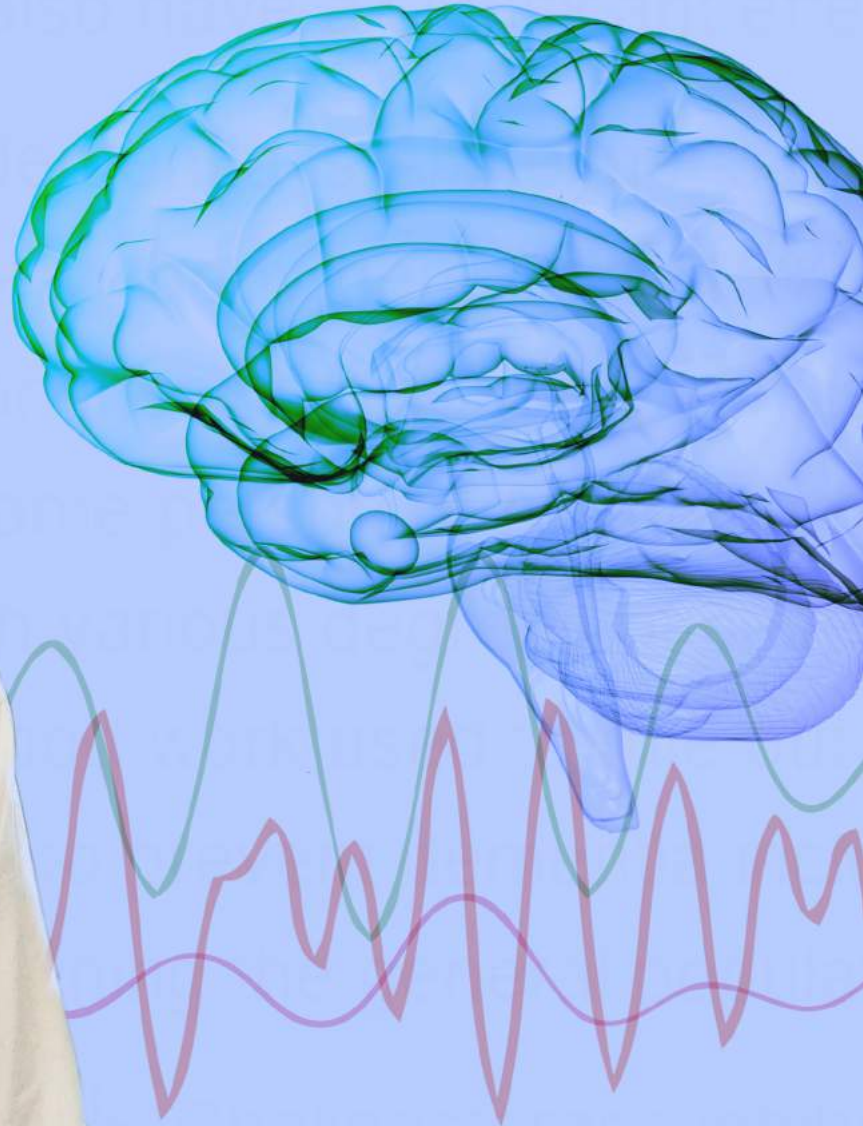


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# BLAZE

THE SUNWAY UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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**Maintenance of the Mind**  
We speak to Associate Professor  
**Dr. Lim Lee Wei** about his efforts  
in the battle against dementia

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Silicon Valley for Masters of Code!

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Oxford Symposium a smash hit

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Tan Sri Lin on education



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**BLAZE** is published quarterly. The name was selected as it signifies Sunway University's achievements in recent years. Sunway University is a trailblazer in education excellence that is pursued with flaming passion in the hearts of its employees and students.

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**Jeffrey Cheah Foundation**



*Nurturing the Seeds of Wisdom*

Founded by Sunway Group Chairman Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, AO, the Foundation continues the legacy of giving through providing quality education to all deserving Malaysians. More than RM720 million has been endowed into the Foundation. Since 1997, more than RM165 million worth of scholarships have benefitted over 20,000 students. The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation – which operates through the Sunway Education Group – is the first of its kind in Malaysia, and is based on the inspirational framework of the internationally-renowned Harvard University.

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*VICTORS WHO WILL GO TO THE VALLEY: (from left) Lim Jay Ching, Chew Kean Ho, Daniel Lim, Gwen Yin Wong and Leonardy Kristianto are all smiles as they get to go to California for a chance to compete in the Finals.*

**Sunway students get to go to Silicon Valley!**

Two students – one each from Sunway University and Sunway College – and their three high-calibre team mates demonstrated excellent computer science knowledge when they won the Regional Round of the *MasterCard Masters of Code Competition* held in Singapore.

Following their regional victory, Sunway University BSc (Hons) Information Technology student Leonardy Kristianto (20) and former Sunway College A-Level student Lim Jay Ching (19), will be given full funds to enable them to compete in the Grand Finale of the *Masters of Code* hackathon in Silicon Valley in December. There, they will have the opportunity to meet and learn from Silicon Valley experts, as well as undertake the *MasterCard Priceless Experience* tour of Napa Valley and San Francisco. Additionally, they will stand a chance to win the Grand Prize of US\$100,000 (RM377,000).

The *MasterCard Masters of Code Competition* is a series of hackathons (where

computer programmers and others collaborate intensively on software and hardware development) that traverses the globe, and gathers together the very best coders.

Lim, the youngest member of the team, was also its founder. He met the other three Malaysian teammates through a coding bootcamp to learn Ruby on Rails. After discovering the *MasterCard Masters of Code* competition, Lim convinced them to form a team, after which he immediately invited Leonardy to become the front-end designer.

Leonardy – who hails from Medan, Indonesia – only joined the team a day before the competition; however, there were no fears on that score as the team clicked instantly. "We identified and recognised each other's capabilities, and started brainstorming throughout the bus journey from Malaysia to Singapore," said the marathon runner, who is also active in academic and extra-curricular activi-

ties, such as volunteering for community services and designing the campus newsletter.

The team proved to be fearless, despite one of the features triggering an error during their first pitch – which left them with only 30 minutes to debug the system and solve the problem before the finals. "We managed to pull together in the end and it was really a close call from the competition!" said Leonardy.

The team is currently working on developing their hackathon skills, by forming a startup with their winning project "*One Small Step*", while simultaneously negotiating a partnership with the UN.

Sunway University and Sunway College are proud of the students' exceptional achievements. The institutions will continue to serve the community by nurturing more talented and well-rounded individuals like Leonardy and Lim. **BLAZE**



# Putting Parkinson's Disease in its place

Associate Professor Dr. Lim Lee Wei is an authoritative figure whose work is making headway in the fight against dementia and mental illness

Suffering from any of the numerous physical diseases is a burden that befalls the fate of many people – and more often than not, a majority of them have extreme difficulty in coping with the realities of it, never mind the effort and expense required to become cured. The problem becomes even more acute when the disease is not merely physical but affects the victim psychologically or mentally.

Amongst the most devastating of these diseases that befalls people from all over the world, dementia and depression are perhaps the most insidious. According to a 2008 report by Alzheimer's Disease International on the prevalence of dementia worldwide, it is predicted that the number of people suffering from dementia will be over 100 million. Meanwhile, more than 350 million people of all ages suffer from depression globally, making it the fourth leading cause of societal burden among all diseases, according to World Health Organisation.

Recently, however, a major breakthrough was achieved, thanks to the efforts of Associate Prof. Dr. Lim Lee Wei of Sunway University and his research colleagues from Europe. **BLAZE** caught up with the soft-spoken professor from Ipoh to talk to him about his work.

"Depression is quite a serious problem," said Dr. Lim, who teaches Neuroanatomy and Research Methods and Ethics at Sunway University. "It does not only affect the patient, but the entire family is affected as well. It is a global disease, and a social and economic burden to the government." According to Dr. Lim, approximately 20% of depression patients are resistant to existing treatments, such as pharmacotherapy, psychotherapy or electroconvulsive therapy, while approximately 60% of patients receive inadequate treatment. "What that means is that even though the treatments are effective, the depression actually relapses. So, are just we going to let this 60% suffer just like that? I say: 'No', and my team and I have worked very hard to do something about it."

That hard work, spanning a period of over five years, has led to the discovery that electrical stimulation into the brain – via a technique call Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS), which targets the prefrontal cortex – not only treats symptoms of depression most effectively, but is also effective in combatting dementia.

"Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) is quite a well-known technique; it is not new – it's just how you apply it that makes it a 'novel' factor," said Dr. Lim, who graduated as a medical doctor before pursuing his PhD. "Prior to this, while clinical studies have demonstrated the efficacy of DBS in treating depression, the most effective brain area to administer DBS for this purpose had not been identified. With this research, we are able to target the prefrontal cortex as a specific modulator of depressive-like behaviours – which meant that we could obtain the optimum result for treatment with DBS."

Miraculously, this new application of an existing technique – also known as Neuromodulation – was also able to reduce the symptoms of dementia in experimental animal models, which means that the potential to improve short-term and long-term memory functions is not only possible but effective.

Dr. Lim speaks in a calm and quiet manner – but it is very clear to see the passion and dedication he puts into his work, which comes through when you hear him talk about his research. "We looked through these treatment-resistant depression patients, to try and see if DBS is effective. At that time (2008), different centres have their own preference targets – and there were very strict standards about conducting clinical trials."

"I was doing my PhD at Maastricht University, and we had just received a very prestigious grant worth €300,000. On top of that, I myself received another grant – the Koostra Top Talent Research Fellowship €50,000 – so when I finished my PhD, I was able to immediately continue with this project on depression."

"We started the project in 2009, where I stimulated different targets in animals. Then, in 2011, I found very specific brain targets for which anti-depressants were very effective, compared to several other brain targets," he said, adding that in order to discover more about this mechanism, he collaborated with several universities to conduct some experiments.

The results were encouraging, and Lim was able to write and defend his research paper, which led to him receiving the very prestigious Lee Kwan Yew Research Fellowship in August 2011. It was not all smooth sailing, though. "During the first year when I started to work on the project, most of the experiments failed; it really was very difficult to get good results. But I persevered, and got some good results in 2013, which continued on to 2014. By March of this year, I wrote up the whole thing and submitted it for peer review – and when it was polished and completed, I could announce what was essentially a major breakthrough," he said with little laugh.

It is a disarmingly low-key and self-deprecating statement, considering that the news spread like wildfire not only in the medical journals but in the mainstream news as well. It is even more amazing when you consider that Dr. Lim's humbleness does nothing to conceal his brilliant mind. It is this brilliance that led him to be chosen by Majlis Anugerah Inovasi ("Innovation Awards Council") as a Finalist for the *National Young Scientist Awards 2015*.

## Humble beginnings, determination

When asked about what gave him his drive and motivation to do this research, Dr. Lim talked about his background. "I finished my PhD within such a short period of time: I started in May 2007, and finished in February 2009, slightly less than two years," he said with a smile.

After he finished studying medicine, Dr. Lim got a scholarship to do a Masters in the Netherlands. "At the time, all my colleagues were PhD students and candidates – and this motivated me to do a PhD. Normally, I worked day and night to

make sure that I could get the PhD done within a short period of time. During this time, I developed my passion and patience for research. I discovered that I loved research more than I did clinical work, and that is

what made me stay back to pursue the PhD," he said. "My family had actually objected when I wanted to pursue the PhD. They told me: 'If you work and open a clinic, you can earn tons of money!' But research is the opposite. However, when I got my PhD, they were so proud of me."

Dr. Lim was quite frank about how difficult life was for him: his parents had divorced, and his biological father had passed away, so he was under the custody of his grandmother. "At that time, I was the most mischievous boy in the kampung. I didn't do well in my study. When I was 11, my family planned to send me to a welfare home – and on the advice of the pastor, they sent me to the Salvation Army Boy's Home in Ipoh."

He recounted how difficult it was for him, because he didn't speak either Bahasa Malaysia or English, and how he would sneak into the toilets late at night after lights-out to study by himself – and it paid off when he scored four As for his PMR exam, much to the surprise of his family and the home. The young man had also prayed for two things: for a loving parent figure, and for the chance to do medicine. Amazingly, his prayers were answered, in the form of a man known as Mr. Ong. "He used to come and donate to the Home – and he adopted me as a son. God touched Mr. Ong – and he supported me all the way, both here and when I studied in the Ukraine. He is still alive in Ipoh, and I owe my success to him and my uncles."

Dr. Lim then explained the reason why he does what he does. "My father and uncle died of electrocution in Singapore – and it drove my grandmother into a depression. To-

## "My father and uncle died of electrocution in Singapore – and it drove my grandmother into a depression. Today, I use electricity to treat depression – and the breakthrough was conducted in Singapore."

day, I use electricity to treat depression – and the breakthrough was conducted in Singapore. Because my grandmother suffered from depression, it made me study and work on depression. And as I worked on depression, she developed dementia. It made me realise that I should do something about dementia too."

"In the university, I teach about the brain, as well as research methods and ethics; how you should perform that research, what kinds of methods to use, from the very basic level to the highest. I also continue my research, and I have found the university to be very supportive of my work. In many respects, Sunway is just starting out as far as involvement in my line is concerned – and I know that there will definitely be a bright future for Sunway," Lim said, adding that although he would be leaving the university at the end of August to pursue further research elsewhere, he does not rule out returning back in future to teach at the university once more. **BLAZE**



RECOGNITION: Lim was selected by Majlis Anugerah Inovasi to be a Finalist for the National Young Scientist Awards 2015.



## JCDSS returns stronger than ever

Since 2005, the *Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Speakers Series* (JCDSS) at Sunway University has given the community and general public an opportunity to listen to outstanding experts speak on a variety of issues. Serving as a platform for intellectual discourse and lifelong learning, this series is one of the many activities which Sunway University has embarked on to further boost its social responsibility efforts through education, and shows no sign of slowing down even a decade after its inauguration.

The year 2014 saw two special lectures: a medical lecture by Harvard Medical School neurology professor Prof. Dr. Igor Koralnik; and a history lecture on Southeast Asia by Prof. Peter Carey, Fellow Emeritus of Trinity College of the University of Oxford. After a short break, the JCDSS returned stronger in 2015 with three public lectures in March at the state-of-the-art auditoriums within the university's brand new 12-storey building.

For this year, Sunway University Chancellor and Sunway Group Founder and Chairman Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, AO, brought in three distinguished guest speakers: University of Oxford Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Development and External Affairs and Professor of Behavioural Neuroscience Prof. Nick Rawlins; University of California Professor of Economics and of Political Science and University of Cambridge Professorial Fellow at Gonville & Caius College Prof. Barry Eichengreen; and Prof. Jeffrey Sachs, Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon.

For many years, Prof. Rawlins has had his research in the areas of neural basis of memory, brain degeneration, pain and anxiety widely published. As the first JCDSS guest speaker at Sunway for the year, he spoke on the topic of "*Pain and the Brain*", which explored the human brain and his new experimental work on phantom limb pain.

Listed as one of *Foreign Policy Magazine's* 100 Leading Global Thinkers in 2011, Prof. Eichengreen was a Senior Policy Advisor at the International Monetary Fund. His topic in the JCDSS lecture series was "*Global Economic Prospects: What Should Keep Us Up at Night?*", where he laid his analysis and argued against the global



**DISTINGUISHED GUEST SPEAKERS:** (clockwise from top left): Tan Sri Dr. Cheah (left) presenting a token of appreciation to Prof. Sachs; the lecture by Prof. Sachs saw an audience of more than 500; Prof. Eichengreen; Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr Elizabeth Lee (in red) chaired and facilitated the lecture by Prof Rawlins (sitting next to Dr Lee).

consensus view of seeing a stronger US dollar in 2015, and focusing on the downside risks of the global economy.

Last and certainly not least was the famous Prof. Sachs, who has 30 years of experience in international development, and holds many key and influential posts with NGOs and think tanks from around the world. Speaking on "*The Age of Sustainable Development*", he argued that 2015 is a defining year for sustainable development and a year of several important global negotiations. "If we make it right we can make a difference in the world. If we neglect and get it wrong, it will be an opportunity that is not going to come back anytime soon," said Prof. Sachs, adding that he hoped to reach out to more people, in order to share on what is at stake and what needs to be done to encourage all governments, who will ultimately be the ones to negotiate the agreements during the second half of 2015. Prof. Sachs is certainly no stranger to Sunway University, with this lecture being his second ever visit to the educa-

tional stronghold that he described as a "profoundly impressive rising institute".

Sunway University Public Lecture Coordination Committee Co-chair Dato' Dr. Goh Cheng Teik was especially pleased with the response to this year's JCDSS series. "The popularity of the Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Speakers Series can be ascertained from the increasing attendance levels. Each lecture this year has set a new attendance record and this afternoon (at Prof Sach's lecture), we witness a new record, and we have some over 500 registered present," said the recognised academician and scholar, who is a long standing member of the Sunway University Board, as well as a former Deputy Minister during both the Tun Hussein and Tun Mahathir administrations.

More JCDSS lectures will be held throughout the year. For more information, or to subscribe to the JCDSS mailing list for updates on future talks, please visit <http://sunway.edu.my/university/JCDSS/mail-list>. **BLAZE**



**REGAL BEGINNING:** His Royal Highness the Sultan of Perak strikes the gong to signify the start of the Symposium, as JCF Founding Trustee Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah (left) and Oxford Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Nick Rawlins (second left) look on.

## World's top thinkers attend Oxford Symposium in Malaysia

The 4th Southeast Asian Studies Symposium, the world's largest annual conference on Southeast Asia organised by the University of Oxford, was hosted by Sunway University and the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia (JCI) from 20 to 22 March – the first time that the symposium has ever held outside of Oxford.

The guest of honour was the Sultan of Perak, Duli Yang Maha Mulia Paduka Seri Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibuddin Shah Al-Maghfurlah. His Royal Highness – who is both an alumnus of the University of Oxford, as well as the Royal Patron of JCI – delivered the royal keynote address. Among those in attendance were Jeffrey Cheah Foundation Founding Trustee and Sunway University Chancellor and Sunway Group Founder and Chairman Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, AO; University of Oxford Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Nick Rawlins; and

National University of Singapore East Asian Institute Chairman Professor Wang Gungwu, CBE, who delivered the keynote lecture.

The Symposium – themed "*The Year of ASEAN: Integrating Southeast Asia*" – was also the first public event to be held at the New University Building, and highlighted of a week of intense intellectual discourse and discussions, with global thinkers and thought leaders comprising academics, business, political and civil society leaders coming together to address Southeast Asia's most important challenges.

In conjunction with the Symposium, Sunway University also hosted the Asian



*Economic Panel* conference (AEP) from 23 to 24 March, bringing in former lawmakers in Southeast Asian countries together on one platform, which was chaired by JCI President Professor Woo Wing Thy. Amongst the distinguished panellists were Former Indonesian Minister of Trade Dr. Mari Pangestu; Former Thai Minister of Finance and Thailand Development Research Institute Former President Dr. Chalongphob Sussangkarn; and Former Indonesian Minister of Finance Dr. Muhammad Chatib Basri. **BLAZE**



## Mobility for all with launch of BRT-Sunway Line

In addition to promoting a healthy lifestyle among the staff and students, Sunway also looks to enhance mobility for all. In its newest initiative, Sunway Bhd – in collaboration with Prasarana Malaysia Bhd, under the innovative public-Private Partnership (PPP) programme – broke new frontiers with Malaysia’s first elevated Bus Rapid Transit system: the BRT-Sunway Line.

Officiated by Prime Minister Dato’ Seri Mohd. Najib Abdul Razak on June 1, 2015, the BRT combines the convenient features of a Light Rapid Transit (LRT) system with the use of a comprehensive system, made up of dedicated lanes, environmentally-friendly electric buses and customer-friendly infrastructure. Present at the official ceremony were Prasarana Chairman Tan Sri Ismail Adam, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai and Sunway Group Founder and Chairman Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, AO.

In his speech, Tan Sri Cheah said that Sunway had achieved a remarkable milestone for the nation’s public transportation at large. “We believe that this first-of-its-kind project in Malaysia will be setting the minimum benchmark standard and model for all future BRT lines and public-private initiatives. I am pleased to inform that the BRT-Sunway Line has been completed three weeks ahead of schedule,” he said.



**GRAND OPENING:** (From left) Prasarana Group Managing Director Azmi Abdul Aziz, Prasarana Chairman Tan Sri Ismail Adam, Prime Minister Dato’ Seri Mohd. Najib bin Abdul Razak, Sunway Group Founder and Chairman Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, AO, and Sunway Group Deputy Chairman Tan Sri Datuk Seri Razman M. Hashim.

Consisting of a fully-elevated 5.4km highway, the BRT-Sunway Line will be serviced by 15 environmental-friendly electric buses. There are seven stations, including one with a “Park ‘n Ride”, as well as a depot. With a top speed of 80km/hour, the buses are fully-equipped with universal access facilities

for the disabled, and has a capacity of 67 passengers (25 seated). The seven stations are: Sunway-Setia Jaya; Mentari; Sunway Lagoon; SunMed; SunU-Monash; South Quay; and USJ7 as the final station.

Kompleks BRT Sunway – which is located across from the SunU-Monash Station – houses the “Park ‘n Ride” facilities, and provides a total of 1,153 parking bays, including 102 special bays for lady drivers and 23 for handicapped parking. The BRT-Sunway Line will be connected to the KTM Komuter Setia Jaya Station and the LRT network via Station 7 (USJ7) of the extended LRT line, which is currently under construction and scheduled to be opened next year. **BLAZE**

**HISTORIC RIDE:** (from right) The first official BRT run, with Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, Prime Minister Dato’ Seri Mohd. Najib bin Abdul Razak, Transportation Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai and PEMANDU CEO Dato’ Sri Idris Jala.



**FUN AND GAMES:** The crowd were excited to start using the awesome facilities!

## Game on at Sunway University!

The new field was abuzz with activities as students and staff members of Sunway University and Sunway College gathered at the new sports facilities for an evening of friendly matches of football, tennis, basketball and netball.

Sunway University Vice-Chancellor Prof. Graeme Wilkinson, Sunway Group Education and Healthcare Division CEO Dr. Lee Weng Keng, and Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee were on hand to officially launch the facilities by releasing balloons, before joining the students and staff for a group exercise and warm-up session to start off the games.

The new sports facilities include a FIFA-certified synthetic turf football field, tennis courts, basketball court and a



gym – exciting, state-of-the-art amenities that can be enjoyed by all Sunway University students and staff members. The 12,000 sq ft SunGym can accommodate up to 250 people at any one time. Open daily to students and staff of Sunway University, Sunway College and Monash University Malaysia, it offers a wide variety of classes, including Zumba, Yoga, Boot-camp style and Cross-fit

style workouts, among others.

Focusing on the student community, the SunGym also offers Personal Training, Physio-Therapy, basic supplements, guidance on weight loss and weight gain at reasonable fees. This means that everyone can not only expand their minds, but get healthier at the same time – while having fun, to boot! **BLAZE**



## A wise, gentle soul with a sharp mind

Tan Sri Dr. Lin See Yan's recent appointment as Sunway University Pro Chancellor and Research Professor is not surprising, as he shows no sign of slowing down as time goes by

As the **BLAZE** team walked into the office of recently appointed Sunway University Pro Chancellor and Research Professor Tan Sri Lin See Yan – which looks deceptively unassuming from the outside – it seemed like we had entered a small world of its own, as it also appeared to double up as a mini library, museum and art gallery, dotted with collectibles and souvenirs from distinguished global personalities – including a painting from the late Nelson Mandela. Looking for all the world like a wizened master, Tan Sri Lin – who also sits on the Board of Trustees of the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation – greeted us with a warm smile, sparkling eyes and a firm handshake, putting us at ease immediately as we plonked down on the comfortable classic Chesterfield sofas.

It seems that the word “retirement” does not apply to Tan Sri Lin; when you consider that since he finished his tenure with Bank Negara Malaysia (the Central Bank), he has been keeping busy for the past 20 years with a list of activities and bodies – both commercial and non-commercial – that would shame anyone even one-third of his age. Among other things, Tan Sri Lin has run a commercial bank; taken on advisory roles in the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the national economic council working group; served on the boards of public-listed companies and private enterprises, including Cabot Malaysia, Silverlake Axis, Jobstreet, Top Glove, Genting, Ancom, and Wah Seong – and that does not count his contributions to Great Eastern, F&N, Straits Trading and *The Star*.

“What do I do if I retire?” said the Harvard-educated economist with a quiet laugh. “I would get on my wife’s nerves if I stay in the house. How much coffee or *roti canais* can I have?” In a nutshell, Sunway University’s new Pro Chancellor is not one to rest on his laurels, but one who believes in setting and maintaining a good example for people to emulate. “I’m here (in the office) every day until 7pm. There is a lot that I can do, and I enjoy it. Many people come and see me



to ask for help – they know I sit on many foundations, so they ask for scholarships, or assistance. I try my best to help,” said Tan Sri Lin, adding that his own Lin Foundation, which is run by his wife, had recently organised a fundraiser for people affected by the Nepal earthquake.

So what keeps a 76-year-old economist with a zestful demeanour going? “Curiosity,” said the mindful gentleman in a simple, matter-of-fact tone. “I keep learning – and there are a lot of things you can learn about... You have to keep doing something. I write, teach and travel a lot.

I also contribute to think tanks; after all, I’ve been more than 50 years in the business, and of many businesses at that!” he said with a chuckle.

Tan Sri Lin is well-known for his writing, the scope of which is impressively eclectic: from comments on business trends to social and cultural issues, it seems that he really means it when he says “I write about almost everything”. To this day, Tan Sri Lin writes a regular column in *The Star* newspaper, and he recently came out with a book – *The Global Economy in Turbulent Times* – that is a compilation of

his columns over the past few years for the daily paper. The book was officially launched by the Sultan of Perak, Duli Yang Maha Mulia Paduka Seri Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfurlah, at Sunway University on June 15, 2015 – and it even has an illustration by popular Malaysian cartoonist, Lat, who managed to capture the mischievously charismatic character of Tan Sri Lin in a minimal number of strokes. “The book has around 1,000 pages covering issues of world economy, education, the middle class, poverty, corporate governance. My experience has enabled me to have a very wide scope and big coverage of things.”

His vast experience certainly counts for a lot, as Tan Sri Lin has the unique advantage of having served all six of Malaysia’s prime ministers, not to mention a stint with the country’s first ever finance minister, Tun H. S. Lee. His experience, travels and voracious appetite for reading and gaining knowledge ensure that he has a broad and unassailable grasp of the world stage. When asked how the business landscape of today has changed compared to before, he said: “Companies and their boards now have become more professional.”

“This is opposed to the traditional family-run companies, whose owners relied on instincts or their gut feel. They often never paid much attention to the companies’ feasibilities – but companies now are growing by use of public money. They liquefy their investments, rather than have their money held up by properties like buildings and factories – they sell off the buildings, then lease it back.” Tan Sri Lin mentioned Mid Valley as an example, where the holding company is not only the majority owner of the business, but sold the business to a REIT, which it in turn manages.

“You leverage whatever (little) money you have, and leverage it in a good way. In the old days, you couldn’t borrow a lot, as banks were very conservative. Now, you can leverage it up using new instruments – so the business is more dynamic and flexible. But it increases the risks,” he cautioned. Tan Sri Lin’s words can certainly be taken at face value, considering the rather coincidental fact that practically every single business entity whose board he sits on goes from strength to strength – certainly from the moment he joins right up to the time he leaves.



WORDS OF WISDOM: (from left) JCF Founding Trustee Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, His Royal Highness the Sultan of Perak and Tan Sri Lin at the launch of the latter’s book.

## “You cannot get an electric bulb by trying to improve the candle.”

### Dead serious about education

Tan Sri Lin’s endeavours when it comes to education are as legendary as his career – and he certainly has something to say about improving the education system in Malaysia. “We can do a lot,” he said in a serious tone that is quite different from his usual jolly mode. “We can – and must – change mindsets. I believe that when you want to do something, you shouldn’t do it unless you have a passion for it. Otherwise, it will be done ‘half-past-six’: neither here or there. A lot of things we do are simple – it’s common sense. The only thing is, that involves change. If you ask people, they say they will change – but they don’t change. Change doesn’t come easy – but you have to change.”

Tan Sri Lin stressed that change not only applies to people. “Look at Kodak. They discovered cameras and digital cameras – but they opposed digital, and were killed by it. We have to completely change how we do things. You cannot get an electric bulb by trying to improve the candle. We have to change the system and the attitudes, and to get tough. Sometimes, people compromise – but never compromise on principles.”

He insists that the country must be committed to quality education, and that parents have to take responsibility, and not just leave it to the schools. Giving the example of his own parents, who were teachers, Tan Sri Lin longs for a return to the days when teachers had great respect in society. “Change is better than the status quo,” he says, espousing on the importance in learning the liberal arts where “you study everything”. “You have to understand history to understand yourself. Understand the mistakes of the past by understanding history. I write and try to help young people. The only thing I can do now is to try to influence in the best way I know. A lot of these things, I won’t get to see in my lifetime. So that’s why I still write and teach.”

As both the Chairman Emeritus of the Harvard Graduate School Alumni Association Council at Harvard University and the President of the Harvard Club of Malaysia, Tan Sri Lin is working hard to bring more Harvard people to come and share their knowledge with Sunway. “We want to encourage more exchange of scholars to upgrade the standard of education, and to promote more research on Southeast Asia. Because without enough research work, we can’t get good policies,” he said, stressing on the importance of having access to transparent and accountable information and data in order to get enough data for research and analysis.

“That’s what education is all about: organising and putting data together, analysing them, putting into a form that people understand, and with tools to analyse. If we’re serious about improving the education system, we need to get the input from all the people involved.” **BLAZE**



## SUMS heroes help make the 'Zero Birthday' a reality

The Sunway University Business School (SUBS) – through the efforts of the Sunway University Marketing Society (SUMS) – recently threw a “Zero Birthday Party” to commemorate the launch of Sunway University’s new BSc (Hons) Marketing programme.

The BSc (Hons) Marketing is a specialised degree encompassing the multifaceted components of marketing knowledge, and is designed to groom marketing champions with a focus on understanding consumer behaviour as a driver of product design, distribution, communication and pricing strategy. The idea of celebrating the new programme came from Associate Dean of Postgraduate Programmes Prof. Brian Charles Imrie, together with his team consisting of Dr. Choy Tuck Yun, Jessica Ho Sze Yin and Padma Priya K.R. Pillai, as well as senior lecturers and lecturers from the Department of Marketing and the founding members of the BSc (Hons) Marketing programme.

Praising the team’s effort in getting the approval from the Ministry of Education to launch the programme, Prof. Imrie elaborated on the hardship of rolling out the “dual award” programme, where students of the new programme will be receiving two scrolls upon graduation: one from Sunway University, and another from Lancaster University.

Lancaster University is not only ranked in the Top 1% of universities worldwide and Top 10 in the UK, but its Marketing Department is also the UK’s very first established university marketing department and ranked first in the *Complete University Guide 2015*.

Asides from cakes and balloons, two guest speakers were invited to speak at the birthday party, which served as an alternative learning channel for current SUBS students. BSc (Hons) Marketing students sat in to lectures by DiGi Marketing Division Head of Department of E-Business Ramesh Rajandran; and L’Oréal Sdn Bhd Recruitment and Integration Manager Zubbir Raffiq, and their lectures covered digital marketing and tips of getting into a career in marketing.



**PARTY ON:** (clockwise from top) The Zero Birthday Party was a success for SUBS and SUMS; Fionne was praised for her professionalism during her internship at GE; Julian was described as ‘the epitome of a talented Sunway University graduate with high potentials to rise as a future business leader’.

### SUMS that add up to greatness

The party was deemed a success, thanks to the support and help of the SUMS members, who set up and decorated the venue, in addition to coordinating and hosting the event. SUMS President Ding Der-Jiunn said that SUMS is a testing ground for students to be exposed to the business world.

That exposure has certainly proven useful for Sunway University student Fionne Wong Siang Ning. The final year BSc (Hons) Business Management student not only successfully secured an internship offer with multinational powerhouse General Electric (GE), but also completed it so well that she gained great feedback from her employers.

Fionne worked as an EID intern with the Human Resource (HR) department, reporting to GE HR Director for Malaysia and Brunei Sugunah Verumandy. “I felt fortunate to be able to contribute. There was so much to learn from the internship on human resource,” she said.

Another SUMS member who proved to be a hero at the Zero was former SUMS President Julian Lee Zu Yao. The 22-year-old, who is currently undergoing Semester 1 of Year 3 of the BSc (Hons) Business Studies programme, will be joining as a L’Oréal Management Trainee 2016. “Through my involvement with SUMS, I have been exposed to many opportunities of networking with companies from various industries and exposure from the various events held,” he said.

Meanwhile, Zubbir described Julian as the epitome of a talented Sunway University graduate with high potential to rise as a future business leader, and he urged the students to learn from Julian.

The *Zero Birthday Party* is the first of many upcoming events that BSc (Hons) Marketing students should expect. For more information about BSc (Hons) Marketing or other programmes under SUBS, please call **03-7491 8622**, or log on to <http://sunway.edu.my/university/subs>. **BLAZE**

## The TEDxSunway Club takes flight

The TED global set of conferences has already become an important and much-anticipated event for the dissemination of the things that make up its slogan: “Ideas Worth Spreading”. It has become so popular that an offshoot series – TEDx – was created to support independent organisers who want to create a TED-like event in their own community. That spirit has now come to Sunway University, where approximately one hundred students attended the TEDxSunway Club launch, organised entirely by students of Sunway University.

“In bringing TEDx events to Sunway, my team and I wanted to provide a platform for like-minded, curious and passionate thinkers, who are interested in participating in a TED-like experience,” said TEDxSunway Club President Nicole Tan in her speech. She confessed to being both terrified and elated when approached with the idea of the club, as the responsibility to maintain and uphold the standards of TEDx are not light. However, Nicole said that thanks to the help and support of Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee, and the dedicated team of student leaders, the TEDxSunway Club was successfully established, and set to

prosper with a continuous succession of Sunway students. The planning and formation of the TEDxSunway Club began last year in November. Currently, the club has 31 members.

In her welcoming address, Dr. Lee said that TED’s mission “in the spirit of ideas worth spreading” is akin to the spreading of good deeds - for at TEDx events, the goal of the speakers is to teach the audience something new, something they didn’t know before, and something profound enough to inspire and change the audience’s view of the subject matter. “The subject matters are pretty wide as TED encompasses Technology, Entertainment and Design – hence, the sharing of ideas from the speakers to the audience is the creation of a cycle, and the good deed is passing on information and knowledge,” she said.

The speakers for the day were Refuge for the Refugees (RFTR) Founder Heidi Quah; Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI) Chief Operating Officer Ng Yeon Seen; BeatNation Founder-CEO Cody Foo; and Monash University Malaysia Clinical Associate Professor of Surgery and Glenagles Intan Medical Centre Consultant Urological Surgeon Dr. George Lee. Also

present at the event was TEDxKL Head Curator Daniel Cerventus Lim.

Quah shared her experience and passion in helping Myanmar refugee children by providing the children with education. This was done through RFTR, a registered non-governmental organisation she founded when she was just 18 years old. Meanwhile, Ng spoke on the challenges faced whilst trying to rally sponsors to support efforts to provide financial aid for food, water and necessities for her fellow citizens of Kelantan. This was in the wake of the recent floods that devastated the entire state, and she paid tribute to the doctors, nurses and volunteers who helped.

Foo – better known as five-time beatbox champion Coex and the brains behind Beatnation – was the third speaker. The beatbox aficionado and leading educator in the beatbox movement entertained the crowd with various performances throughout his talk. Finally, Dr. Lee’s talk on urology focused mainly on the journey of fear. Touching and speaking based on his own experience, Dr. Lee spoke on the various points of fear. The day proved to be interesting and informative in a well-balanced manner for the attendees. **BLAZE**



### THOUGHTS FOR THINKERS:

(from back left)

Dr. Elizabeth Lee (in red),

Nicole Tan, Ng Yeon Seen,

Cody Foo and

Dr. George Lee pose

with the TEDxSunway Club

Committee.





## Crowds throng Career Month to 'Get Hired'

Recently, Sunway University and Sunway College were ranked *No 1. in Asia for Graduate Employability*, according to the *i-graduate Student Barometer Survey Entry Wave 2014*. This is amazingly impressive, as the survey tracks feedback from over two million students from 1,400 universities, colleges, schools and government agencies across 30 countries in Asia. Being recognised as Asia's No. 1, it is a sterling tribute and testimony to the hard work of Sunway's academic and administrative staff in nurturing its students to be highly competent in meeting the job market.

In view of this, Sunway University and Sunway College's popular Career Month returned in April 2015 to great reception, having "Get Hired 2015" as the theme for this round. The Career Month is one of the many initiatives at Sunway to help connect students with prospective employers and prepare students for the working world.

The Career Month featured various career talks by employers from prominent companies; Industry and CEO Forums, which involved panelists of top management from notable companies; a Resumé Clinic, which honed students' curriculum vitae writing skills; and visits to various companies, which gave students a sneak peek into the real working world.

Participating students mainly came from the Sunway University Business School (SUBS); the Faculty of Science and Technology; the Centre for Tourism, Hospitality and Culinary Management; and Sunway College's Victoria University, Sunway TES Centre for Accountancy Excellence. The Sunway Career Services Team has once again delivered an impressive and informative Career Month, by having an impressive lineup of speakers to take part. Sunway students were able to learn the most up-to-date job market demands and tips in order to secure an internship or full time job.

The Industry Forum: Branding & Marketing Forum – entitled "Creating a World Class Brand" – featured Scoot Chief Executive Officer Daniel Joshua; Eight Gourmets Executive Director June Chang; and RHB Bank Head of Group Brand Marketing ST Rajen. The *Industry Forum for Accounting and Finance* featured notable personnel from the Big Four, including KPMG Tax Partner Tai Lai Kok; PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Executive Director of Tax Anushia Joan Soosaipillai; and Ernst & Young Tax Consultants Sdn Bhd Partner of Human Capital Tan Lay Keng.

The CEO Forum – "Winning with People" – was one of the main highlights of the Career Month, with Mattel Southeast Asia Country Manager Petrina Kho; HSBC Bank Malaysia Chief Executive Officer Mukhtar Hussain; and Shell Business Operations Kuala Lumpur General Manager Nyon Kam Yew forming the forum's panel. **BLAZE**





## Young leaders for 2015 Student Council

Sunway University's dynamic Student Council has always been an admirable and commendable student body – and recently, the outgoing team formally handed over the reins to a new batch for 2015, secure in the knowledge that their legacy will not only be matched the new team, but bettered as well.

"To those of you entering into the Student Council today, you are entering into the realm of student leadership, which can both be a challenge and an honour," said Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee. "You are representatives of the student body, and embody the best in student qualities that our university has to offer. I do hope that you will be mindful of this as you embark on your duties and tasks."

Outgoing Student Council President Teoh Han Ee paid tribute to various parties – his pro-active and highly committed team; Vice Chancellor Professor Graeme Wilkinson; Deputy Vice Chancellor Professor Pua Eng Chong; Dr. Elizabeth Lee; and Sunway University heads of departments and staff – for their continuous guidance and support during his tenure. "When faced with challenges, always remember to talk to your team and move together as one," he advised his successors. "Be a fighter, be in a team."

"I could be the voice of the students and turn ideas into reality," said incoming Student Council President Kelly Goh Siok Mun. "I am grateful to my previous seniors, who gave me both the drive to take on this challenge, as well as support. Of course, my friends, acquaintances and students of Sunway University played a big role too, by voting for me and giving me this chance to represent them."

Currently pursuing her second year in the BSc (Hons) Business Studies degree, Goh hopes to connect with her fellow students, in order to promote a better bond of friendship between the students and the Student Council – a move she knows will ensure that students are comfortable in sharing ideas and opinions for a better university experience.

Meanwhile, new Vice President Yoon Peili said that she hopes that, together with



READY TO BEGIN: The Sunway University Student Council 2015/2016 with Student Services Director Lee Siok Ping (in yellow).

all the members of the Student Council, "...we are able to be the channel of communication between students and the management, with regards to any issues that they face on campus".

The Sunway University Student Council is the governing body for the Sunway University Student Association, where they act as representative voices for student opinions, handle important issues on campus and help the university management to execute various objectives.

Last year in 2014, the Student Council collaborated with the Sunway Volunteer Society on various causes, including helping out at the Kechara Soup Kitchen and collecting daily essentials for the East Coast Flood relief.

Earlier this year, the two collaborated with the Chinese Independent School Alumni Club (CISA) and the Chinese Cultural Society (CCS) on the *Young and Fun Festival* for a day of festive celebration ushering in the Chinese New Year, featuring a *24 Seasons Drum, Chinese Traditional Dance and Lion Dance* performances by students. **BLAZE**

### Sunway University Student Council 2015/2016

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Kelly Goh Siok Mun

Vice President  
Yoon Peili

Secretary  
James Ooi Weng Teik

Treasurer  
Chow Shenn Kuan

Director of Academic Affairs  
Jaymie Tan Lynn Wei

Director of Advertising and Promotions  
Chan Choon Hee

Director of Community Service  
Carmen Choong Wai Lum

Director of Extracurricular Activities  
Chan Ga Yen

Director of International Students  
Abdullahi Anas Jibril

Director of Student Welfare  
Chua Mun Ying

## The 'local' Korean from KL

Jung Chul Soon  
Diploma in Hospitality & Tourism Management

Even though he originally hails from South Korea, Jung Chul Soon feels confident in saying that Kuala Lumpur is his *kampung* ("hometown"). "I first came to Malaysia when I was only 8 years old, and basically grew up in KL. I love Malaysia, especially for the "makan-makan" (eating)! Every state here is also so full of heritage – and I am from a land where the population is only about 51 million (compared to Malaysia's 20+ million), but with a land size that is probably three times smaller than Malaysia!"

Jung considers it a privilege to be able to graduate in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Sunway. "The reason why I chose Sunway was because I always had a passion for the hospitality industry. At that point in time, I had many friends who chose Sunway. Naturally, that meant that I would choose Sunway Uni to kick start my learning curve."

"The course was very interesting for me – especially since I was coming from a non-cooking background! All the cooking classes were eye openers – especially when I had to dig through the innards of a chicken, or fillet a fish! Before I knew it, two years just passed by, and I graduated and started my working life," he said, adding that it was tough choosing which hotel department he wanted to work in.

"I did not know where I wanted to be. Then, I had the opportunity to be in the Sales Department, which I took as I would learn how to sell the 'property' that I belonged to. From then on, I moved to the Revenue Department, where I was responsible for strategies to sell the hotel at the right price, to the right people, at the right time. This was very interesting, because by planning ahead, you could see revenue going up – or in some cases with bad decisions, you can see the revenue going downwards."



Currently, Jung works for Aloft Kuala Lumpur Sentral and Four Points by Sheraton Sandakan – in the Revenue Department, of course. "For me, I still feel this is just the starting point. I am ever ready to discover new ways of doing things to make myself better in what I am doing," he said, adding that his advice to all the readers is to always go for your dream, but to start with baby steps first. "Then, when you feel you are ready, fly to your final destination." **BLAZE**

## Computers and culture

Yap Mun Keong  
Bachelor of Information Systems (First Class Honors)

For Yap Mun Keong, the journey in Sunway University has been a long ride. "I started in Sunway as an AUSMAT student in 2010, before continuing as a Bachelor of Information Systems student."

Along the way, he also got nominated for the Sunway University Korean Cultural and Language Programme in Daelim University, South Korea in 2011. "It was great, as I directly gained a better insight on Korean cultural experience," he said, adding that the support of the Korean students and lecturers was invaluable.

Throughout his studies at Sunway University, Mun Keong was actively involved in clubs and societies which motivated him to become the Sunway Statistical Analysis System (SAS) Club President and the Sunway Young Entrepreneur Society (YES) Club Student Advisor. "Joining the

clubs and societies have well equipped me with industrial skills - plus I got to make many new friends in the process."

After completing his degree, Mun Keong joined Hilti in 2013 as an SAP ByDesign IT Process Consultant in the area of Reporting. "I am responsible in various roles, which range from support, project development and implementation, fulfilling legal requirements, and providing training to the end users and developers," he said. Since January 2014, Mun Keong had the chance to contribute to the successful roll-out of the SAP ByDesign system in Kuwait, Lithuania, Estonia, Ukraine, Belarus, Greece, Colombia, and Oman.

Mun Keong is currently pursuing an MSc in Information Systems at Sunway University. **BLAZE**





## The foundation of his career

Dominic Ho  
Bachelor in Computer Science

Twinning programmes between local universities and foreign ones hold several key advantages for many people. They provide an assurance of quality education – particularly when they are with institutions that are renowned the world over – while at the same time resulting in a lessening of the financial burden for the student, compared to the outlay that would ensue had they undertaken a full study course overseas.

Dominic Ho certainly agrees with this, having undergone the process himself. He started as an undergraduate student of the Sunway-Western Michigan University Twinning Programme, before eventually transferring to Western Michigan University (WMU), Kalamazoo, Michigan as a junior to complete his

Bachelor in Computer Science. “It was definitely quite an experience, and I am glad that I went through the twinning programme. During my final



*CENTRE OF KNOWLEDGE: The Dwigth B. Waldo Library at the WMU campus.*

semester, I did a one-year internship programme with Pfizer in Portage, Michigan, and I really learned a lot from it.”

Upon graduating and obtaining an Optional Practical Training (OPT) card from the US government, Dominic moved to a different American environment: Fremont, California, a part of the legendary Silicon Valley near the San Francisco Bay Area. He did this in order to enroll for Software QA Testing training, to gain both knowledge and experience. “I wanted to study something that I could take with me, and improve upon for the rest of my life,” said the young man.

After training and working for several years in the Bay Area, Dominic decided to return home to Malaysia for work. He currently works in IRIS Corporation Bhd as a Software QA, where his job is to test software applications, devices and firmware for Trusted ID Card and Electronic Passport.

Returning home of course meant gathering up his old college mates for a reunion – the traditional and fun way to reconnect with old friends in order to both reminisce and tell a few tall tales. “Study-

*FIRM GROUNDING: Dominic says that his education at Sunway and WMU is his lodestone in life.*

ing and working abroad in America was, for me, enjoyable and exhilarating. It taught me how to be independent, for I was alone there. Even then, I made new friends with many American people, who were nice and taught me many things. Amongst the many things I learned was how to share culture, and how to cook a perfect meal – although I never cook back home in Malaysia!” he added with a laugh.

If there is one thing Dominic is very confident about, it is how important his education has been in building him up. “All throughout my career, my grounding was my WMU and Sunway education. In retrospect, I have much to be thankful for Sunway lecturers and WMU professors,” he said, adding that his favorite lecturers were Cheah Seong Leang and Prof. John Kapenga, from Sunway and WMU respectively.

So what is next for the computer science graduate? “I may go back to the US for my Masters programme,” Dominic said. We certainly wish him all the best for it! **BLAZE**

**SUNWAY**  
*Alumni*

## Lost a limb, but conquered mountains

Melvin Tong  
Bachelors in Information Systems

Sometimes, we need to lose something in order to gain more and learn from that loss. For Sunway alumnus Melvin Tong, this is certainly true, and **BLAZE** got him to share his story about conquering mountains – he has climbed Mount Kinabalu and the Mount Everest base camp – and his fears that he faced along the way.

Losing his right leg to amputation to prevent the spread of fibrosarcoma, a soft-tissue cancer, seems to have given Melvin more reasons to push himself further, be it growing his business ventures or finding ways to share his stories to inspire more people. The 30-year-old director of Extreme Limousines, and Extreme Supercars, caught the entrepreneurial spirit when he was only 14. “I lost my leg right when I was 17, right before the SPM exam. Despite my success in building our website, I still had the fear of not knowing what the future had for me. But I knew that after losing my leg, I had to move on with my life,” he said matter-of-factly.

“We were quite the geeks, my twin brother Kelvin and I. Very much into IT stuff, computers and PC games, we created our first gaming website called ‘Need for Speed Extreme’. That’s how the ‘extreme’ came about,” he explained, referring to the name of his current company.

“It took me a few years to move on from that major change. I still cared about how I looked. I was worried about not being able to have a girlfriend, a family, or how the business would turn out. I didn’t have anyone to help to share with me about how to deal with the situation. I just hoped for the best and tried to live as positively as possible. To go through it, that was my own journey of self-discovery,” he shared.

“The first few months in college was tough, as I was on a wheelchair. It was rather difficult, even though the campus was disabled-friendly and I had my brother by my side. It was socially challenging. When I reflect back, it wasn’t easy for me to communicate with others. I felt lonely, and couldn’t connect,” he said wistfully. “(People may have thought) It’s like,

you know he’s there, but you don’t know him, and would rather choose to be friends with someone who isn’t different. After college, I still felt alone, and at a disadvantage. I asked myself what was ‘wrong’ with me. I was socially awkward, and couldn’t sit and talk to people face-to-face. Then I learnt to improve on my social skills. If I have nice things to say to someone, I’ll just say it. When you compliment someone sincerely, both parties feel good.”

The brothers tried a few ventures, including a web hosting and web design company, and opening a computer shop in KLCC. Having discovered the challenges and risks in retail, the brothers then sold off the business and proceeded to dabble in a multi-level marketing business. Melvin said that the training he received helped him gain knowledge on how to sell, to be more confident and to improve his speaking skills.

### Ain’t no mountain high enough

Facing his fears took on greater dimensions when Melvin decided on a new challenge in 2010: Mount Kinabalu. “It was driven by personal reasons. I was looking for something to challenge me. My girlfriend then wanted to climb the mountain with her friends. Then, I hadn’t even climbed a hill. And I thought, ‘Why not, let’s do it!’” he said with a grin. “Since I was going to climb, I decided to also help raise funds for Shelter Home for children. Each climber was to raise RM3,000 each. I set a higher target and managed to raise over RM100,000, with the help of family and friends.”

In March this year, Melvin climbed up to the Mount Everest Base Camp in March with 18 Malaysian climbers for “Trek for a Cause”, raising money for charitable groups working with underprivileged



children. “If you put your heart into it, you can get what you want. It’s about persistency and consistency,” he said.

### His great achievements

In addition to his ventures and adventures, Melvin also contributed to the StART Society project, which brought author and motivational speaker Nick Vujicic to speak in Malaysia in 2013. For his efforts, Melvin got the privilege of giving Nick a ride in – what else – one of his supercars.

“It wasn’t about overcoming losing a leg – those were things that I had to face anyway. I’m proud that I’ve climbed the mountains, and have been able to give talks – to share my story to inspire people or even one person. That gives me some sense of satisfaction that I’m doing something right. People ask me what’s the next mountain, or next big thing that I want to do. Film director Christopher Nolan gave a keynote address at a university, and said to not just dream, but to go after your reality. I’m not chasing a dream, I’m living my reality,” he said. **BLAZE**





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