

blaze

SUNWAY
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

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The making of a prestigious university

Standing tall

A night with a "Phantom" dinner

Dine in

Making a difference

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2009
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Explanatory notes: blaze was selected as its name signifies Sunway University College's burst of achievements in recent years. Sunway University College is a 'trailblazer' in the area of excellence in education pursued with a flaming passion in the hearts of its staff and students.

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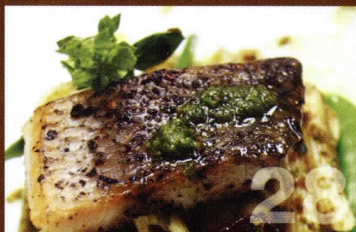
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From the Executive Director's Desk



Graduation is more than just wearing a mortar board and being conferred the scroll.

It is the turning point in a student's life – in fact, it marks the beginning of a challenging career ahead. After spending several years in college, the real test in life has only just begun!

To stand out from the rest, Sunway graduates will first have to compete with many others as they seek to climb the corporate ladder.

To be a true Achiever, it takes more than technical knowledge; one has to have the right Aptitude for learning and the right Attitudes in life.

Firstly, talking about Aptitude for learning, I hope by now, our graduates would have realized that learning is indeed a lifelong process. No one is too old to learn anything, and it is never too young to start somewhere.

Being able to learn something new every day is being able to stay ahead of others. This is extremely important as technology changes everyday and what may be relevant also becomes obsolete very fast.

Secondly, in order to climb the corporate ladder, our graduates have to adopt good attitudes. The right attitude, and not talents alone, is what propels a person towards greater achievements in life.

Attitudes will help one to adjust to the different situations at work, and be willing to learn from others who may be more knowledgeable.

The young person with the right set of attitudes in life will more likely reach the height of his career than someone whom others find hard to work with.

For our graduates, these are my little nuggets of wisdom. On behalf of Sunway University College, I wish to congratulate all our recent graduates. Bravo and may God bless all your future endeavours.

Elizabeth Lee
Executive Director





The making of a prestigious university

In the race to provide tertiary education, institutions like Sunway University College will have to stand out from the rest.

From an institution offering mainly twinning degrees, it gradually moved into 3+0 degree programmes. Since 2004, it confers its own degree Programmes which go in through the validation process from its partner university, Lancaster University.

As its Foundation Chancellor, Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah puts it, Sunway is dedicated to becoming a world-class tertiary institution with superior tutorship and up-to-date facilities in a university campus environment.

"This," he said, "is complemented by our pioneering efforts of more than two decades ago that have resulted in twinning degree programmes with several eminent universities in the UK, USA and Australia."

Positioned as a first class private university college in Malaysia, Sunway's reputation as a strong academic institution is built on a clearly defined mission statement: "To provide quality education of choice and valuable experience for the all-round development of competent, creative, intellectually critical individuals, who will contribute to local and global needs."

With 80% of the cohort receiving either a first class honours or a higher second class degree during the recent graduation ceremony, it is an enviable achievement for any institution. This has particularly impressed Lancaster University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Wellings who conferred the Lancaster University scrolls on graduates.

One of the First Class Honours Business Management graduates, Jason Yong told **blaze** that studying at Sunway has been challenging and rewarding. "Setting goals, being self-motivated and determined have helped me obtain a First Class degree - and it really gives a real sense of achievement!"

Right Formula

Despite being a commercial entity, the fact remains that Sunway is unique in that it has been run by a trust fund, formerly known as Sunway Education Trust Fund, since 1997. Although the name has since changed to the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation, the funding arrangement remains unchanged. Whereas most other private education providers have shareholders, Sunway's profits are ploughed back into the development of the institution. This is a legacy that its founder hopes to leave behind for the younger generation.

For this reason, the facilities are constantly being upgraded. Currently it has one of the best libraries in the region. This fact is acknowledged by one of its First Class Honours B.Sc Business Management graduates, Aimi Syazana who said, when she quit another college in her Second Year to join Sunway's First Year, she was first amazed by the facilities offered in Sunway, especially the Tun Hussein Onn Library.

"I have never regretted joining Sunway," she asserted, when interviewed during her graduation recently.

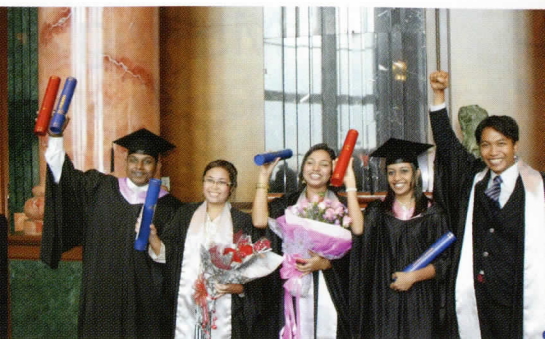
With such facilities, Sunway is able to attract not only the best students, but also prestigious partner universities like Lancaster University, which is ranked in the top 200 universities worldwide by the Times Higher Education.



Community scholar, Theresa Jerome (3rd from left) with her father, Bernard Jerome (next to her), who works at Sunway University College and the rest of her family



Professor Paul Wellings (left) and Professor Robert Bignall



Community Scholars who graduated (Left to Right), Jagadesan, Azerene, Reenuka, Theresa and Khalid. Absent: Emmanuel Yong.

Importantly, Sunway's degrees are not only validated by Lancaster University, but the jointly developed Honours degrees in Business, Computer Technology, Hospitality and Psychology also provide students with two scrolls, one from Sunway and the other from Lancaster University.

As Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University, Professor Paul Wellings, said in an interview, both institutions are charting their future together.

Sunway can always draw on Lancaster's teaching and academic strengths. According to Professor Wellings, 92% of Lancaster's research is recognised as world leading or internationally significant and some key areas of research are ranked top in the UK.

Therefore, the formal signing of the agreement on September 18, 2006 not only made Sunway University College an affiliated institution of Lancaster University, but also supported greater collaboration between the two institutions with several postgraduate programmes jointly developed by the two institutions and launched recently.

Scholarships

The profits from the institution are also being channelled into numerous forms of scholarships, including one that is highly commendable, namely the Tun Omar Ong Yoke Lin Community Scholarship, a scholarship programme for the financially disadvantaged. The recent graduation ceremony proved that, given the opportunity, some of the scholarship holders became high achievers too. Jagadesan s/o Chandra Mohan, 22, bereaved of his father at the age of eleven, and whose mother is a cancer patient, graduated with a First Class B.Sc (Hons) Information Technology. He is the first in his family to graduate with a degree. There were five other community scholars who graduated. Amongst them is Azerena Nediba d/o Zainal Abidin, who hails from the Orang Asli community and graduated with a diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management as did Renuka d/o Appalanaidu and Khalid bin Zainal.

Read the Centrespread story about Sunway's Graduation Ceremony 2009 >>

Vice-Chancellors spoke to blaze about the partnership between Sunway and Lancaster

Professor Paul Wellings, in his capacity as Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University, was particularly impressed with the achievement of Sunway:

"I am particularly pleased that 80% of the cohort have received a higher second or first class degree. These results are a real tribute to the quality of the students and the hard work that they have put in and give the students a real advantage in realizing their future ambitions," he said.

Lancaster, he added, believes in transnational education. "The University views Malaysia as a hub for the region, linking to Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand."

Under this partnership agreement signed three years ago, Sunway can benefit from Lancaster's vast teaching and research infrastructure. "92% of Lancaster's research is recognised as world leading or internationally significant and some key areas of research are ranked top in the UK," he reiterated.

Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University College, Professor Robert Bignall said that there are continuous efforts to develop more joint-degree programmes, including a number of jointly delivered postgraduate degrees at the beginning of this year.

There are currently approximately over 1000 students enrolled in degree programmes in Accounting and Finance, Business and Management, IT, Psychology, Hospitality Management and Tourism. Students study at Sunway, but are awarded scrolls from both institutions respectively, making it a very attractive option for them.

Making a difference

Stronger research culture and stringent quality control are two keys to achieve academic excellence in a tertiary education institution like Sunway University College. Its Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Bignall talks about the right steps already being put in place to transform Sunway into the "Harvard of the East"...

Vice-Chancellor, you are known for advocating research at the university level. Are there plans to promote a stronger research culture at Sunway? Do you believe that research is important in the context of a University-learning environment?

Sunway now develops and offers its own degrees, so it is important that our academic staff are up to date in their chosen discipline areas and are familiar with new trends and developments. To contribute to the curriculum effectively, an academic needs to be actively involved in the ongoing development of their discipline or profession.

Of course, all true universities are engaged not just in the transmission of existing knowledge, but in advancing and applying knowledge. They help us to improve our understanding of what we know and they contribute to the discovery and development of new knowledge, new ideas and new applications.

The stated mission of Sunway University College includes a devotion to the advancement, transmission and application of knowledge. It is clear that successful economies in the twenty first century will be heavily reliant on knowledge and innovation.

We must also recognise that the world today faces many problems that need to be addressed and solved in an intelligent, informed and logical way. These problems include economic challenges, poverty, overpopulation, environmental degradation, the risk of dangerous climate change, famine, war and so on. Young people are very aware this of and care about improving their world. It is in all of our interests that we strive to better understand ourselves and gain practical insights into how we can improve our own lives and those of others. The problems are very complex and a sound education plus careful and rational inquiry is needed to properly understand and address them.

At Sunway, many academic staff are already involved in research and it is certain that this is becoming an increasingly important part of what we do. Our research programmes will directly benefit our teaching programmes and enhance the reputation and standing of the degrees that we offer.

When I was in charge of Monash University Malaysia, I placed considerable emphasis on building up its research capabilities. The benefits of that are now very clear. I am confident that Sunway will enjoy a similar enhancement to its reputation and prestige over the coming years.

While we are on the topic of research, Sunway is known to be conservative in offering professorships and associate professorships to its staff, where assessment of qualified staff for such promotion within a university includes looking at the number of research papers that the individual has published. Do you think this helps to safeguard quality of the teaching staff? Will such a policy continue under your leadership?

It is important for a university to look forward and think about what it is going to be like in the future. We intend to become Malaysia's leading private university. To do that we need to benchmark ourselves against reputable international universities such as Lancaster and Monash. Our standards need to be as high as theirs.

We want to appoint more full professors and associate professors. However, we will continue to take great care when making such appointments, because we want to ensure that a professor at Sunway is someone who is on an equal footing academically with a professor at a university like Lancaster or Monash. So, like them, we must maintain quite strict criteria for appointments to these key academic leadership roles. In the long term, appointing the best possible people to such positions benefits everyone, staff and students alike.

While you talk about the importance of benchmarking, sadly, parents are beginning to feel that some local private institutions of higher learning are not up to the mark when it comes to providing quality education. How would you, in your capacity as Vice-Chancellor, help raise public confidence in our private education system?

Malaysia has a vibrant and very competitive private higher education sector.

There are a lot of different institutions - in fact probably too many, because it is clear that some of them are struggling academically and in some cases financially. Perhaps because of this there is an unfortunate tendency for some operators to promise more than they can deliver. That reflects badly on the sector as a whole. Perhaps the private higher education sector needs a stronger code of practice in the area of advertising and promotion.

Choosing a university and a course of study is a very important life decision and prospective students need to receive sound and honest advice and information. I would urge parents and students to research their choice very carefully. Speak to current students and graduates and get them to share their views and experiences. Most importantly, the choice that is made should be based on value and not on price.

Sunway is recognised as one of the leaders in the private higher education sector. That did not happen by accident. We achieved this by focussing on what is best for our students and by striving to maintain high standards of service and academic integrity. We take a long term view. We are here to stay and are committed to maintaining our reputation and our strong brand.

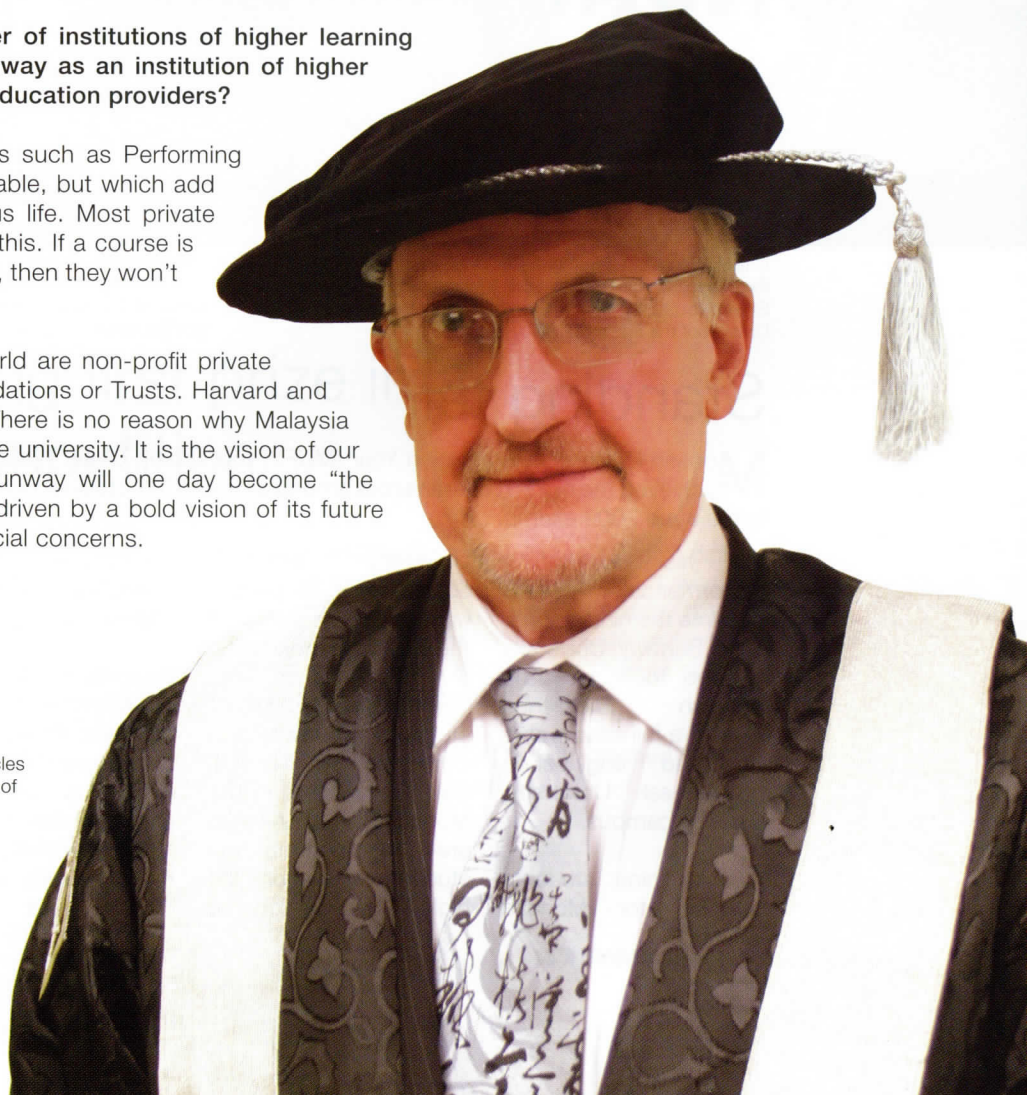
Of course, we also stand fully behind the Malaysian Qualifications Agency and the Ministry of Higher Education in their efforts to ensure that all approved private institutions of higher learning adhere to the required standards.

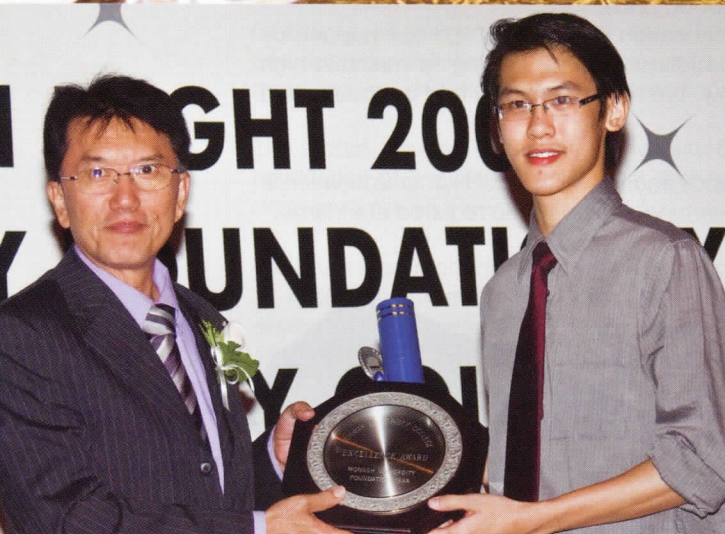
Parents also complain that a number of institutions of higher learning are more profit-oriented. How is Sunway as an institution of higher learning different from these private education providers?

We are able to offer distinctive courses such as Performing Arts, which are not in themselves profitable, but which add diversity and choice and enrich campus life. Most private university colleges can not afford to do this. If a course is not going to be profitable in its own right, then they won't offer it.

Many of the best universities in the world are non-profit private universities that are supported by Foundations or Trusts. Harvard and Stanford in the US are two examples. There is no reason why Malaysia can not have its own outstanding private university. It is the vision of our Founder, Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah that Sunway will one day become "the Harvard of the East." Thus, Sunway is driven by a bold vision of its future and not by pressing immediate commercial concerns.

This concludes a two-part series of interview articles with Professor Robert J. Bignall, Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University College.





Chew Weng Chuen (right) receiving the Monash Excellence Award from Lee Weng Keng, Chief Executive Officer of the Education and Healthcare Division of the Sunway Group



Subject award recipients: (From left) Sarah Chong Yin Ching, Grace Sim QiuHong, Botsalo Lardgence Morotsi, Philemon Lim Sung Ern, May Khet Pan, Pn. Adawiah Norli, Esmonde Lim Wei Chen

Standing tall

Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) top scorer, Chew Weng Chuen achieved the highest overall score among all the MUFY providers worldwide in the June 2009 exams.

For his outstanding performance, Chew became the ninth winner from Sunway University College to receive the Monash Excellence Award, a full scholarship to read engineering at Monash University, Sunway campus.

Another nine students

University entrance scholarships to pursue undergraduate studies at the Australian university.

This year, MUFY students at Sunway also clinched twenty Monash Subject Awards. The Monash Subject Awards are presented to the students who score the highest mark among all

the providers of MUFY in each of the subjects offered.

Recently, the Chancellor of Monash University, Australia, Dr Alan Finkel paid a visit to Sunway where he spoke to a packed auditorium of MUFY students, on how the University plans to move forward.

Providers of MUFY worldwide:

- Taylors College Melbourne (Australia)
- Jakarta International College (Indonesia)
- Vientiane College (Laos)
- ANC (Sri Lanka)
- Sunway University College (Malaysia)
- Sunway College Johor Baru (Malaysia)



Joanne (left) receiving her mock cheque from Tan Sri Abdul Rahman Mamat, Secretary General of MITI.



A tick for winning first prize in a logo design competition

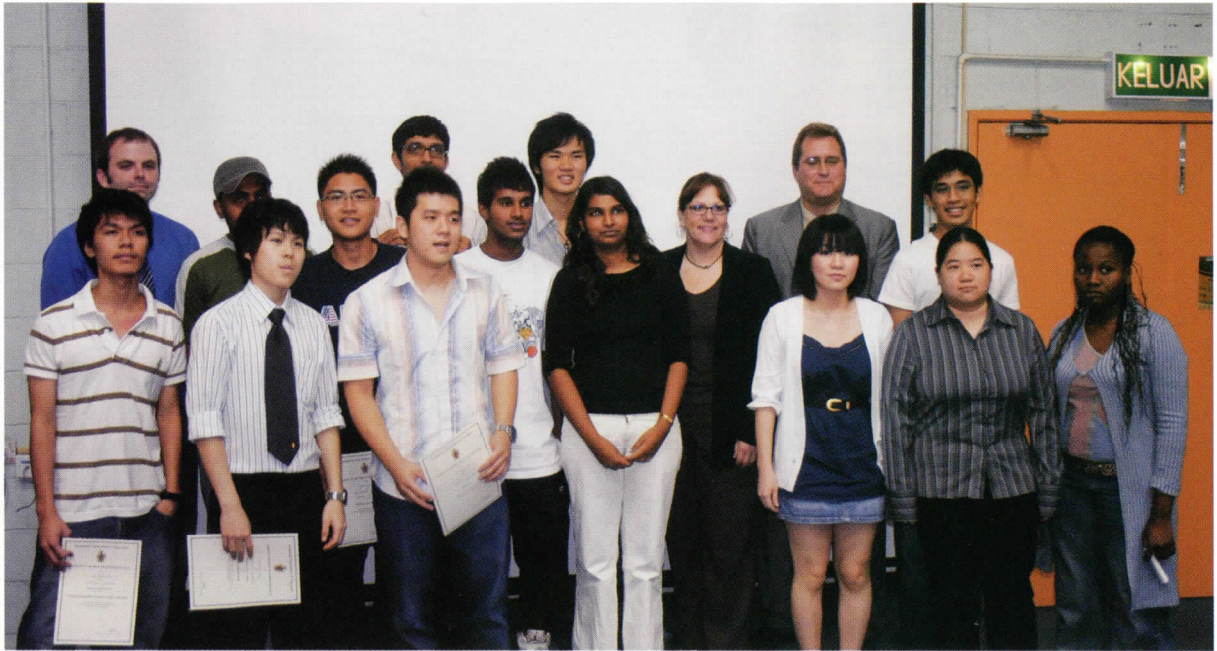
When the announcement was made, Joanne Ooi Yuen Kei was overwhelmed with emotion.

The Sunway student, whose logo design incorporated a "tick" mark, had won the first prize in the Malaysia TrustMark Logo Competition 2009, a logo design competition organised by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia (MITI).

The prize came with a cash award of RM5,000, which Ooi plans to finance part of the cost of her degree studies in the near future.

The 19-year-old Graphic and Multimedia Design diploma student said she never expected to win. "I was very surprised but grateful for my win," she said. "I would like to thank my lecturers for their guidance and help throughout my course. Without them I would not have been able to win this prize."

Her classmate, Kenry Tang Tze Lye clinched the third prize in the same competition.



The twelve Presidential Scholars (except the student, third from left front row) with WMU staff, Cathleen Fuller (sixth from right), Dr Craig Kaml (5th from right) and Kirk Sundling (2nd from left)



Lau Jann-Lim



Ahmad Safianu Saleh



Alvin Tan

Cream of the Crop

For the next three years, parents of 14 Sunway's American Degree Transfer Program (ADTP) students need not worry about their children's education expenses overseas.

These were the cream of the crop. Twelve of them were recently awarded Presidential Scholarships worth USD8,000 per annum each, from Western Michigan University (WMU), a twinning partner of the Sunway ADTP since 1987.

Another two received scholarships. Anjuli Rabrindanath is pursuing chemical engineering on a scholarship from Illinois Institute of Technology valued at US\$12,000 per annum and Alvin Tan is a Community College Leadership Award recipient earning scholarship valued at US\$10,000 to study business at the University of Missouri, Kansas City.

Past President of the ADTP student committee, Foo Kok Seong has chosen to study engineering at WMU.

Foo played an important role in organising the ADTP Twilight Carnival 2009 which raised funds for the Vivekananda Home in Rembau.

His Vice-President, Lau Jann-Lim picked New York University, where he is majoring in Finance. Lau is thrilled that New York University is only five minutes away from Wall Street.

Other students who will be transferring to good US universities include Ahmad Safianu Saleh from Nigeria who is pursuing aviation at the Embly Riddle Aeronautical University, Florida and Sean Shao Chi Yap. Sean, who had deferred his studies from an earlier intake, is now pursuing film production at Chapman University in Orange County, California.



The participants, students and participating company staff at the ICT Skills Transfer workshop



The Consulting, Collaboration and Commercialisation (CCC) Laboratory

Bridging the ICT gap

Universities these days do not operate as an isolated entity. Sunway University College's School of Computer Technology knows this too well.

The School recently organised a series of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Skill Transfer Workshops for SMEs, which were aimed at closing the gap between the School's curriculum and the market needs.

Its head, Associate Professor Dr. Lim Tong Ming said that the workshops serve to enhance product and knowledge dissemination for students, and help companies have access to a pool of student interns. "In turn, the school can also fine tune the practical skills of its students to match the requirements of the industry." Dr. Lim added that newly developed technologies and products will also be introduced to the participating companies, whom he promised, "will have the first opportunity to further develop them."

Key people from the industry were also invited to speak at the workshops. Chief Operating Officer of the England Optical Group Sdn Bhd, Loke Sim Fatt spoke about "Benefits of Interns to SME and IT Collaboration with Universities" while Lee Yin Jye of Solution Architect, SAP Malaysia spoke of, "Emerging Technologies & Solutions for SME from SAP".

Dr. Lim also took the opportunity to unveil Sunway's latest Consulting, Collaboration and Commercialisation (CCC) Lab as well as its SCTNET portal.

The laboratory supports the strong research focus on the areas of Network and Ubiquitous Computing, Multimedia and Information Systems, Intelligent System and Robotics Engineering as well as Database Technologies and Software Engineering. The School offers the Master of Science in Computer Science (by research) and the Master of Science in Mobile Systems.

A challenging but worthwhile MBA journey



Sunny Khoo Choo Hock
Client Servicing Manager
Single

Kian Yap
Nuclear Chemist
Married, with two teenagers

Ooi Phaik Loon
Account Executive
Single

Karen Tan Sheau Yann
Business Partner
Married, with no children

Joie Wong
Senior Medical
Sales Executive
Married, with no children

*They say the way to the top is never easy. **blaze** interviewed five part-time students, enrolled in the Victoria University MBA programme at Sunway to find out what motivates them and how they manage all their commitments.*

The only thing that keeps Sunny Khoo Choo Hock going is his realization that we are now living in an information age where knowledge is king. "Without a proper education," he admits, "it is very difficult to compete, especially when Malaysia is moving towards becoming a fully-developed nation."

Khoo opines that a basic degree is the minimum to kick start one's career and a higher level of education becomes very important when we rise up the ranks in the corporate world. "As a manager with an MBA qualification, I can definitely plan better strategies for my clients," he explains. "It prepares me to manage my career from the macro point of view."

Fellow student, Karen Tan Sheau Yann has a more practical reason to pursue her dream when signing up for the MBA. Reflecting on her decision, she explains: "My recent move from the corporate world to join my spouse in his business expansion has accelerated the need to pursue my MBA."

Benefits

Account executive, Ooi Phaik Loon says the MBA helps him with his career advancement. "I also learnt to do research more effectively," he surmises. "I feel that I am able to think critically and holistically, and the VU MBA programme makes me more confident than ever. It also serves as a bargaining chip for my work appraisal which affects pay raise and promotion."

Senior Medical Sales Executive, Joie Wong feels that by pursuing her MBA, she is able to add another feather to her cap. "The knowledge I gain from this MBA programme complements my Bachelor's degree in Microbiology," she elaborates. "In the process, I learn and network with other people who are from other industries. It has also helped to improve my ability to think analytically besides enhancing my understanding of my company's business operations."

Time invested

On average these students spend at least 20 hours of studies in a week. "This works out to be about three hours a day in meeting for group discussions and doing assignments," says Khoo. "Closer to the deadline for submission of my assignment, I have to burn the midnight oil."

For Yap, a nuclear chemist and father of two teenagers, it is an average of one or two hours a day, while Tan says it is at least 14 hours a week.

To make sure that she keeps track on her progress, Wong keeps a timetable. "Of course, self-discipline is very important to make sure that I am always in touch with family members and with my colleagues at work," she says.

Ooi says for him, it is a minimum of four hours a week to read, do his research and writing but it could easily reach 20 hours when an examination is around the corner.

It's the tough that get going

For all of them, it hasn't been easy. Yap admits that, with two teenagers, ages 12 and 16, keeping the balance naturally depends on the individual. "I believe priority should always be given to family," he says. "Fortunately, they are at the stage where they are more independent of me."

Wong concurs: "It's a lot of hard work that will eventually get our MBA students right to the top of the corporate ladder – what's more with a postgraduate degree that is well-recognised worldwide!"

The advice Tan would like to share with others thinking of pursuing their MBA: "Despite the many hours spent at work and on study, I always ensure that I have time for my family and friends. They definitely keep me motivated with their love and care. Therefore, prioritising and time management is the essence to keep the balance."

Discovering Melbourne and myself

by Kesego Elizabeth Poomore

Kesego Elizabeth Poomore of Botswana was the Grand Prize winner in "Celebrate VU" lucky draw competition. The Victoria University (VU) Bachelor of Business twinning programme student at Sunway writes about her trip to Melbourne....

Day One

After all the excitement, the day finally arrived. On arrival at the Tullamarine Airport, Ms Diana Heatherich and Ms Carol Verga gave me a very warm welcome. Jet-lagged, I rested at Ms Heatherich's house before checking into Citigate Hotel at 2 pm.

Day Two

After breakfast, where I had the best bagels in town, Ms Helen Nuttall took me to the zoo. This, being my first time going on a tram, I was excited! The zoo was beautiful. It brought back the nostalgia of Africa. Because Ms Nuttall and I shared a lot, I feel I learnt so much in just those few hours with her.

In between, I went sightseeing on my own to check out Monash Medical School. In the evening, we had fun going bowling with Ms Nuttall, Ms Carol Verga and Mr. Kenny Chong, followed by a dinner at the Blue Train restaurant.

Day Three

This was the best day of my life. Ms Heatherich took me to the Footscray Park campus where I met the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Elizabeth Harman just as she was having a 15-minute break. I had coffee with her. Later, I had lunch and sightseeing with Ms Ann Marie Angebrandt.

Our next destination was the Eureka Tower, the tallest building in Melbourne, with 88 floors. We could see the whole of Melbourne from above. Next, it was Shrine of Remembrance.

In the evening I was invited to watch the Football Match between Western Bulldogs and Collingwood at Etihad Stadium, with the Vice-Chancellor and Senior staff members of the university council. Western Bulldogs and VU have a partnership which brings the western region football club and the university together.

The following day was time to say, "Goodbye". I was overwhelmed because, within a few days, I have seen and learned so much about Victoria University and about Melbourne, its people and the culture.



Kesego with Professor Elizabeth Harman



Kesego in front of the Yarra River in Melbourne City



Congratulations!

This year's Graduation Ceremony, which was held at Sunway Resort Hotel and Spa on October 9, saw a total of 381 recipients being conferred their degrees and granted their diplomas by Sunway University College's Chancellor, Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Jeffrey Cheah, AO.

Of this, 86 were Business, Computing and Psychology graduates of the joint honours degree programmes, developed by Sunway University College and validated by Lancaster University since 2006.

They received one scroll each from Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, and another scroll from Professor Paul Wellings, Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University.

The event was witnessed by Sunway University College's Vice-Chancellor and Chair of the Academic Board, Professor Robert J. Bignall, who certified that the candidates were entitled to be admitted to their awards.





'Beats of Peace' performances by students

A passage through India

In his quest to promote a better understanding about the Indian culture, a former multimedia lecturer and principal advisor of Sunway's Indian Cultural Society went beyond speaking about the "Indian Cultural Night: Beats of Peace 2009". He took **biaze** to different parts of India...

India may appear to be one big country, but there is a very diverse culture in the subcontinent, with a population of over one billion. The Malaysian Indian culture is quite different from India, says Rajesh Kumar Sarraf, who first came to Malaysia in 1999 to work as a Multimedia Consultant before joining Sunway in 2000. It has evolved over the years, and is influenced mainly by Western as well as the local Malay culture. "If you are a Malaysian Indian visiting India today, the way you speak would immediately give you away as a foreigner in India.

Although there are over 200 languages in India, Hindi is the official language of the republic, and it is spoken mainly in Northern and Western India. The local Tamil community in Malaysia mainly comes from South India.

Staple food

Punjab is a province which is well-known for its paddy and wheat fields. Most of the food is wheat or rice-based, such as cappati, naan, tandoori, prata and lassi.

Chappati is the staple food, along with naan, tandoori, lassi and sweets such as Laddu, Gulab Jamun and Jelebi.

Occasionally, the Punjabis would paint themselves with Mehendi, which is a form of henna painting. Unlike here in Malaysia, in Northern India, henna painting is not a fashion statement," explains Rajesh. "Henna leaf, when ground, has a special property that helps to remove extra body heat."

The Malaysian Gujarati community are famous chettiers and traders of mainly textile products. "In Malaysia, you can find them mainly in places like Jalan Masjid India" says Rajesh.



Rajesh Kumar Sarraf



Bollywood

Mumbai, the financial hub of India is located in the province of Maharashtra. Over here, the Marathi is worn with the saree flap tied to the right shoulder.

"Most Malaysians know that Mumbai is famous for its Bollywood movies," says Rajesh. "But interestingly, only very few realise that most of the Bollywood style of clothing is the Lehanga, worn by the Punjabis."

On the west coast of South India, the Malayalees live in the hilly province of Kerala, which is famous for its coconut plantations. "This explains why their food is more coconut-based. In fact, most of the herbs in India originate from Kerala."

The literacy rate in Kerala is 100%. This is probably the outcome of years of tireless efforts by missionaries who set up schools in Kerala. The Malayalees are proud of their heritage. They have a certain way of wearing the saree flap either to the left or right shoulder depending on the occasion.

Our link with India

The majority of Malaysian Indians came from Tamil Nadu. "This is why the roti canai that you have in Malaysia is similar to the paratha consumed by the Tamils in South India. It is very different from the paratha that is consumed in Northern India, where they have two cappatis and some ingredients sandwiched in between," explains Rajesh. "In fact, the word 'canai' may have originated from either the word 'Chennai' (the new name for Madras), or the Channa dhal, a type of dhal lentil."

Chennai is also where Idli (steamed rice), tosar or paratha is consumed for breakfast. "It is interesting that Malaysian Tamils still take this every morning," Rajesh enthuses.

The majority of the people of Hyderabad are Muslims and they became known as Indian Muslims. The name, "Hyderabad" comes from two words – Hydra, the name of one of the Muslim rulers, and 'Abad', which means City. Its twin city in Andhra Pradesh is Secunderabad, which is named after another Muslim ruler, namely Secunder.

The Indian Muslim community

In Hyderabad, people consume more rice, vegetables, chicken and meat. Adds Rajesh: "During the Ramadhan month, they make haleem, which is mutton cooked in a soup and is a very delicious delicacy that people would queue for. I haven't found anything close to haleem here in Malaysia."

Going further north in the Province of West Bengal is the city of Kolkata (formerly known as Calcutta), where the people speak Bengali. "Bengali sweets are very famous," Rajesh adds. "They are also very good in preparing fish dishes."

A cook himself, Rajesh considers himself an ambassador of the culture and cuisine on India. Having lived in Malaysia for the past 10 years – and hoping to obtain his permanent residence soon – Rajesh loves Malaysia.

"Malaysia is my second home," he smiles.

(b1aze wishes Rajesh all the very best in his future undertakings. We hope that he will continue to keep in touch with Sunway.)



Tham Ying Hong (left) and Fiona Tay Ting Nuan



Deep concentration



Students from different schools were intensely participating in Sunway's A-Level Math & Logic Challenge

Number crunching fever

Quiet, be still! The hall was silent, except for the whirring and clicking of students' brains, as they worked hard through their calculations.

When the results were finally announced, an exhilarated Form 3 student, Tham Ying Hong, 15, emerged as champion of the Sunway's A-Level Math & Logic Challenge, which attracted 342 Mathematics buffs from 88 secondary schools all over Peninsular Malaysia.

Tham, the youngest participant in the competition, partnered Fiona Tay Ting Nuan. Both are from Katholik Secondary National School, Petaling Jaya. They were coached by their teacher, Mrs S. Jeyacowri.

"The competition was great as it has taught us about the importance of teamwork and it was a good exposure for us," enthused Tham.

Meanwhile, Tan Yong Chin of Sam Tet Secondary School, who won the First Runner-Up, said the competition offered him a whole new experience about the learning of Mathematics. "It was both challenging and exciting," he said.

Chong Hwa Independent High School, Kuala Lumpur won the Second Runner-Up in this year's competition, which has been popularized since 2006.

The top five teams in the competition won trophies, certificates, cash prizes and bursaries (ranging from 20% to 100% waiver) in the A-Level programme, all sponsored by Sunway University College, as well as book prizes sponsored by the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE).

The competition was pioneered and developed by experienced Mathematics lecturers in Sunway's A-Level programme.

According to Dr Wong Yoke Chen, Director of the A-Level programme at Sunway and Chairperson of the organising committee, the competition was aimed at raising the standard of Mathematics among secondary school students and to instill the elements of fun and creative thinking into the learning of the subject.

"Our team of lecturers took great efforts to ensure the questions were fresh and suitable for the level of Mathematics competency in the students, so that their experience in the competition was enlightening, enriching and enjoyable," she said.

Students participating in the competition were from mainly from Form 4 and Form 5, who were reading two Mathematics subjects, Additional Mathematics and Modern Mathematics. Minimum entry into the competition is Form 3.

American Independence Day

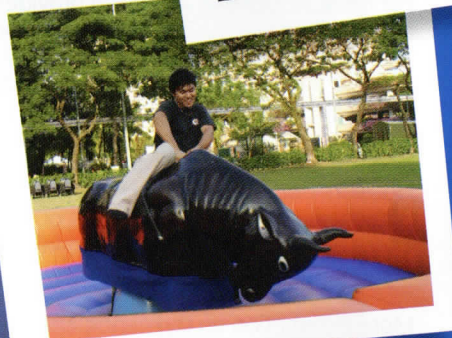
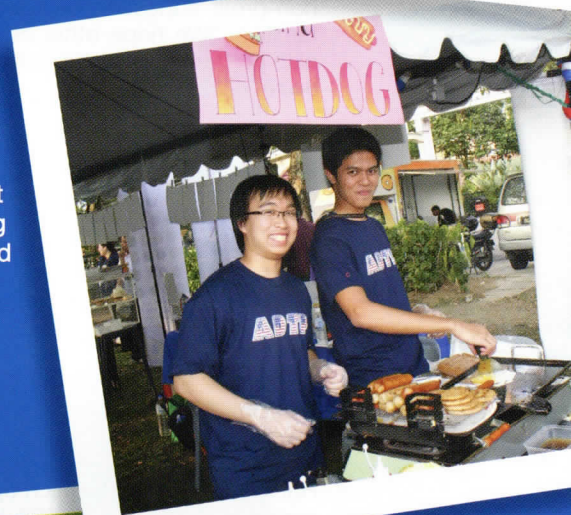
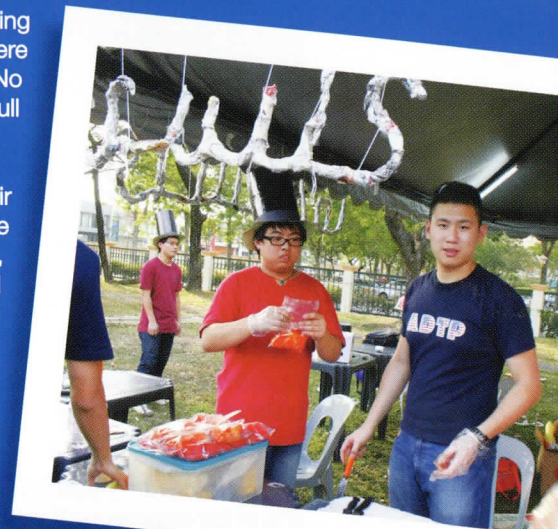
Twilight Carnival

The highlight was a moonlight cinema with a free screening of the movie "Transformers" (the first sequel). There were also inflatable activities such as "Rocky Mountain", "No Way Out" and "Army Eliminator" and mechanical bull rides reminiscent of the rodeo in the U.S.

Students organised the activities with guidance from their lecturers. Some students of the Ravelution Performance and Dance Club performed moves such as the Latin, pop and hip-hop. Students manned food stalls and games stalls. Proceeds from this event were donated to the Vivekananda Home in Negeri Sembilan. The guest of honour was Datuk Dr Rajmah Hussain, Former Ambassador of Malaysia to the United States.

The carnival organised by the American Degree Transfer Program (ADTP) in conjunction with American Independence Day acquaints students with American culture so that they will be better adjusted to student life there after they transfer.

Sumitha Ganesharatnam, Head of the ADTP said "American Independence Day is celebrated every year by our students and their involvement is a real world learning experience for them. But this is the first time that it is celebrated on a big scale and I am very proud of their planning and efforts this year".



Saying we care with Futsal

It was indeed a caring way to demonstrate that they really cared for the poor and the underprivileged community.

When these Moral Studies students from Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) organised the charity futsal tournament recently, they were hoping to raise RM5,000 to provide better facilities at a non-profit education centre for students in need.

The tournament, which was held at the U-One futsal centre in USJ 1, Subang Jaya, was a success although the students did not quite reach their target. 12 futsal teams were recruited, each paying RM100.

In the words of 19-year-old Christopher Anand, one of the organisers, they succeeded in raising awareness about the Harvest Tuition Centre, a non-profit education centre which helps poor families. "We hope other college students will also do their part for the tuition centre," he told **blaze**.

Fellow Moral Studies classmate, Jon Silendra said the event was all about learning how we can each make a difference in the lives of the underprivileged children. It was after all the team's first time organising such a project so there was much cooperative learning and building understanding of others, a theme central to Moral Studies in Sunway.

The children from Harvest Centre also proved that they were no easy pushovers by clinching third place.

Harvest Centre Bhd, which operates the tuition centre, was founded in 1998. It provides medical and health care, help with home improvement and food to poor families, especially those in Sentul, Jalan Ipoh, Selayang, Serdang and Puchong, regardless of race or creed.

According to a full-time teacher at the centre, Norman Ng, the centre currently has about 350 students between the ages of two and 17. There are also children whose parents are from Myanmar and Sri Lanka.

More information on the centre can be obtained from www.harvestcentre.org or from its centre in Sentul (tel: 03-4044 1397).





Ng Khailee, co-founder of YouthAsia

Kid Chan speaking to students

Building resilience and entrepreneurship among youths

Sunway University College has produced a number of successful entrepreneurs over the years.

Among the notable ones are George Ang, Group Managing Director and Co-Founder of Revenue Valley Sdn Bhd (it owns Manhattan FISH MARKET, Tony Roma's and TOKYO-g) and Kid Chan, Celebrity Photographer.

Together with others like Ng KhaiLee, co-founder of YouthAsia, and Xandria Ooi, a Sunway alumna, TV host, journalist and emcee, they gave a series of inspiring talks to students in the weeks leading up to Merdeka during the 1Malaysia Entrepreneurship Month.

Ooi, who also launched her new book, entitled "Love, Work and Everything in between", shared her early years of experiences when she first entered the entertainment industry.

Executive Director of Sunway University College, Elizabeth Lee said that the key to sustainable growth in Malaysia is to develop the spirit of entrepreneurship amongst our youth who will become tomorrow's leaders.

"In today's uncertain economic situation," she said, "it is even more vital that we imbue in our students, a more resilient and adaptable mindset so they may rise to the challenges of our times."

Yahurin Mohd Yassin, Senior Assistant Director of Development & Student Affairs Division, Ministry of Higher Education was the guest-of-honour at the 1Malaysia Entrepreneurship month launching ceremony.

During the Entrepreneur Exchange Night, founder of MindValley, Vishen Lakhiani shared his entrepreneurship tips with the students.



Happenings

A night with a “Phantom” dinner

The hospitality students and lecturers of the Sunway School of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Management presented an edgy fine-dining event featuring “molecular gastronomy”.

The spectacular six-course dinner began with a brioche followed by an appetizer that featured flowers and a deconstructed French onion soup. The main courses were braised wagyu beef with foie gras and slow-cooked salmon on a bed of pureed edamame.

A mangosteen sorbet, a passionfruit mousse with a macaroon and Valrhona chocolate, which came in five textures with rhubarb were the amazing desserts. There was a choice of a shaken spicy mango cocktail or green tea and lime mocktail.

Anisha Chai, Head of the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Management said she was very proud that

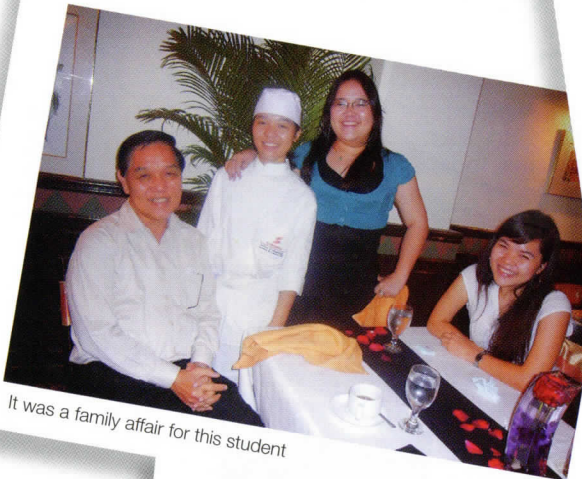
her students and lecturers were able to work together in an event that highlighted an unconventional cuisine seldom encountered by hotel management students. “It is eye opening and will add to their learning experience” she enthused.

Students prepared the dishes and were involved in the dining room service under the watchful eyes of Head Chef, Patrick Siau and F & B Coordinator, Daniel Chong.

The degree students contributed to the planning and organisation of the event, while the diploma students were involved in the production aspects.



Getting the main course right



It was a family affair for this student



At your service!



Elizabeth Lee, Executive Director, Sunway University College (2nd from right) and Anisha Chai with the 'phantom' students



Anisha and the team of Chefs and F & B Coordinators

First engineering PhD has a connection with Sunway

In 2001, Mark Ng Kok Yew was a Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) student at the then Sunway College.

Eight years later, he made news, when he became the first graduate from Monash University, Sunway Campus, Malaysia to be conferred a PhD in Engineering and the first PhD graduate who completed full tertiary studies at the Sunway Campus.

The 26-year-old, now an Engineering lecturer at his alma mater is also part of the Robotics, Automation and Manufacturing (RAM) Research Group. He is actively conducting his research in the area of Fault Detection and Isolation (FDI) and has recently presented his research findings at international conferences, such as the 2007 International Conference on Control Applications (IEEE) in Singapore and the 2008 International Federation of Automatic Control (IFAC) in Seoul, Korea.

"I would very much like to see my theoretical work evolve and be implemented onto practical applications, with the hope that it could improve the stability, safety and also the reliability of the systems," he explained.

A MUFY lecturer, Helen James, who taught him English, had this to say about Dr. Ng:

"Mark was a pleasure to teach. He was a teacher's dream student – someone with an inquiring mind, hard-working and very respectful. With such an attitude towards his studies and people in general, it really is no surprise that he has reached such heights."

Advising younger people, Dr. Ng said: "It's not easy to make a choice sometimes, but I guess I made a right decision when I chose the MUFY programme because it provided me with the foundation that I needed for my undergraduate degree at Monash University. The curriculum was very well organised and I did not face any major difficulties in my studies, transiting from my foundation year at Sunway to Monash."

What is your favourite movie?

Can I have 2 favourite movies? The Matrix and Forrest Gump.

Who is your favourite singer?

Jacky Cheung.

Do you play any musical instrument?

Unfortunately, no But I would like to be able to play the piano someday

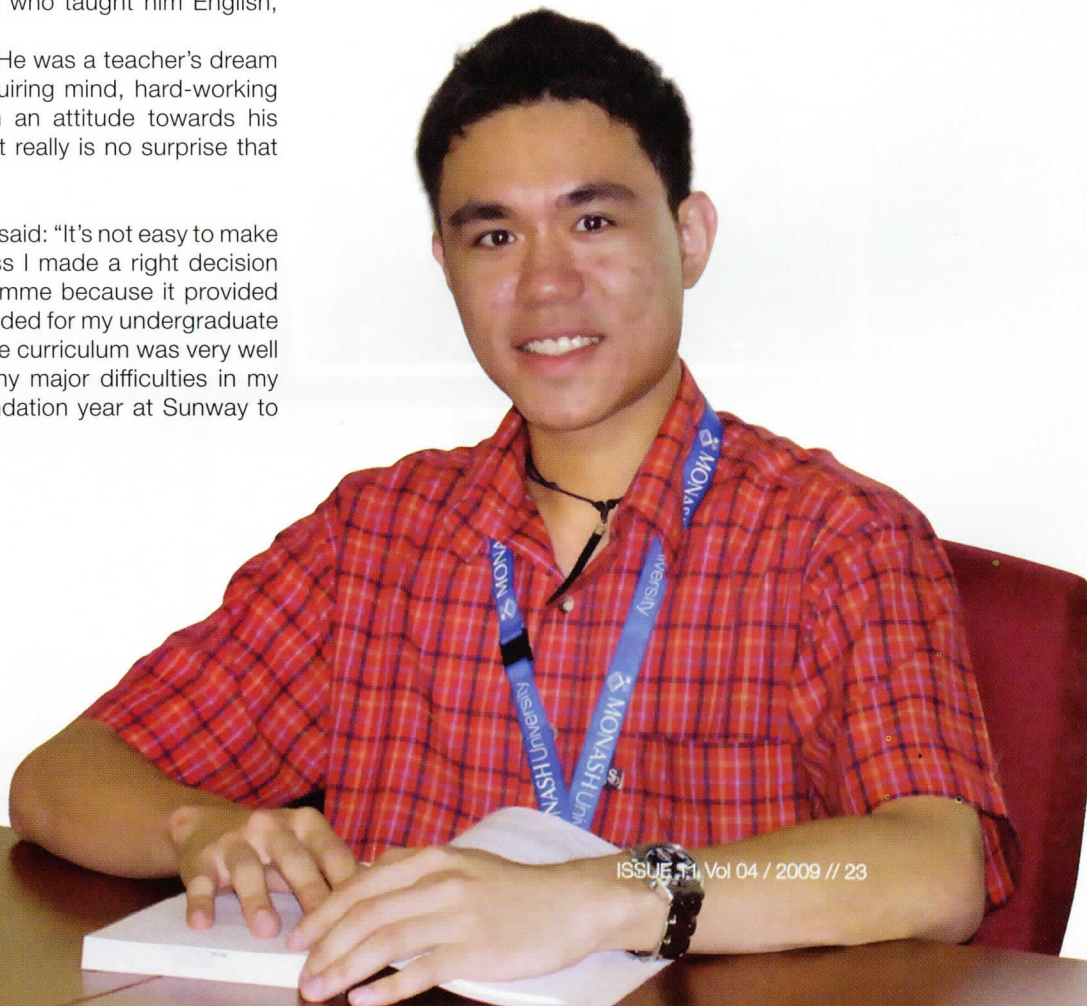
Which is the latest book that you have read?

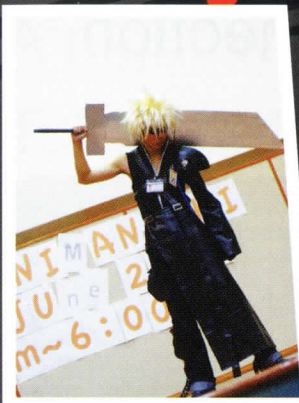
What is the book about?

Tuesdays With Morrie by Mitch Albom. Totally forgotten how many times I've read this book. It talks about the general lessons about life, i.e. love, happiness etc., which is very thought provoking and you just learn to appreciate life even more.

Which NGO do you support? Why?

BeFrienders! I think that they are simply a great group of kind people with the heart to help those in need out there, especially now that a lot of people are suffering from depression and are in desperate need of an ear to listen to their problems.





When AniManGaki conquers time and space...

About 600 students who are self-professing Anime and Manga fans from all over Malaysia converged at Sunway University College recently to celebrate all things Anime in an Anime event, AniManGaki 09, organised by its Anime Club (SUAC) recently.

Students and guests were dressed to the hilt in their costumes depicting characters such as Naruto, Bleach and Final Fantasy with clothes purchased from Japan or tailor-made.

But, rumours are rife that they could be up to something that could mean disaster to the human race. The 50 strong AniManGaki crew had been planning the event for six months. Could they be trying to conquer the world?

The festive atmosphere, resembling the Harajuku in Japan, also had a mini Omatsuri (traditional Japanese festival), featuring goldfish scooping and Japanese yoyo water balloons. There were also Doujin booths – the place where amateur artists sold their “fanarts”.

The air was electric as “cosplayers” posed and mingled in their eye-catching costumes. There were also “live” band performances, movie screenings and a karaoke competition.

On our further investigation, there is nothing to worry. President of SUAC (2008-2009), Yvonne Sing, an American Degree Transfer Program student at Sunway, who is also a Doujin artist of two years, said, “We learnt a lot during the planning of the event such as teamwork and communication skills and we enjoyed it. I am glad that it turned out to be really awesome with an attendance that was greater than expected.”

It was after all a students’ event. Stay tuned to the news update on prime time. Meanwhile, I am Jacqueline Muriel Lim from Sunway University College’s public relations department.

Madiha loves Penang

Psychology student, Madiha Mushtaque Rashid is a water sports enthusiast, and since visiting Batu Ferringhi, has fallen in love with the magical island of Penang.

After spending a short stint on the Pearl of the Orient, the 20-year-old, hailing from Pakistan, says she enjoyed every moment of her holiday there, especially when she had the opportunity to savour Penang food.

Her two favourite Penang cuisines are none other than the Penang Char Kway Teow and the variety of food served Penang-style in Mamak stalls. "I have also started to like Iranian cuisine and Japanese sushi," she adds.

In Penang, she also found the Butterfly Farm fascinating. "Never in my life have I seen so many butterflies, and they are all so colourful as well!"

After completing her Bachelor of Science (Hons) Psychology at Sunway University College, Madiha says she hopes to pursue her Master in Clinical or Organizational Psychology, which will pave the way for her to pursue her PhD.

Since arriving in Sunway in August 2008, Madiha admits it wasn't very difficult adapting to the learning environment. "In fact, I love spending hours researching a certain topic and doing the assignments," she enthuses. "However, it took some time to learn how to write in American Psychological Association (APA) format but my lecturers and friends have been particularly helpful."

The other thing that helps her to feel at home in Malaysia is the atmosphere at Masjid Jamek in Jalan Masjid India with its Indian food. "This is something I can relate to," she laughs.

Most importantly, it is her close friends who have helped her out. "They are mostly international students from Pakistan, India, and Sri Lanka. I have also built good friendships with local Chinese and Malays."

Her favourite lecturer is Associate Professor Teoh Hsien-Jin, Head of the School of Health and Natural Sciences, whom she believes is very knowledgeable. "Personally, I find his lectures very interesting. Not to forget, I am fascinated by his love for animals, especially his pet ferret," she observes.

She has never regretted joining Sunway, after checking out its website. "I chose Sunway because of its recognized degree in Psychology. Sunway has some of the most highly-qualified lecturers. Besides, I will also be obtaining two certificates, one from Sunway and another from Lancaster University. I have the best of both worlds here!"



Psychology academic colloquium

Themed, "Neurological Processes", the student speakers at First Sunway Academic Colloquium on Psychological research held recently focused on information and research on decision-making, memory, mental rotation and hormonal change effects.

A total of nine psychology student research findings were presented, along with five student research poster presentations.

Topics included the concept of switching attention by Tay Ee Lin. "People generally do not switch their attention focus between the different ears. However, given the suggestion to look for meaningful information, they are more capable of switching attention between ears," she said.

Meanwhile, Maziar Daghighi Masouleh spoke on how information presented can affect one's decisions. "When both logical and illogical information are presented at the same time, people may be more likely to pick illogical information," he explained.

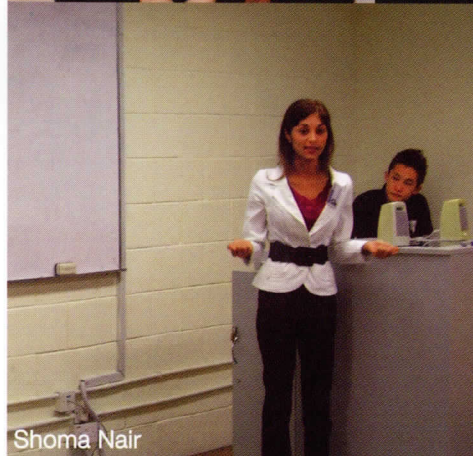
His colleague, Jocelyn Kung's research focused on audio-visual information. She told the audience that such information is best remembered despite having distractions around. "Females seem to remember more than males," she concluded.

There were two presentations on visual processes. Nur Diyanah Sulaiman suggested that, contrary to suggestions that women have poorer ability to find their way around using maps, there was no effect of hormonal level on these abilities. Kok Kwee Tze further explained that it takes more time for people to see the differences in two and three dimensional objects, as the angle of rotation increases. She also suggested that a person's mind may try to use the least time consuming method to recognise objects.

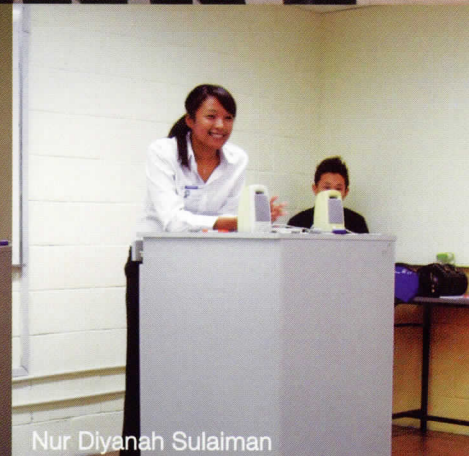
There were also other interesting topics by Lee Ai Suan, Shoma Nair, Cassandra Pillay, Cheng Hui Wen, Ling Si Ying, Tan Wan Ting, Chang Mei Yan, Foo Minyi and Wo Su Woan.



Some students who helped prepare for the colloquium



Shoma Nair



Nur Diyanah Sulaiman



Maziar Daghighi Masouleh



Jocelyn Kung Shu-Yi

Dine in



The Dining Room@Sunway

Level 5, North Building, Sunway University College
For reservations, call 03-74918622 Extn: 8510

The restaurant is open Tuesdays and Wednesdays for lunch only during the semesters. For **the Deli Café**, operational days are not fixed. Please call to enquire.

After a major renovation, the Dining Room@Sunway now offers Classical French Cuisine and International Cuisine as part of the newly introduced lunch menu; while the Deli offers quick bites of sandwiches, pastries and local cuisine. Here is a recipe from the Dining Room@Sunway.

Penne pasta with seabass

(serves 8)

Ingredients

400 gm Penne pasta
20 ml Olive oil
300 ml Cherry tomato, cut into halves

Pesto

50 gms Basil
10 gms Garlic
20 gms Pine nuts
10 gms Parmesan cheese
30 ml Olive oil
Salt
Crushed black pepper

8 pieces of seabass (100 gms per piece)
5 gm Sage
Salt
Crushed black pepper

Pesto preparation: Combine all the ingredients in a food processor and blend to a paste

Penne pasta:

Set the water to boil with salt and oil and when the water is boiled, add in the pasta, stir to prevent sticking. Drain off the pasta when it becomes soft and springy (al dente). Heat a pan with olive oil, put in the pasta followed with the pesto, toss. Add in the cherry tomato. Check seasoning.

Pan-fried fish:

Season the fish with sage, salt and pepper. Pan-fry the fish on a skillet until cooked.

Assembly:

Place the pasta tossed with pesto on a plate and top with the pan-fried fish.

