

to the 5Rs [i.e. creation of plant pots, birthday cards, and innovation products from recyclable materials], games (i.e. treasure hunt, quizzes), sharing or talks from numerous agencies and competitions that relate to the 5Rs concept.

Apart from that, another positive aspect of the project included preparation of a few designated areas for the 5Rs purpose by the participating schools. Hence, this showed that the campaign cultivated a positive response in increasing the 5Rs awareness as one of the ESD efforts among the young people and school students.

The RCE Kuching Sarawak River Art Competition also won the "Acknowledged Flagship Project" category for SDG 14 - Life



Painting by the champion of the Sarawak River Art competition, Ann Marie Teng May Cing.

Below Water. Led by RCE Kuching Education and Programme Taskforce lead coordinator, Francesca Enchang and officiated by the State secretary, Tan Sri Datuk Amar Mohd Morshidi at the Kuching Waterfront, the art competition (both tangible and intangible art) was aimed at gathering unique perspectives that local communities have on their rivers and their sustainability and how they can express themselves in various art forms.

"This is our first project promoting the goals of SDG 6 which is Clean Water and Sanitation and SDG 14, that is, Life Below Water. I would like to thank Sarawak Multimedia Authority (SMA) and Old Kuching Smart Heritage (OKSHe) for providing us with a total fund of RM19,500," said Francesca.

"Moreover, two of our stakeholders, the Sarawak River Board and the Natural Resources and Environment Board Sarawak also showed their support by giving an awareness talk to the public on the importance of keeping the rivers clean. This event would

not have been a success without their tremendous support", she added.

According to Francesca, they received a total of 80 art works (55 paintings, 19 poems and 6 sculptures). Apart from that, she also said that the main objective of the competition was to create awareness among the public on the importance of Sarawak rivers as part of the Kuching SMART city.

Artists were also encouraged to apply digital inclusion such as the QR bar code to describe their artwork. Additionally, she said, "We believe that this competition has given a great impact to the public. Thus we will continue organising this competition as an annual event. We at RCE Kuching want to continue to empower our locals to understand what they can do to contribute to each of these global goals".

In a nutshell, RCE Kuching chairperson, Associate Professor Dr Yeong Siew Wei personally thanked the RCE Networks and



Painting by the first runner up of the competition, Chai May Cheng.



Painting by the second runner up of the competition, Gloria Umah Anak Martin Renang.

United Nations University for these two awards.

"We at RCE Kuching, our stakeholders, partners, sponsors, communities and friends are indeed very grateful and happy to receive these great awards. Being a relatively new RCE centre in Borneo, it is certainly a boost to our confidence that we are on the right track of ESD and a motivation for greater things to come. We look forward to the continuous support and guidance from RCE Global".

RCE Kuching will continue to teach especially young people, school students and villagers to minimise the impact of pollution and dumping of waste. We are hoping for more volunteers to join RCE Kuching and make a greater impact together. For more info, we are reachable via email at rcekuching@gmail.com or contact +6082 596965.

By Sherrymina Kichin, Francesca Enchang and Assistant Professor Ida Anak Ingko



Quek Shio Yee

Bachelor Of Contemporary Music (Hons), graduated 2013

Shio Yee has loved music since she was young. Knowing that this was her calling in life, she pursued a degree in music at UCSI with a major in violin. In 2013, she won the Best Performance Award in the 8TV Ultimate Song Competition – a popular Mandarin reality show. She has produced two albums, “Abstract” and “Blind Spot” and is now a singer and songwriter working for a company called Never Fall Inc. in Taipei, Taiwan under Penny Tai, a renowned Malaysian singer, songwriter, producer and director. Shio Yee has achieved more than she could have imagined and with her determination and zest for life, she is destined to achieve bigger and better things.

In this column, the UCSI Gazette features the lives of prominent alumni. Like Shio Yee, many have pursued their dreams and made them a reality. Others have dedicated their lives to contributing to the community in any way possible. Yet others have journeyed on to further their studies in the field of their interest. In this volume, we catch up with Shio Yee and see what has been happening in her life since her time at UCSI University.



How is your current position at Never Fall Inc. related to what you were studying in UCSI?

Well, I majored in violin. But right now what I am using from my studies at UCSI is more on other subjects such as band classes where I had to use software such as Logic and Pro Tool. So these classes helped me in writing my demos. I am thankful that I learnt so much from these classes and lecturers and also my classmates. We discovered many new ways of making music and playing music.

What made you choose your programme at UCSI?

I studied classical music when I was super young. I started with classical piano classes, then classical violin classes when I was 12. After I finished SPM, came the phase where everyone makes that decision of ‘what are we going to do next?’. For me, naturally, I wanted to continue to study what I really love and to understand it even further and deeper. Of course, that would be music and since I studied classical music in the past, I wanted to try contemporary music and found that UCSI had this course.

What excites you most about the field of music?

I have been studying and playing music, listening to music and being in the whole music world all my life. It always excites me no matter what I do, no matter what stage or process I am in as long as I get to communicate with music and enjoy music; I think that always excites me.

What particular aspect of Music do you enjoy?

I enjoy being on stage, being in a live band performing, enjoying the singing process, looking at the audience and listening to them singing along with me.

Tell us about your experience studying at UCSI.

I am thankful to all the people I met in UCSI, lecturers and all my friends. They helped me so much not only in understanding music more but also in socialising. At that time, I wasn’t a very open person; but after knowing these friends, all they wanted to do was enjoy music and talk after classes. We usually have gigs during free time and that helped me get more experience.

Where do you get your motivation from?

My motivation was wanting to do well in studies and getting a cert as well as making my parents proud. Right now, when I write a song and share it with people, I get feedback; they ‘feel’ me and the stories. They thank me because they feel comforted and inspired and motivated, so I feel motivated in return.

What are your future ambitions?

Well I take one day at a time because sometimes I feel I cannot catch up. I have so many things to learn and improve on and I hope every day I will learn something new and find ways to be happy.

Your advice to UCSI students in the same field?

You have to feel the passion. Understand that it’s not just a job. You have to love it from the inside; and enjoy the process. Keep working hard and pursuing your dreams. In the end I believe as long as we work hard, we can achieve anything.

How was your time at UCSI significant in your current success and the shaping of your future goals?

Before UCSI, I was under a very systematic and disciplined music training so it was looking at music scores every day and doing everything exactly as written. After UCSI, I found there are a lot of things that need to be decided spontaneously and to improvise. This is significant for me because I need to be spontaneous and improvise while on stage. Sometimes when errors happen, we have to ‘wing it’ as if there is nothing wrong.

What are your contributions to society or the community?

I hope my songs have contributed to the community in some way. I hope they were comforting and that someone in a similar situation would not feel alone. I hope people feel that everything is going to be ok and feel happier. If they feel this, then, I think that’s a sort of contribution to society in itself.

What do you do in your leisure time?

I love reading thick books with no images. I love going for really long walks and long distance running. And writing music, of course!



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

UCSI GROUP SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

TARGET 2030

STAND UP FOR SDGs

WATER PARTNERSHIP ACTION FOR THE GOAL
CLIMATE
LIFE BELOW
GOOD
NO POVERTY
DECENT WORK
ECONOMIC GROWTH
INDUSTRY INNOVATION INFRASTRUCTURE
GENDER EQUALITY
HEALTH & WELL BEING
REDUCE INEQUALITIES
CITIES & COMMUNITIES
CLEAN WATER & SANITATION
SUSTAINABLE
QUALITY EDUCATION
ZERO HUNGER
AFFORDABLE & CLEAN ENERGY
RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION
PEACE LIFE ON LAND AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
JUSTICE



THE UCSI GAZETTE

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