

# BLAZE

THE SUNWAY UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2015 | KDN Permit No: PP 14672/10/2012 (030937)

SUBS's New Dean  
**Professor Steve Williams**

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To Sir, With Love: Teachers fêted

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Cheers For Team S.U.C.!

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Working Together with IBM

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*HISTORIC OCCASION (from left): SUBS Dean Professor Steve Williams, SUBS Department of Financial Mathematics & Statistics Head (Academic) Professor Dr. Ho Chee Kit, Sunway University Vice-Chancellor Professor Graeme Wilkinson, FAA CEO Dr. Amat Taap Manshor, FAA Strategic Corporate Relations Division Director Molly Jagpal, and FAA Director of Corporate Services Theodoras Gkitzos pose for the record.*

## Actuarial Studies programme achieves historic Triple First

Sunway University proudly received full accreditation for its Actuarial Studies programme from the Finance Accreditation Agency (FAA). This means that it is the first Bachelor's Degree Programme to be accredited by FAA, the first in the discipline of Actuarial Studies, and the first in Malaysia: an extremely unique Triple 1st. It is a significant achievement for any institution of higher learning, as it is evidence that the learning programme has been globally benchmarked against minimum standards and practices.

Sunway University's Actuarial Studies programme is a three-year programme that prepares students for the actuary profession. The programme – offered through the Department of Financial Mathematics and Statistics in the Sunway University Business School (SUBS) – aims to equip students both with academic and soft skills that will help them to be industry-ready upon graduation.

Sunway University Vice-Chancellor Professor Graeme Wilkinson said, "Actuarial

Studies is a complex discipline, and we are proud to have received the accreditation from FAA, an agency that adds critical value to academic programmes in the technical fields such as this – where quality, precision and industry feedback are of the utmost importance." He also thanked FAA for their input, which was used to further enhance the programme.

The accreditation serves as a strong accolade and motivation for SUBS Department of Financial Mathematics & Statistics Head (Academic) Professor Dr. Ho Chee Kit, who led the programme with his team. "Recently, we have two highly-qualified actuaries with great industrial experience joining the academic team," he said. "We hope to provide the best learning experience for our students."

FAA Chief Executive Officer Dr. Amat Taap Manshor and his team marked this achievement by personally presenting the Certificate of Accreditation to Professor Wilkinson at the Sunway campus. Also present at the ceremony were SUBS Dean

Professor Steve Williams, FAA Strategic Corporate Relations Division Director Molly Jagpal, and FAA Director of Corporate Services Theodoras Gkitzos.

The FAA team also met with Lee Chun Yuen and Cuthbert Chong He Bok – two students from the Actuarial Studies programme – to get their insights on the accreditation by FAA. Cuthbert said, "I have made a very good decision, and am very proud that I have come to a good university, even before this accreditation was announced. With this accreditation, I am very confident of the programme, and have less worry to about my future," said the second year BSc (Hons) Actuarial Studies student. Cuthbert is also the recipient of a scholarship.

Accreditation of learning programmes was introduced by FAA in response to the recommendations of Malaysian Regulators in the Financial Services Industry (FSI), to ensure quality learning in the industry and to promote the highest standards in continuing education and professional learning for the FSI. **BLAZE**

# The recipe for success

## New SUBS Dean Professor Steve Williams talks about getting Sunway world-class accreditation

It can safely be said that the Sunway University Business School (SUBS) is one of the leading business schools in Malaysia, producing new job-market entrants who are well-known locally to be of a superior quality. But rather than just being content with a strong reputation, the new SUBS Dean, Professor Steve Williams, has a simple plan: making SUBS into a world-class accredited business school.

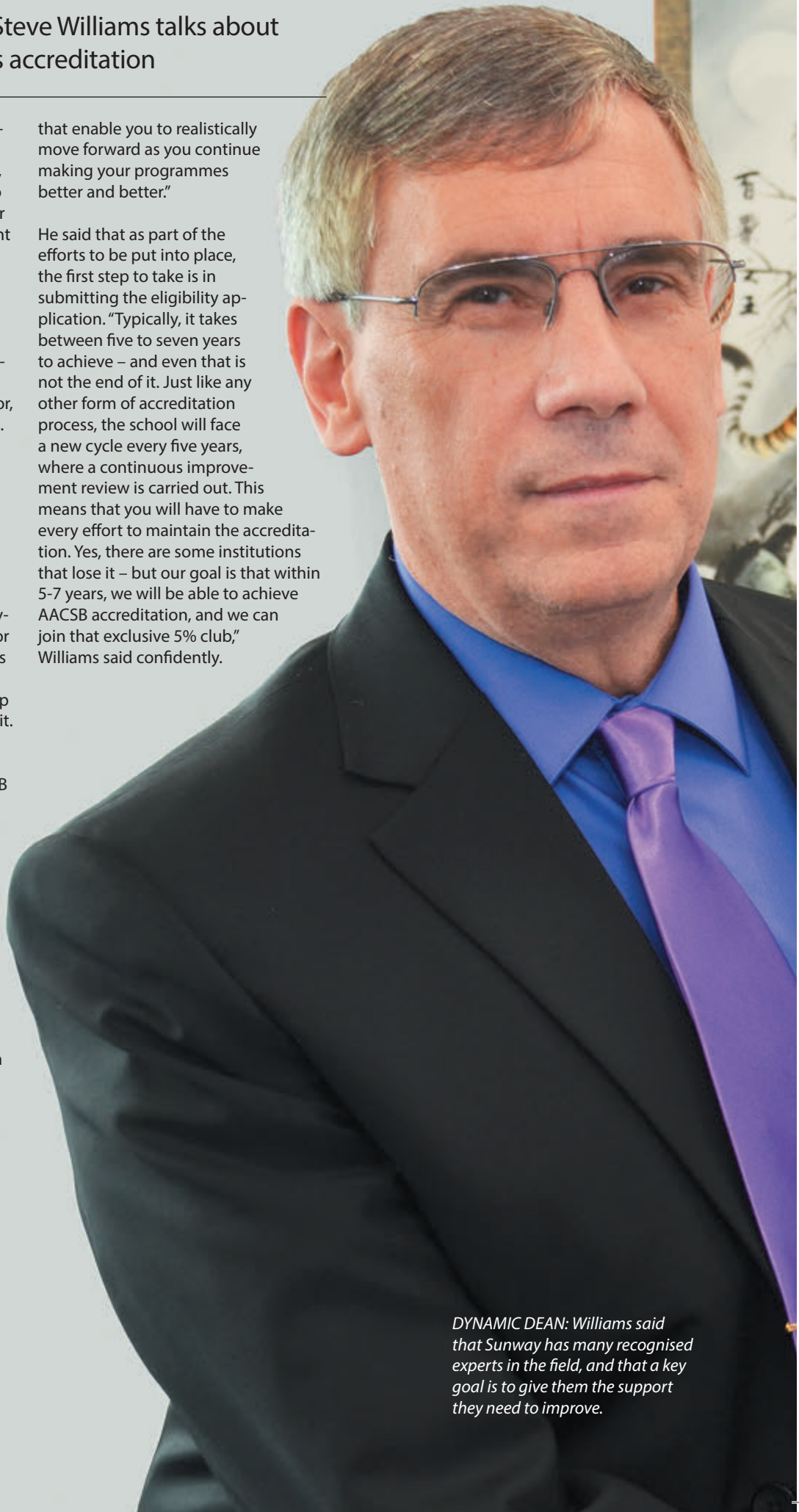
“As you probably know, the Sunway Education Group has aspirations to be a world-class university,” said the American educator, who has been a business dean for 15 years. “There are certain things that any world-class business school should have, and I think that one of the objectives is to do what we can to move this business school to be world class. That, of course, will take some time – but that is the goal.”

Williams said that one of the mechanisms to achieve this goal is by attaining the coveted AACSB accreditation. “The AACSB – or Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business – accreditation is the gold standard for business schools; only the top 5% of business schools in the world have it. If you can think of any of the known business schools that are famous enough to be named, I can guarantee that it is AACSB accredited. I have been involved with AACSB for 20 years – and even though it originated in the United States, it is now firmly an internationally-renowned body that runs what I can attest as the most stringent, rigorous professional accreditation at present. Of course, there are also other accreditation bodies the world over, such as EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System, based in Brussels), and the AMBA (The Association of MBAs, based in London) – but if you can achieve AACSB, you really are in a league of your own.”

Even then, he said, the whole point of the pursuit of the accreditation is not to be a goal in itself. “We want to achieve AACSB accreditation because it is one of the ways in which you could objectively demonstrate that you have reached a threshold of what we could call quality business education,” Williams said. “The whole premise behind it is that you are continually progressing, and that there is continuous improvement of business education. It’s never about you reaching there, it is about ensuring that you have in place a series of processes and systems

that enable you to realistically move forward as you continue making your programmes better and better.”

He said that as part of the efforts to be put into place, the first step to take is in submitting the eligibility application. “Typically, it takes between five to seven years to achieve – and even that is not the end of it. Just like any other form of accreditation process, the school will face a new cycle every five years, where a continuous improvement review is carried out. This means that you will have to make every effort to maintain the accreditation. Yes, there are some institutions that lose it – but our goal is that within 5-7 years, we will be able to achieve AACSB accreditation, and we can join that exclusive 5% club,” Williams said confidently.



*DYNAMIC DEAN: Williams said that Sunway has many recognised experts in the field, and that a key goal is to give them the support they need to improve.*



When asked what was the most important factor to implement in Sunway in order to achieve that, the professor had this to say: "For what we have to do, in almost all situations – whether eligibility or maintenance – the number one factor and concern is always faculty qualifications. That would be the main thrust we have to undertake – to make sure that there is no question regarding the quality of our staff strength." Elaborating on this point, Williams said that it was of paramount importance that the individual teacher has knowledge that is relevant, and that they can convey those teachings to the students.

"Current and up-to-date knowledge is what you need to have, and not just scholarly activity. The rationale behind it is that if you are a business instructor, you must be publishing in your field – and since it is peer-reviewed, other experts will recognise that what you are doing is advancing the discipline. In order for them to recognise that contribution, the business instructor clearly needs to be aware of what is going on at the forefront of the business world. Those are the two watchwords that we must stand by: relevant and current." He added that Sunway has many recognised experts in the field, and that a key goal is to give them the support they need to improve. "Now, we are primarily building on scholarly output. Our research activity needs to demonstrate currency, and some faculty members are trying to elevate their relevance, and gain their doctoral degrees."

For the professor, though, that alone is not enough. "If, for example, you are trying to teach about subjects that deal with applied fields (such as accounting), you often find that the people down in the field itself are the best experts to convey that learning to the students. As such, it leads to a real juxtaposition of theory and practise, and Sunway is really good at applying both the theoretical aspects and the practical aspects, to produce business graduates who can hit the ground running, who can add value to the company that hires them. That is exactly what employers are seeking, and Sunway has got very good name recognition locally as far as this is concerned.

**Working together with the industry**  
Williams said that while Sunway can be justly proud to offer the "core" business classes to ensure that the students have strong fundamentals, the main challenge is finding ways to strengthen them in a way that goes beyond merely attaining

accreditation. "For us, now is the time for fine tuning. It is possible that there will be some restructuring of our departments, and we are constantly tweaking and making incremental changes in order to make us more and more like what a world-class business school is expected to be like."

Happily, SUBS has a strong foundation upon which to build, and the professor intends to take full advantage of this. "We have very sharp students, who not only shine in the class but also out in the field, in many ways. SUBS recently fielded several of their BAF students, who competed in the ICAEW (The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales) competition – and they won, despite this being their maiden trial! I took the team and made them do a presentation for the SUBS advisory board – and their presentation and the way they handled the ensuing questions resulted in the board members practically tripping over each other to offer posts to the team members!" he said with a laugh.

Above all, Williams wants to ensure that everyone out there knows that SUBS produces candidates of

such calibre; graduates who are technically brilliant at what they do, who can not only hit the targets but excel; the kind of employee that the industry needs in order to function efficiently. "We want to teach our students how to be ongoing learners; we want them to learn to learn. The reality is that the world of business changes so fast now, so we need to make sure that they have the ability to adapt. As such, we need to build a strong support system for the students, to help give them that extra polish which will demonstrate to employers that the graduates will have the qualities that the industry captains are looking for," he said.

It really is an ambitious plan – and one that is not going to be easy to either achieve or to keep up. "Where I come from, there is a saying: 'The proof is in the pudding'. In a year from now, you can tell me if the cake is really good. We'll see. And since we are using the kitchen for analogies, I can tell you that I'm excited – because we have all the right ingredients and chefs. You can say that we have the recipe for success!" **BLAZE**

**"We want to teach our students how to be ongoing learners; we want them to learn to learn."**

*If you enjoy Steve's Story and the Blaze, please send your comments to [blaze@sunway.edu.my](mailto:blaze@sunway.edu.my)*

# Representing Malaysia at HYLI 13 in the Philippines

Two Sunway University students were selected to represent Malaysia at the 13th *Hitachi Young Leaders Initiative* (HYLI) in Manila, Philippines from July 27-30, 2015. HYLI is an annual community relations event, and a platform to identify and nurture potential Asian leaders. The two students are Thilageswaran Vijayan (25, who is pursuing the BSc (Hons) in Computer Science) and Dzafran Adris Azmir (19, who is pursuing the BA (Hons) in Communication).

Bringing together approximately 350 delegates – including top university academics and students, high-profile opinion leaders, influential government officials, prominent business leaders, and non-governmental representatives from Asia – the forum seeks to discuss regional issues and work out probable solutions. The event gives participating student representatives a chance to broaden their outlook on regional and global issues, while at the same time promoting Asian values and cross-cultural understanding.

This year's HYLI focused on the *Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Perspectives on the Social and Environmental Challenges of Designing and Implementing Public Transportation Systems*. The best and brightest students from the seven HYLI participating countries – Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam – were selected through a multi-tiered application and assessment process. As a reward for passing the selection process, the students were able to attend training sessions in their respective countries, as well as a series of workshops and networking sessions in the Philippines to learn, draft ideas and solutions to problems related to urbanisation, sustainability and people-centred transportation systems.

**“I believe that in future, we will be able to use this bond to initiate movements to help each other and make an impact in changing the lives of the citizens of the ASEAN member countries.”**

Thilageswaran, who aspires to become a mobile application developer and educator, said, “We spent a total of six days altogether in the Philippines, where the conference itself was a four-day event at the New World Makati Hotel in Makati, Manila. Each country sent in four delegates – except for Japan, which sent in three this year.” He added that they were then separated into eight different groups, where each group had one representative from one participating country.

According to Thilageswaran, the first day of the conference saw two main speaker series sessions, where presenters from a variety of backgrounds delivered their perspectives on this year's theme. He singled out the sessions by Indonesia Transportation Society President Professor Dr. Danang Parakesit and Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand Business Development Director Dr. Somprasong Suttayamully, who were amongst the various experts who spoke during the first and second sessions.

The last event for the day was a workshop series, where each group was placed under two facilitators to discuss about their perspectives on the subject matter, based on the conference sub-themes. The workshop was intended to prepare the participants for the last day of conference, where they would to present their ideas and solutions in front of an audience consisting of various influential people and guest mentors, who included ASEAN Foundation Executive Director Elaine Tan from Malaysia.

The second day saw the final run of the speaker series, and Land Transport Authority (LTA) Academy of Singapore

Advisor Mohinder Singh was one of the presenters. After the speaker series, they went back into their workshop groups to continue working on the final conference presentation for the rest of the day.

Up next was a surprise itinerary: a field trip to Gawad Kalinga. This is a community formed by the Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation, Inc. (GK), a non-governmental organisation (NGO) whose mission is to end poverty for five million families by 2024. The participants got to know the residents of the villages, and learned through a series of interviews how they are affected by the present public transportation systems. This was followed by a trip to Bonafacio Global City, one of the Philippines' fastest growing business centres, which exposed the participants to the state of urban development.

Finally, the last day of the conference saw the groups giving their respective presentations, followed by a commentary from the mentors and a Q&A session. The presentations would later be showcased in a white paper which was produced after the 13th HYLI programme ended.

Dzafran, who is currently in his first year at Sunway University's Faculty of Arts, said, “I was considerably the youngest amongst the competing interviewees in the final interview for Malaysian representatives. Being representatives, we are expected to improve our public speaking, networking and leadership skills in HYLI.” The student, who is also very involved in the Sunway Model United Nations and Sunway University Kendo Club, also added that because he spent 10 years growing up in Oman – in a different social, cultural and academic setting – he felt that this international background was added advantage during the event.

“Being a part of the delegation for the 13th Hitachi Young Leader's Initiative has been an amazing experience,” Thilageswaran said. “First of all, I must say that even though I read a lot, I realised that there are so many more things that you learn when you meet people from different parts of the region. It was an eye-opener, and I can now firmly say that I know more about our counterpart ASEAN countries than ever before. I believe that in future, we will be able to use this bond to initiate movements to help each other and make an impact in changing the lives of the citizens of the ASEAN member countries.”

Sunway University is certainly proud to have these two representing the university and Malaysia in the international arena. Their involvement serves as testimony of Sunway University's focus on students' all-rounded learning and development. **BLAZE**



**EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCE:**  
Thilageswaran (left) and Dzafran were proud to be representatives at HYLI.



CELEBRATING THE EDUCATORS (clockwise from top left): The Choir performs in perfect harmony; AUSMAT student Shireen in action; and the four international students serenade the source of their inspiration.

## Thank You, Teachers!

Sunway University recently celebrated a rainbow-themed *Teaching Appreciation Day*, to commemorate the dedication of its academic staff who have contributed towards influencing, nurturing and developing the lives of its students.

The day involved an awards ceremony to recognise the 46 academic staff, with 20 *Outstanding Teaching Performance Award* recipients coming from Sunway University, and 16 from Sunway College. The recipients were selected based on recommendations from heads of departments and student evaluation surveys for the academic year 2014-2015.

Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee thanked Sunway's lecturers and teachers for their contribution, dedication and passion. "Here at Sunway, we don't just educate," she said. "We mould lives; we transform students into individuals who can think and contribute positively to society. We hope to build relationships, so that when our students leave here they will carry more than just textbook knowledge. We want to create a lasting impression, a positive influence in our young charges' lives. I hope you share this with me, as we

can only do this through you, our teachers and lecturers."

Supporting the day were Sunway Group Education and Healthcare Division CEO Dr. Lee Weng Keng; Sunway University Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Pua Eng Chong; Sunway College Executive Director Teo Ee Sing; Director of Human Resources and Facilities Betty Lai; the senior management of Sunway University and Sunway Education Group; and members of Sunway Academic Staff Association (SASA). SASA is deemed as a bridge between the management and academic employees of the Sunway Education Group, and was formed as an avenue for academic staff to voice out grievances and provide suggestions for improvements.

SASA worked together with both the Department of Art and Design and the Human Resources Department for the creative backdrop of the celebration: a big rainbow heart made of coloured paper airplanes, which the members pasted one by one. SASA President Jennifer Rathabai was one of the 46 recipients. "Such appreciation events motivate us. I thank the management for acknowledging our efforts," said the passionate Senior Teaching Fellow from

the Intensive English Programme of the Faculty of Arts. Having served the university for over 6 years, Jennifer attributed the success of the event to the voluntary efforts from various departments, and she called upon her fellow colleagues to support and join SASA.

Chan Wy Yee, a young lecturer who has joined the Foundation in Arts for approximately two years, was utterly surprised to receive the award. "I thought it was a prank call when I was notified! But I am really happy to receive this as it helps boost my confidence in my career," she said, adding that the teaching profession has been rewarding as she gets to see her students grow and graduate.

The audience was treated to a variety of performances: The Sunway University Choir gave a stirring performance of *The Best of You in Me* by Johnny Rodgers; well-known and well-loved Malay song *Kau Ilhamku* ("You're My Inspiration") by Man Bai was given a heartfelt airing by a group of four international students from Sunway College's Australian University Programme; and AUSMAT student Shireen wowed the crowd with guzheng performance entitled *Battling Against Typhoon*. **BLAZE**



# Four decades of teaching and research, and still going strong

Being involved with television doesn't necessarily entail being an actor; there are a lot of other roles – both on set and behind the scenes – that are equally important. When you add the dimension of education to the scope, you get an extra sense of achievement that is worthy of praise – and that is a statement that can easily apply to Harold Thwaites, Professor of Creative Digital Media and Advisor to the Faculty of Arts (FoA) for Sunway University.

"I taught at Concordia University for 31 years, as a tenured member of the Communication Studies Department, up until my early retirement in 2008," said the ever-smiling native of Montreal, Canada. "I have degrees in Communication Arts (Communication Studies) and Educational Technology (Concordia University), and was also involved as an Associate Producer in children's television at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for a decade: 1974-1984." It is an astonishing revelation, given that Thwaites has also served as a communication consultant for private companies and government departments in that same span of time.

The professor's areas of specialty in research and teaching cover Digital Heritage, Cyberculture Studies, Cinematic & Inter-media Arts, audience/user media impact, biocybernetic research, 3-D spatial media, and Digital Humanities. Amongst his many other achievements, Thwaites has also organised numerous International Conferences on 3D Media Technologies as well as

Virtual Systems and Multimedia (VSMM) – which is fitting, as he served as President of the International Society on Virtual Systems and Multimedia (VSMM) from 2003 to 2010. He currently holds the post of Honorary President – which makes his appointment at Sunway University an added boost of credibility for the FoA.

It's not just in the international sphere that Thwaites has made his mark, as he is rather active in Malaysia too. "In Malaysia, I was Dean of the Faculty of Creative Multimedia (FCM) at Multimedia University, Cyberjaya from 2006 to 2012," he said, adding that he also served as Chair of both the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) advisory panel for Programme Standards of Creative Multimedia (2009-2010) as well as of MYREN Multimedia Applications Group (2009-2012). "From 2012 to this year, I was Consultant Professor at the University of Malaya (UM), and Director of the Centre for Creative Content and Digital Innovation (3CDI)."

So how did this Canadian creative content guru end up in this neck of the woods? "I was looking for a new environment that is forward thinking and supportive of

**"I have never stopped teaching – either formally in my courses, or informally with staff and colleagues at the various institutions I have worked in."**

of Arts to grow and expand its research profile. "Drawing on my MQA standards panel background, I will also be assisting the Faculty and staff to develop and fine-tune new degree programmes and postgraduate programmes," he said, adding that another important target is the establishment of the first FoA research centre: a Centre for Research Creation in Digital Media.

The professor is also proving to be a passionate advocate for the preservation of cultural heritage, as one of his recent projects has shown. "The *Textile Tales of Pua Kumbu* (TTPK) Exhibition was the culmination of two years of research-creation collaboration with Dr. Welyne Jeffrey Jehom on her High Impact UM funded research project and the 3CDI creative team. *Pua kumbu* refers to the traditional patterned multicoloured ceremonial cotton cloth used by the Iban tribe in Sarawak, and they are considered to be sacred objects to mark lifecycle rituals and special events, such as childbirth, coming-of-age celebrations, and even funeral rites."

"From my first meeting with Dr. Welyne in March 2013, I knew that we would have a dynamic working relationship sparked by her first enthusiastic description of her research project. While participating in this project, I realised that indigenous knowledge in Malaysia was endangered, as are many of the animals and other areas cultural heritage. Therefore, I felt that I should do all I could to help Dr. Welyne preserve the intangible and tangible heritage of the Iban weavers of Sarawak." The Exhibition was launched on June 15, 2015 by the Minister of Tourism and Culture, YB Dato' Seri Mohammad Nazri Abdul Aziz, and was a hit with the general public.

When you consider the span of time that Thwaites has put into education, you cannot help but be in awe of his commitment to developing minds. "As of this September, I will have been in a University environment for 41 years. I have never stopped teaching – either formally in my courses, or informally with staff and colleagues at the various institutions I have worked in." That is the sort of dedication that bodes well for Sunway University's FoA students – and eventually, for the nation as a whole. **BLAZE**



**CULTURAL WARRIOR:** Thwaites firmly believes in making sure that both the tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage are protected from future loss.



# Team Sunway scores at ICAEW Regional Business Challenge

Team Sunway emerged as champions at the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) *Regional Business Challenge 2015*, and will be representing Malaysia for the *ICAEW-Malaysian Accounting and Finance Society (ICAEW-MACFIS) Business Challenge 2015* in London next year.

The team – comprising team leader Albert Yeoh Yun Wei, Anthony Yap Zhen Huang, Muhammad Shahmi bin Shahidan, Yap Tyron and Jeffrey Lee Wen Xiang – did not know each other until they registered themselves for the initial online screening process, as separate individuals. After being selected, Team Sunway competed against 25 other teams from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam, in an intense environment which simulated the real work of a chartered accountant.

Muhammad Shahmi – who is in his final year of Sunway University's BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance, along with Anthony and Tyron – said that the participants were observed and assessed during the first hour-and-a-quarter of the competition, during which they analysed a business case and prepared a business presentation with probable solutions to turn a financially-distressed company around. They were then divided into four rooms to present their business plans to representatives of the Authorised Training Employers of the ICAEW. "It was ultimately great teamwork which helped us win the challenge," said Tyron, adding that each member had a unique role to play without which their victories would not be possible. Tyron worked mainly on the presentation slides, while Muhammad and Anthony were the analysts. Jeffrey was the main presenter and Albert – the eldest of the team – took up the leadership role to allocate the work according to each member's strength.

Besides teamwork, Albert – who graduated from the BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance, and is currently undertaking a Masters in International Business at Monash University – said that strategies



*MALAYSIA'S REPRESENTATIVES (from left): Jeffery Lee Wen Xiang, Yap Tyron, Anthony Yap Zhen Huang, Albert Yeoh Yun Wei and Muhammad Shahmi bin Shahidan are proud of their win.*

were equally important, especially in the finals. "There were a total of 20 questions for the four finalist teams to answer – a sort of 'speed' round, where right answers reward you, but wrong answers are disastrous. All I can say is, the competition helped boost my confidence in public speaking," he quipped. The biggest take-away for Jeffrey – who is a final-year student of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) programme under the Sunway TES Centre for Accountancy Excellence – was an experience of working under pressure. "I believe the main factor of winning the challenge was keeping calm. Albert was good at this – and by keeping our heads clear, we were able to remain analytical in handling various challenges."

In addition to a trip to London, the winners were also awarded employment or internship opportunities with one of the prestigious ICAEW Authorised Training Employers. The champions are looking forward to their trip and hoping to bring more prizes home to make the country proud. **BLAZE**

# To Warsaw for the CIMA Global Business Challenge Finals!

Sunway University's Team Lcct won the National Finals for the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) *Global Business Challenge (GBC) 2015*, and represented Malaysia to compete against 26 other international teams at the Warsaw Intercontinental Hotel from Aug 3-7, 2015. The team – comprising team leader Chee Chia Ling, presenter Joel Thum Wen Jian, and analysts William Tan Soo Yoon and Lim Sze Khai – are all students taking the BSc (Hons) in Accounting and Finance from the Sunway University Business School (SUBS).

The close classmates – who are currently in their second year – often work together for university assignments, and their achievement far surpassed their expectations. Chee – who is the recipient of a full scholarship from *The Star* – said, "We just wanted to gain exposure during our term break by giving our best to try out in external competitions."

Joel said that he found out about the competition through an announcement from Elearn, Sunway University's internal online learning system, while Chee discovered it by surfing on the internet. The team leader immediately invited her friends to form the team, which spent two months to write and submit a business proposal of not more than 3,000 words. It was a case study about an oil and gas (O&G) company, with probable solutions to issues troubling the company. After the proposal was chosen, the team had to prepare a group description, CIMA promotional video and presentation slides. During the finals, the team took the role of a



*NATIONAL CHAMPIONS (from left): Joel Thum Wen Jian, William Tan Soo Yoon, Chee Chia Ling and Lim Sze Khai pose with their trophies.*

consulting firm, and presented their business proposal to a panel of judges from top O&G companies, including Shell and PETRONAS, followed by an intense question and answer session.

Lim, who is an aspiring analyst, said, "The BAF (BSc (Hons) in Accounting and Finance) programme structure – with its various creative assignments and presentations – has been extremely helpful in developing our analytical, problem solving, critical thinking and soft skills. I believe these are the contributing factors to our win." Joel added, "We were also very grateful to our lecturers: Wong Wing Tien, our mentor and coach; Christine Shobana Arthur, who brushed up our communication skills; and Associate Professor Dr. Foo Yin Fah, who participated and contributed constructive critiques in our mock practice." **BLAZE**

# Continuous learning with the Lancaster CAP

Five of Sunway University's lecturers recently concluded their last session of the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (CAP) with a sharing practice event, which saw a good turn-out of academic staff discussing and brainstorming best teaching practices.

The CAP is an in-service programme by Lancaster University, which supports and accredits the educational development of staff who teach at the degree level. It seeks to foster a dynamic, cross-disciplinary community of practitioners to share ideas, and to develop a discourse about educational practice in higher education. Sharing Practice events are part of this community, which extends beyond those on the taught programme.

There were five presenters of the fifth cohort of CAP: Dr. Ch'ng Sue Inn and Dr. Adelina Tang Lai Toh, from the Faculty of Science and Technology (FST); Associate Professor Dr. Cheah You Sum and Alvin Chan Sian We, from the Sunway University Business School (SUBS); and Christine Arthur from the English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) Unit of the Faculty of Arts (FoA). Altogether, there were 22 participants in total in this cohort.

After participating in the three CAP modules over the past two years – with intensive cross-institutional collaborations and sharing of ideas for teaching, learning and curriculum design – each presenter developed and delivered unique topics, including ways of teaching that were given a trial and evaluated in their classes.

Dr. Ch'ng revealed the use of scaffolding activities as reflective practice to better assist her students in understanding their study subjects. Dr. Adelina discussed her application of problem-based learning, as well as the different levels of engagement she perceived from first- and final-year Computing students, where the first-year students were more open to new ways of learning.

Associate Professor Dr. Cheah talked about how he confronted the challenges of teaching law to non-law students, by using visual aids and story-telling techniques. Alvin addressed the balance between summative assessment and formative assessment, while Christine explored the method of "self-regulated learning" throughout the CAP, which she could leverage on and apply in classrooms in order to achieve the mission of lifelong learning.

The CAP began in 2005 at Lancaster University, and was designed by Educational



*SERIOUSLY ENJOYABLE (from left): Dr. Ch'ng Sue Inn, Christine Arthur, Ann Rosnida Md. Deni, Annyza Tumar, Susan Armitage, Sunway University Vice-Chancellor Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Alvin Chan Sian We, Dr. Adelina Tang Lai Toh, Alison Cooper and Associate Professor Dr. Cheah You Sum strike a playful pose at the end of the CAP session.*

Development Adviser Alison M. Cooper. The programme was then brought to Sunway as part of the Lancaster University/Sunway University (LU/SU) partnership in November 2007 by Cooper and Dr. Tony Luxon, who recently retired after his final week of teaching at Sunway in February this year. The CAP has continued since then, with about 15 to 20 of Sunway University's academic members joining the programme every year. Lancaster employees fly in to teach the intensive CAP workshops at Sunway, followed by online and video conference sessions.

For this year, Cooper conducted the sessions together with her colleague Susan Armitage. "CAP is more like a sharing session rather than training," said the lady with more than 30 years of educational and teaching experience. "It gives practitioners a framework to challenge their thinking for new ideas of best teaching practices," she said, adding that Sunway practitioners have been very engaged, open and honest.

Cooper said that CAP at Sunway has grown and developed into a mature and stable phase with ESAP Head Annyza Tumar and ESAP lecturer Ann Rosnida Md. Deni joined in as co-tutors for the delivery of CAP. That being said, more teaching and sharing sessions can be conducted via video conferences between Sunway and Lancaster.

Supporting the event were Sunway University Vice-Chancellor Professor Graeme Wilkinson and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Pua Eng Chong. "We pride ourselves on being a very strong teaching focused university, and I know that from my own career, I never stop learning things about teaching," Professor Wilkinson said. "So, the CAP programme is indeed very important to us, and I ap-



*REFLECTIVE PRACTISE: Dr. Ch'ng Sue Inn was the first presenter.*

preciate very much that this programme is brought over by our key partner Lancaster University, and am grateful for the support that Lancaster has given us in this programme."

Sunway University has always emphasised quality teaching, promoting active learning among its employees. The CAP is in line with this, and is open for Sunway University's academic employees teaching Lancaster University-partnership degree programmes to apply, via a voluntary basis or through recommendations from heads of departments.

There is also the Educational Development Programme, whereby academics teaching the Lancaster University-partnership programmes are selected to spend a week in Lancaster to enhance their teaching experience, and to visit its departments to meet their Lancaster University counterparts. **BLAZE**



*WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE (from left): Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee, IBM Malaysia Cloud Ecosystem Development Strategy & Market Development Manager Mandy Teo, IBM Malaysia Managing Director Paul Moung, Sunway Group President Dato' (Dr.) Chew Chee Kin, Sunway Group Education and Healthcare Division CEO Dr. Lee Weng Keng, Sunway University Vice-Chancellor Professor Graeme Wilkinson, and Sunway University Faculty of Science & Technology Dean and Research and Enterprise Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Heard pose after the signing ceremony.*

## Sunway University taps IBM to create new ICT talents

IBM Malaysia and Sunway University announced an academic-industry collaboration to embed IBM technologies in its Information Communications Technology (ICT) curriculum, to equip its undergraduates with skills in important new technology areas such as Big Data Analytics (BDA), cybersecurity and mobile application development.

The IBM-Sunway University Research and Academic Initiative Collaboration Programme was sealed with the signing of an Academic Collaboration by IBM Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. (IBM Malaysia) Managing Director Paul Moung and Sunway University Vice-Chancellor Professor Graeme Wilkinson.

The signing was witnessed by IBM Malaysia Cloud Ecosystem Development Strategy & Market Development Manager Mandy Teo; Sunway University Faculty of Science & Technology Dean and Research and Enterprise Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Heard; Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee; and Sunway Group President Dato' (Dr.) Chew Chee Kin.

Sunway University is the first in Malaysia to sign-up for IBM's Academic Initiative Cloud Offer. With the increasing awareness and demand for developments like the Internet of Things (IoT), BDA, Cognitive Computing and Mobile, flexible cloud platforms which can enable innovation are key for both faculty members and students. Leveraging on the IBM Academic Initiative Cloud Offer, Sunway University faculty members and students can now enjoy free use of IBM Bluemix, an open

standards-based platform, to rapidly build applications in their coursework for a duration of 12 months.

The collaboration will also see Sunway University's Faculty of Science & Technology leveraging on the IBM Academic Initiative resources, which comprise of training materials, curriculum guides, software and hardware to enhance current teaching content. According to Professor Wilkinson, the rapid pace of technological advancement has led to the creation of entirely new roles and rewritten old job scopes. "We aspire to equip our undergraduates with skill-sets that combine technology developments in analytics, cloud computing, mobile applications, and data security with the spirit of entrepreneurship and an understanding of future opportunities," he said. "These are essential in helping us create a high income nation with successful technology-based businesses in the global context."

Global statistics indicated that there were 4.4 million jobs created in the field of analytics in 2015. In Malaysia, the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDec) aims to increase the country's number of data scientists to 1,500 from the current 80, in its bid to turn Malaysia into a BDA hub in

the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) by 2020.

"The objective of partnering with IBM is to build a generation of students who are skilled in analytics, network security and mobile app development," said Sunway University Centre for Innovation and Industrial Linkage Head Professor Lim Tong Ming. "IBM is an enterprise leader in these three areas, and we are pleased with the opportunity to develop 21st Century professionals with expertise in these key topics."

In line with the collaboration, Sunway University introduced three newly-minted undergraduate degree courses in August. The subjects taught include web analytics, data mining, social media analytics, BDA, visual analytics, networking, mobile security, mobile application development and entrepreneurship.

Moung said, "Taking advantage of the transformational opportunity presented by analytics and network security has become a key priority for organisations around the globe. To embrace this growing opportunity, companies today must hire a workforce with a broad range of expertise. IBM is dedicated to partnering with academic institutions and providing students with the skills needed to make an impact." **BLAZE**

**"The objective of partnering with IBM is to build a generation of students who are skilled in analytics, network security and mobile app development."**

# THE KROKODILOES

## Musical World Tour 2015

CHARITY DINNER AND AUCTION | 3 JULY 2015



### Harvard Krokodiloes serenade Sunway for Nepal

For the first time in Malaysia, Harvard's oldest and finest a capella group the Harvard Krokodiloes – or the Kroks, as the group is popularly known – touched hearts with their soulful performance at a charity dinner and auction on July 3, 2015, benefitting the Nepal Relief Fund of MERCY Malaysia and the Jeffrey Cheah Community Scholarship through the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation (JCF).

Made up of 12 tuxedo-clad male undergraduate vocalists, the group has performed around the globe in front of world leaders at prestigious events, including the United States President Bill Clinton's Inaugural Ball celebration and the Hong Kong Handover to China commemoration ceremony in 1997. Notable alumni of the Harvard Krokodiloes include philanthropist David Rockefeller Jr. and actor Miles Fisher, where the latter is well-known for his roles in *Mad Men* and *Gossip Girl*.

The charity dinner and auction – organised by the Sunway Education Group and the JCF at the Sunway Resort Hotel & Spa – was graced by high profile and notable corporate figures, celebrities and socialites. Among those present were the Ambassador of Nepal to Malaysia, His Excellency Dr. Niranjana Man Singh Basnyat; Sunway Group Chairman and Founder Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, AO; JCF Board of Trustees members Tan Sri Dr. Lin See-Yan, Tan Sri

Dr. Ramon Navaratnam, Tan Sri Razman Hashim and Tan Sri Rainer Althoff; Sunway Group Education and Healthcare CEO Dr. Lee Weng Keng; Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee, who was also the Dinner's Organising Committee Chair.

Items for the silent auction were donated by Zang Toi, Poh Kong, A Cut Above, Kid Chan, Inhesion Industrial, Di Tullio and Sons, Eternal Clinic and Wellness, The Banjaran Hotsprings Retreat and Sunway Le Cordon Bleu Malaysia. Among the items to be auctioned were an etching by internationally renowned artist Eng Tay entitled *Safe Haven XVI*, as well as a rare porcelain Legle Tea Set. A total of RM200,000 was raised from the table donations for the dinner and auction. Over and on top of the monies raised, the JCF committed RM1 million worth of scholarships to MERCY Malaysia's Nepal Relief Fund to provide students affected by the earthquake the opportunity to take up further studies at Sunway, as well as another RM1 million to be allocated to the JCF Community Scholars for 2015.

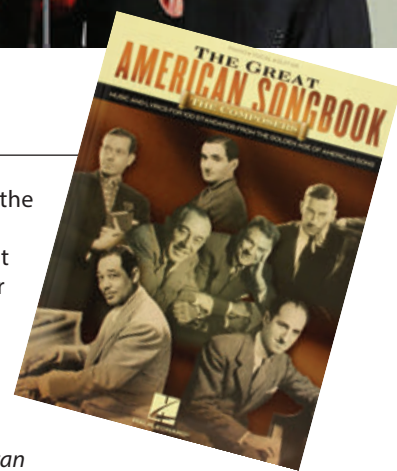
"MERCY Malaysia and the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation – these two entities, are so very different yet alike," said Dr. Elizabeth Lee in her welcome address. "Both concentrate on 'the basic human needs approach', engage in reaching out, extending a helping hand to those in need, to ensure their lives are better whether they are recovering from a disaster or striving to live and contribute in their own country. It comes down to building human ties, enhancing communities and

developing the future."

The highlight of the dinner were performances by the Kroks of songs from the *Great American Songbook*. Amongst the many favourites were evergreen hits such as *Unchained Melody* by the Righteous Brothers, Frank Sinatra's *I've Got the World on a String*, and a special rendition of the immortal 月亮代表我的心 (*Yue Liang Dai Biao Wo De Xin*, or *The Moon Represents My Heart*) by the late Teresa Teng.

On the next day, July 4, 2015 – which coincided with American Independence Day – Malaysians of all ages had the direct chance to experience the musical charm of the Kroks at a public concert at the Sunway International School, where they were treated to famous songs such as *Loch Lomond*, Elvis Presley's *Can't Help Falling in Love*, Irish folk song *Danny Boy* and, in tune with the celebrations in the U.S.A., the *Star Spangled Banner*.

The Kroks would go on to perform in Thailand, Australia, Western Kenya, Turkey, Germany, Belgium, Italy, France, England and the Netherlands before heading back to the States. During their short stint in Malaysia, the Kroks also conducted a Vocals Masterclass, on top of a sharing session with a small crowd at an event entitled *Life at Harvard: A Conversation with the Kroks at Sunway University*. All proceeds from the public concert and Vocals Masterclass were also channelled to both MERCY Malaysia and the JCF. **BLAZE**



12  
INTERNATIONAL  
COLLABORATIONS



# SEG hosts Harvard's Asia Leadership Trek 2015

The Sunway Education Group (SEG), in affiliation with Harvard University's Asia Center, concluded the Asia Leadership Summer Trek with the Executive Leadership School (ELS) 2015. Themed *Redefining Success*, the programme ran from July 27-31, 2015, targeting young professionals between the ages of 21- and 30-years old.

The programme was mostly delivered by Harvard-trained facilitators, and included workshops on leadership and innovation; lectures; talks highlighting themes on personal leadership and innovative practices; study groups; and networking opportunities with Harvard fellows and leaders from diverse industries.

The Asia Leadership Institute's Asia Leadership Trek (ALT) President Samuel Kim said, "Achieving success also means facing challenges in our lives – personal, professional or communal. We always have the unique opportunity to make a difference. We are able to turn downsides into upsides, and contribute towards making our world a better place." Among the experts facilitating the programmes included Kim, Rachel Roberts, John Lim, Adam Malaty-Uhr, Jaye Buchbinder, Martin Attiq, Faton Limani and John Lee. The customised curriculum was developed by the Centre for Asia Leadership Initiatives (CALI) fellows, based on courses, teaching and research from the Harvard Kennedy School, the Harvard Business School and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. It covers a diverse range of areas, including personal leadership, network building, communication and confidence building, and is targeted at young leaders in Asia.

The Fellows conducted workshops, shared inspirational stories and discussed best practices on leadership, public speaking, practical skills with seminars on professional development, special talks and networking opportunities. In addition to learning through the various workshops, talks and discussions, the delegates participated in group activities such as Interaction and Sportsmanship, and the Dialogue in the Dark (DiD, see also page 19). The DiD sessions were added to expose delegates to a new, brief and exciting experience on communication without sight, and help open up new possibilities to provide fresh new perspectives on a totally different scale.

"It's good!" said delegate Sukmahartini Samudin. "It's like a mini-Harvard. The contents are developed by Harvard fellows, so we get to see things differently." The 29-year-old Head of Campaign Management for Etiqa Insurance at Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank) cited Buchbinder's *Designing Your Life* session as the best, and said, "She taught us the process of leadership – from identifying



UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE: ALT President Samuel Kim (left) receiving a round of applause after his speech.



the problem, to finding solutions, brainstorming ideas, selecting the right idea, and executing it. I can see what I've learnt here will ensure an immediate effect at my workplace as I can start identifying areas to improve within the company. I can motivate my colleagues to come up with fresh ideas and get plans implemented."

A highlight of the programme was the Pitch Competition, where all the delegates were required to continually prepare and compete through the week-long exercise. The five-day intensive programme concluded with a dinner and award ceremony.

"I trust that all of you have been enriched, enlightened and motivated," said Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee. "As our aspiring future leaders, I'm sure you are now much more confident and infused with great new ideas to innovate

change in your workplace, and in all that you do, work to enhance and improve on the way things get done in our increasingly competitive and challenging world."

Prior to the ELS, the ALT fellows also conducted a five-day residential Asia Leadership Youth (ALY) Camp hosted by the Sunway International School, targeted at helping high school and pre-university students explore

their purpose and expand their potential for future success. Aimed at preparing and empowering young students for leadership challenges, the camp would help them translate their values into meaningful actions.

"The theme for the Camp Values Into Action, stems from the rationale that every individual must embark on one's own learning journey that can help him or her examine one's own values," said Kim. "It is only then that their true character and calling can begin to emerge." While this is the fourth time that SEG is playing host to the Asia

Leadership fellows – following similar successful conferences and camps in 2014 and in January 2015 – the ALY Camp marks the first high school programme for youths. **BLAZE**

**"We always have the unique opportunity to make a difference. We are able to turn downsides into upsides, and contribute towards making our world a better place."**



*MUSICAL COLOURS: The ensemble played a diverse range of works that well-received by the audience.*

## JCF raises RM70,000 for community scholars

The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation (JCF), the largest education-focused social enterprise in Malaysia, recently raised RM70,000 to benefit the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation Community Scholars at a charity recital presented by the Perak Society of Performing Arts (PSPA). Titled *A Night of Musical Kaleidoscope*, the concert attracted close to 800 people, who were rewarded with an entrancing musical extravaganza specially designed to take the audience on a journey through the breathtaking lens of music history, ranging from Bach to Yiruma.

The PSPA International Ensemble comprised of professional musicians from Malaysia, the United States of America, Hong Kong, Singapore, the Netherlands and Canada. They were led by renowned conductor Eugene Pook and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Principal Clarinet, Andrew Simon. The group were joined by the Sunway University Ensemble, which has gained a name for itself as a community ensemble and whose members include a few recipients of the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation Talent Scholarship.



*MUSICAL MAESTRO: Conductor Eugene Pook in action.*

“We are grateful to the many corporations and members of the public, who have not only supported the Jeffrey Cheah Community Scholars, but also helped propagate an appreciation for music and performance,” Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee said at the concert.

All proceeds from the concert benefited the JCF Community Scholars who are from homes and orphanages in Malaysia, who would otherwise not have access to quality education. To-date, JCF has aided 144 community scholars, with another 20 more

set to receive the opportunity of a quality tertiary education this year. The scholarship covers full tuition, accommodation, living allowances and books.

The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation is the first-of-its-kind in Malaysia within the field of private higher education, modeled along the lines of Harvard University. The ownership and equity rights of the Sunway Education Group’s learning institutions – namely, Sunway University, Monash University Malaysia, Jeffrey School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Sunway College, Sunway TES and Sunway International School and others – have officially and legally been transferred to the Foundation, valued at more than RM720 million. For more information about the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation, and learn about its work for quality education, please log on to its website ([www.jeffreycheahfoundation.org.my](http://www.jeffreycheahfoundation.org.my)). **BLAZE**



**SUNWAY SYMPHONISTS**  
(above): The Sunway University Ensemble are making waves as a community ensemble.



**PLAYING AS ONE** (left):  
The poster for the concert.



**BREATH-TAKING PERFORMANCE** (right): American clarinetist Andrew Simon, who was accompanied by pianist Jeremy Samolesky from Canada, enthralled the audience with his skill and control.

**TAKE A BOW** (below): The PSPA International Ensemble receive a well-deserved round of applause during their curtain call.



# Happy 4th of July from CAE!

The lecturers, staff and students of Sunway University's Center for American Education (CAE) celebrated the 4th of July – or Independence Day for the United States of America – with a big cake decorated in the shape of the American flag. The cake was decorated following the exact specific details of the actual flag, complete with 50 stars and 13 stripes. The 50 stars represent the 50 States in the Union, whereas the 13 stripes represent the original 13 British colonies that declared independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain and became the country's first new states.

Other than the cake, a backdrop was decorated with a U.S. theme, and was made available at the CAE academic office – which is located on the 5th Floor of the Sunway University New Building – during the week of the 4th of July, so that everyone could come and take photographs. Additionally, the doors for each lecturer and staff were decorated with three big paper flowers: one each in red, white and blue.

Jaime Yap, who was in charge of the celebrations, said that these activities help



enhance students' learning on a more personal and hands-on approach. "The activities encouraged the students to embrace the American experience, and to prepare them for activities that will take place when they are in the U.S.," she said, adding that the festivities also helped build a bond between staff and students.

Jenny Loo Jia Yi, a current CAE student, expressed how happy she was with her experience in the American Degree Transfer Programme (ADTP). "It might be hectic – but the variety of ways in which the classes are carried out will keep you on the edge of your seat till the end of the semester. I chose the Sunway

ADTP because the environment here is student friendly."

CAE communications major Tharmentharan a/I Mohon, who is currently undergoing his fifth semester, said, "I get to meet and hang out with people from different cultural backgrounds. It is such a great experience, because I have the chance to learn more about their ethnicities. I chose the Sunway ADTP because I live close by Sunway – and the programme provides a wide range of subjects. I am allowed to take whatever subjects I want that are connected to my major, as well as other subjects. Also, the programme is not fully exam based – which is great!" **BLAZE**







**WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!:** Team S.U.C. have won three major competitions back-to-back – which has earned them the right to call themselves the Triple Crown Team!

## Team S.U.C. are CHARM Cheerleading Champions again!



Team S.U.C. did Sunway University proud when they emerged as Champions in the Medium Coed Level 5 University Division of the CHARM Cheerleading Championship 2015. It was the second year in a row that they won at the event, where they became Champions in Team Cheer Coed Level 3 Open Division during their maiden outing.

Held at the Centre Concourse of The Curve in Mutiara Damansara, it was the first time that the annual competition offered and official university division. Additionally, Team S.U.C. was the only team in the Division who participated at the highest Difficulty Level.

Cheerleading Club President Dickson Kong said, "The team members are made up of a mixture of students from both the University and the College, which was formed about a year ago. They practise on



Tuesdays and Wednesdays at the NUB foyer, where the practice sessions usually last between 3-4 hours."

He added that the Tuesday sessions were usually done with the coach. "That's when he will teach us new stunts, and have us perform them under his observation. For Wednesday practices, the members will be on their own, polishing skills which they have already learnt, and perfecting the new skills learned with the coach on the previous day".

When asked whether most of them had any background in cheerleading, Dickson said, "More than half of them actually have at least one year of such experience. However, when new members come and join the team, they will be guided by the experienced members, as well as the coach."

With this win, Team S.U.C. has a total of three big triumphs under its wing, including as champions of the CHARM Cheerleading Championship 2014 (Coed Level 3 Open Division) and the Asia Cheerleading Invitational Championship 2015 (Coed Level 4 Open Division). It is a great win which has earned the team the right to call themselves the Triple Crown Team.

Dickson said, "The plan right now is to focus on ourselves and train for the upcoming competition in the USA: the World University Championship 2016 in Orlando, Florida! That will be in January. We are undergoing a membership drive, and – especially as the competition dates get closer – everyone will train hard, but it will still be fun and enjoyable."

He added that a full team will be chosen to represent SUC in upcoming competitions. "For the rest of the year, we want to have as many people to be exposed to cheerleading, and to have fun. We want to expand Team S.U.C. and make the club even more well-known to Malaysia's whole cheerleading community!" **BLAZE**

# The Lancaster Invasion

Every year, Sunway University students travel approximately 11,000 kilometres to a university in the northern part of England to gain the experience of a lifetime.

The International Cultural Exchange programme at Lancaster University has been growing in popularity since we launched it in 2011. This year, our 5th year of running the programme, saw the largest ever contingent sent by Sunway University of 137 students.

Lancaster University Students' Union (LUSU) Involve Manager Sarah Hutchinson said, "When I found out how many Sunway students were going to join us, I thought: 'Wow! Will we have enough food to feed them all?! I know how much they all enjoy our English breakfasts!' The Sunway students were an absolute pleasure to host, participating fully, smiling always and being brilliant ambassadors for Sunway University."

During the three weeks spent in Lancaster University, the Sunway students participated in an array of activities which exposed them to life in the United Kingdom. Among the highlights of the programme were a trip to the farm to see alpaca and sheep, community projects with local organisations, learning from businesses in Lancaster, and not forgetting an educational visit to London.

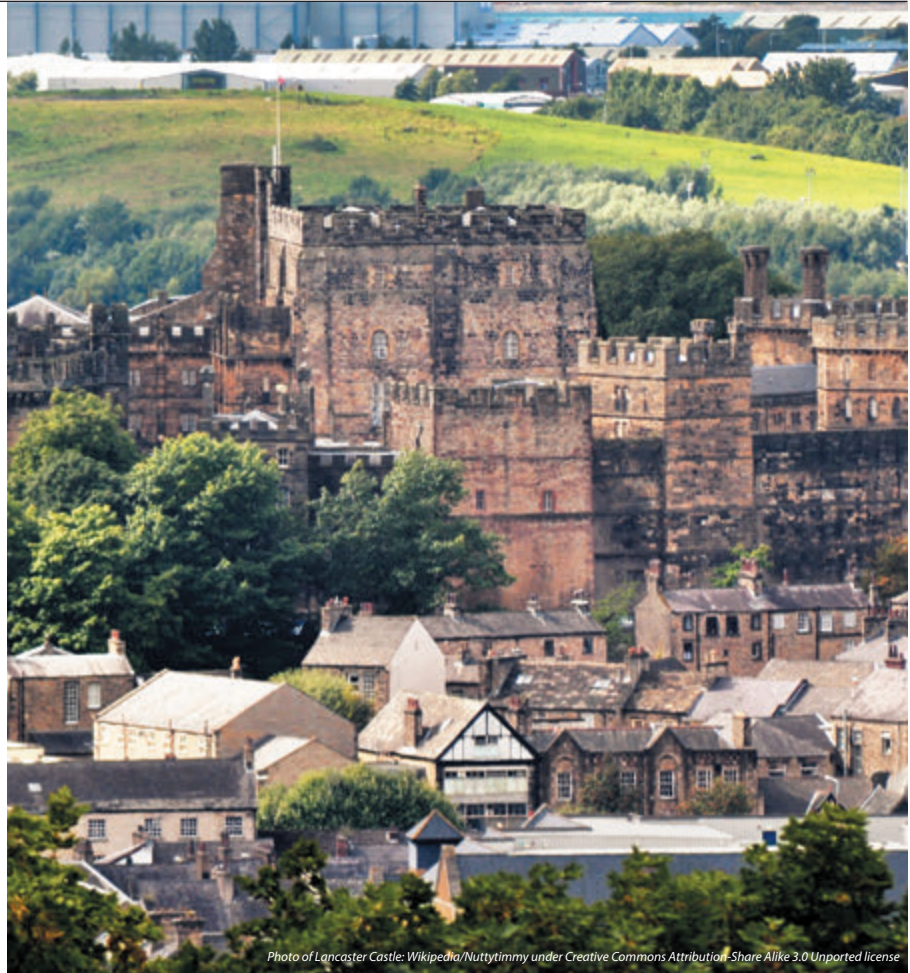


Photo of Lancaster Castle: Wikipedia/Nuttytimmy under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license

Apart from the activities, the most valuable part of the programme was the opportunity to interact with students from other countries. The International Cultural Exchange involved not just students from Sunway University and Lancaster University, but also from universities in China, Ghana, Nigeria, India and Pakistan. Making friends from all over the world and learning to adapt to cross-cultural communication barriers made the programme all the more exciting.

The 'International' part of this programme culminated in an all-day event, aptly called *Showcase in a Day*. It was a kaleidoscope of colours and movements, where representatives from each country showed off their amazing talents. To capture all these beautiful memories as they happened, we encouraged Sunway University participants to post up a photo a day using the hashtag **#myLUjourney15**, which would act as a journal of their experiences.

At the end of the three weeks as the programme ran down and came to an end, it was an emotional goodbye. But since goodbyes are just a chance to ask "When can I see you again?", Nicholas Gabriel summed it up perfectly: "**#myLUjourney15** has come to an end. Fell in love with the place, but the thing I would take back the most are the people I came to make friends with. Memories created with them will always be in my heart." Here's looking to **#myLUjourney16! BLAZE**

*HUGE HORDE: For the 137 students, the International Cultural Exchange programme was an experience they would never forget.*





*UNDERSTANDING WHAT IT FEELS LIKE FOR THE VISUALLY-IMPAIRED: The DiD Board Members pose with the Sunway University Student Council members and the SUBS Students Concilium.*

## Seeing the Light with a Dialogue in the Dark

Sunway University became the first Malaysian educational institution to support Dialogue in the Dark (DiD), a social enterprise that provides the experience of a non-visual world through exhibitions and business workshops. Established in Germany 25 years ago, DiD was brought to Malaysia with the hope of empowering the visually-impaired community, whilst also enlightening the public to appreciate light.

DiD Malaysia Founder and CEO Stevens Chan Kum Fai, who lost his vision due to glaucoma in 2007, said, "Dialogue in the Dark is an experience that one should not miss out on! As you learn to see the world through the eyes of the blind, you will certainly experience a transformative change of perspective compared to the condition that you see the world you're in now!"

"Now at Sunway University, we are the highest DiD centre (Level 11), which is created with 100% recycled material," he said, adding that it is also the second centre – after Singapore's Ngee Ann Polytechnic – within Southeast Asia to be located within a university.

"I would like to thank [DiD Malaysia board member] Datin Joanne Wong for linking us to [Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director] Dr. Elizabeth Lee and Sunway University. We are deeply honoured to be so warmly welcomed here at the university. They have a dedicated passion to transform and empower their students to be the future leaders of our society and nation. It has been very exciting for us to be part of a good university as we can now play small little role in impacting our future generation."

In addition to providing exclusive facilities, the Sunway University Business



*MEANINGFUL EXCHANGE: DiD Founder and CEO Stevens Chan Kum Fai (second left) receives a souvenir from Sunway Group Education and Healthcare Division CEO Dr. Lee Weng Keng (second right) as DiD Chairman Ng Chin Huat (left), Sunway Institute for Social Entrepreneurship & Head (Academic), Department of Accounting, Banking and Finance Director Associate Professor Dr. Foo Yin Fah (centre) and Sunway Education Group and Sunway University Senior Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Lee (right) look on.*

School (SUBS) is highly involved with future plans to support DiD. These could include incorporating the experiential tour of DiD into a relevant study subject – specifically, designed to enhance students' empathy and social skills. This will also enable further understanding, whilst building an in-depth working relationship between DiD and the students who are taking the Community Project module. Internship opportunities with the DiD could also be created for students from the BSc (Hons) Accounting & Finance, BSc (Hons) Business Management, and BSc (Hons) Business Studies.

"This is a unique way for an institute like us (Sunway University) to support such a valuable social enterprise," said Sunway Institute for Social Entrepreneurship & Head (Academic), Department of Accounting, Banking and Finance Director Associate Professor Dr. Foo Yin Fah. "While extending our help to them, it will

also encourage students to gain greater exposure and better understanding. Through this concept students can experience beyond sight, learn to empathise more, along with other skills such as communication and leadership."

Dr. Foo is also the key person leading the DiD project at Sunway. Supporting the launch were DiD board members; Dr. Elizabeth Lee; Sunway Group Education and Healthcare Division CEO Dr. Lee Weng Keng; SUBS Dean Professor Steve Williams; as well as senior management and employees of Sunway University and Sunway Education Group.

Dialogue in the Dark is currently operating from Level 11 of the Sunway University New Building. DiD is open to the public with the following entry fee structure: RM30 for Adults (18 years and above); RM25 for Youth (13-17 years); and RM20 for Children (7-12 years). **BLAZE**

# The American Adventure

For many, going away to college is the first step towards total independence. You have to discipline yourself to get up for your classes, juggle your own finances (often taking up employment at the same time to help your purse strings), and expose yourself to many new and unfamiliar things, which range from faces, places and concepts. It can be scary – but it can definitely be a great opportunity, not only for personal development, but to have a great deal of fun and adventure at the same time.

For three of Sunway University's students – Alicia Ng, Leticia Yeoh, and Ho Sue Ann – it was the best time to take part in a gamble: to take a working holiday to the home of the brave and the land of the free. All three young ladies signed up for a work and travel (WAT) programme to the USA, which proved to be a gamble that paid off. **BLAZE** managed to speak to them about their experience, and what they learned from it.

"I have a hunger for adventure," said Alicia, who spent three full years at Sunway doing the Lancaster degree programme. "To be thrown into the unfamiliar; to indulge in the peculiar – it's what I always wanted, for it is only then that we can find ourselves. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing," said the young lady, who graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Accounting and Finance in July 2014.

Leticia – who was born in 1992, the middle child in a family of 5 – said, "I count myself fortunate to have supportive and loving parents that allow me to explore and pursue my interests. After graduating from HELP University College with my Foundation in Arts certificate, I decided to pursue a degree in Business Management at Sunway University." She added that throughout her three years at Sunway



University, she was presented with a number of challenges and opportunities that she believes would not have been available if she had attended a different university. "The course subjects were challenging, but they prepared me with the skills necessary for the workplace."

"I had the opportunity to represent Sunway University as a student ambassador to Lancaster University, for a cultural exchange programme," Leticia continued. "This opportunity gave me a glimpse into the life of a student in a different cultural setting and interesting differences between our cultures. My stint as an Academic Relations Officers for the Sunway University Business School (SUBS) Concilium 2013/2014 also gave me the chance to develop my skills and create lasting friendships."

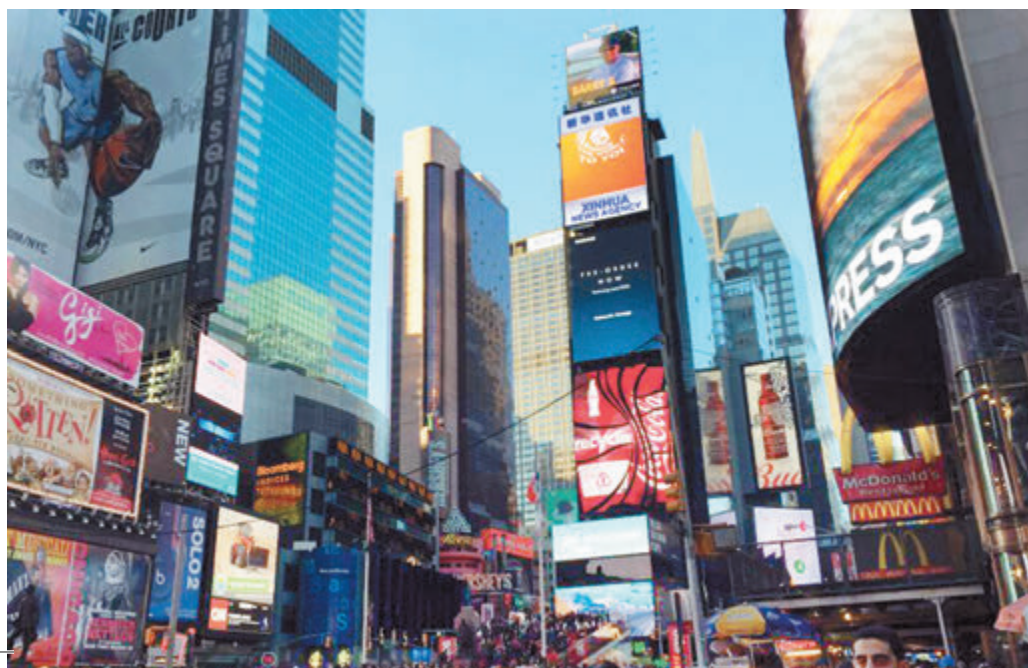
Her interest in exploring the FMCG industry led Leticia to join Colgate-Palmolive Malaysia in July 2015, under their Commercial Gradu-

ate Trainee programme. "I spend my free time catching up on Korean dramas and TV shows," she quipped.

Sue Ann, who graduated with Sunway University's BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance degree in the Lancaster University programme back in 2013, said, "I am usually loud, and love artsy-fartsy stuff – fine arts, collecting quotes and music. The opportunity to check this out first hand in the USA was too good a chance to miss!"

So how is it that they were able to travel to the other side of the world during that time? Alicia said that she signed up with an agency called Out of the Box into the *Work and Travel USA* programme. For Leticia, she wanted to try out the exact same experience that her older sister went on three years earlier, so she signed up for the five-month work and travel USA programme, where university students would be given the opportunity to work for an employer in the USA for up to four months, and travel around USA for 30 days (which is the grace period after the visa expires). Meanwhile, Sue Ann said the decision to go was spur-of-the-moment, but actually planned since the first year of her degree. And because the only time that she could spare five whole months, without deferring her studies would be after she was done with her degree, she only left for Arizona a month after her graduation.

A common factor for all three young ladies was that their families were fully supportive of their decision to embark on this American odyssey. Another common thing was the type of work they decided to take on during the programme: the hospitality line – and they all went to work at the same venue. "I was with a hotel called the Best Western Premier Grand Canyon," Alicia said.



"It is about a 15-minute drive into the Grand Canyon National Park (South Rim). I was at the front desk serving guests from all around the world – I even met a few Malaysians! Americans are generally extremely affable, and my colleagues came from all walks of life. Whether from the East or West coasts, there were white Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, and Natives – very diverse, but all very welcoming."

"I was a guest room assistant – or to put it bluntly, a housekeeper," said Sue Ann. "I was in charge of cleaning hotel rooms, and tending to the needs of guests in a section of the hotel that I was assigned to. Some of the guests love to strike conversation – although the question of 'Where is Malaysia?' comes up much too often!"

Leticia agreed. "We essentially did housekeeping at the Best Western. While I met several other Malaysian students on the same programme there, many of my colleagues were of Native American and Mexican heritage. They were very welcoming and friendly, despite our communication barrier." A major bonus of their stay was that they all picked up a bit of Spanish, due to the fact a lot of their co-workers and their clientele spoke it – which not only consisted of words, but gestures to emphasise the words too.

Even though the experience got a bit overwhelming at times, the trio sup-



ported each other and discovered that focusing on the positive would help see them through. For Alicia, one of the main takes from the programme was in learning to adapt and to become more independent, which was echoed by both Leticia and Sue Ann.

Being in a remote, small area – Sue Ann joked that Sunway Pyramid was bigger than the entire town! – meant that they had to adjust not only their world-view, but also expectations. From what they say, it seems that they not only managed to fit in, but to thrive as well. All

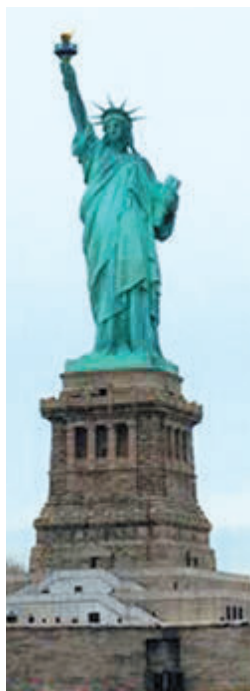
three also managed to cultivate a new-found appreciation for housekeepers – an admirable lesson to be learnt.

So what do they have to say to those who are thinking of taking up the same opportunity? Alicia said, "Mark Twain said it best: 'Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover'."

"It is a great opportunity to immerse yourself in another culture, and to live outside of your comfort zone for a short while," Leticia added. "Through this programme, you will have the opportunity to meet interesting

people from different walks of life, be it your colleagues at work or the people you meet during your travels."

"By the time I came back from the trip of my lifetime, I was almost a whole year later than my peers in joining the rat race" Sue Ann said. "But then again, what's the rush to join that 9-5 life? Get a chance to look at America not just through the television screen, but in real life. You will be able to gain life lessons from the most unexpected places." Sounds like solid encouragement to us! **BLAZE**



## PwC's powerful recruiter

Lee Jie Wen  
BSc (Hons) Psychology



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Let me tell you of how a student became a recruiter for PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC): my story! I used to be a happy-go-lucky person, who always believes that the world is always beautiful. And guess what? I submitted my online application (4 months before the internship start date) after I came back from the Lancaster University Student Exchange Programme – and I got a call from the Intern Recruiter within an unexpected timeline (See! The world is beautiful!). Although phone call woke me up from my sweet dream, it brought me to a beautiful land: PwC. Many wondered: why PwC? Well, PwC has a good reputation, and it's well known for training fresh graduates in the market. Also, PwC simply has vibrant colours and activities! So, why not PwC?

My PwC internship began with photocopying and printing (small responsibilities), and getting to know more about the industries and Line of Services. Soon, I learned to screen CVs (slightly more responsibilities), and to participate in career fairs (I represented PwC as an intern!). I was amazingly fortunate; there was a resignation in the team during my internship period; an experienced recruiter, she had acquired candidates for the Advisory department. I suppose that they trusted me and that my performance exceeded their expectations – because they offered me a position in the team! So here I am, the recruiter for Deals Advisory! I take it as an achievement, as it is not something that usually happens in Human Capital. Till today, I've recruited more than 50 people at various levels of experience in mergers and acquisitions, corporate finance, financial due diligence, valuation and deals strategy, amongst many others. Additionally, I also participate in the PwC Onboarding Programme as an Ambassador. I work closely with the Learning and Development team, to ensure that all new joiners have a pleasant transition when they come onboard.

I'm grateful that I got to shape my presentation skills during my studies at Sunway University. Throughout my time in Sunway University, the tight assignment deadlines were a good training ground, to ensure that I was able to cope with stress and to deliver a good piece of work within a given timeline (I admit, I am a perfectionist!). Time management, personal management and stakeholder management are valuable skills, and these are soft skills that I can bring along no matter where I am. Also, my time in Sunway University has shaped me to be more independent. I appreciate my time in Sunway University – especially, the guidance from my lecturers. To me, they are friends and mentors for life, who gave me wise advice for my career and personal development. **BLAZE**

## Following her dreams

Joyce Ng Wan Ru  
BSc (Hons) Accounting & Finance

While most graduates will look for a job right after graduation – or even before that – I decided to join an exchange programme organised by AIESEC (Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques et Commerciales, or Interna-

tional Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences), which was formerly known as the GCDP (Global Community Development Programme).

It has been always my dream to travel

alone and explore new things at a whole new place. Being the vibrant youths that we are, we have to reach out to the community, to know new things and learn from people from all walks of life. With this programme, I had the opportunity to turn passion into a contribution to the society. Painting murals in a rural fishing village in Taiwan helped develop the area into a tourist attraction, which could result in an improvement of the local economy. Go experience the world upon graduation: believe me, it will change your life!

# The active IT expert from Nigeria

Nafisa Bello Issa  
BSc (Hons) Information Systems

My name is Nafisa, and I come from Nigeria, a country in the west of Africa. I joined Sunway University in January 2010, where I started off with my foundation year, then proceeded to my Bachelor's Degree in Information Systems. I completed this degree in March, 2014 after which I graduated with First Class Honours.

My time in Sunway University is what I can describe as the best years of my life! The community, education, the opportunity to be able to meet and become friends with people – not only from Malaysia, but from other countries as well – made my stay a very memorable one. There were great extra-curricular activities available, and I joined and took part in different activities, including being an International Student Ambassador, a member of the Golden Key International Honours Society, a member of the SCT Student's Representatives, the SAS Club and many more. For some of these activities, I held positions of responsibility such as being secretary and vice-president.

I am now currently working in Hilti Asia IT Services Sdn Bhd, which I joined in January as an Intern. Soon, I took the role of Application Designer SAP BW, where I was tasked with BW reporting and working on projects in that team. I continued in Hilti as a full time employee, with the new role of IT Process Consultant HOL/B2B, where I am in charge of Test Management/Quality Assurance for all Hilti Online releases. I am also in charge of implementing eB2B/eProcurement solutions to all the Hilti Organisations in Asia, the Middle East, Turkey and Africa, with several successful projects already live in some countries.

At the same time, I am doing a part-time Masters in Information Systems at Sunway University as well. To Sunway students/future students, I can say that you have definitely made the best choice to school



with this institution. In line with studying hard for your respective programmes, do not miss out on the opportunity to join different clubs and societies. Do take part in other activities, as you will be surprised at how much you can learn and grow, in so many aspects of your life. Employers look for good grades – but they also look for people who have achieved and experienced other extra-curricular activities. **BLAZE**

# The hardworking performer

Sean Lee Jia Ern  
Diploma in Performing Arts

What an exciting journey it has been since I graduated from the Department of Performing Arts (DPA)! Apart from having my own YouTube channel "seanlje" (do support me by subscribing!), I have also embarked on my acting career. My inaugural TV drama will be released over TV3 in October 2015. I have also participated in several TV commercials and print ads, the most memorable one being *Road to Ramlee*, a 4-episode commercial featuring the Samsung Note 4. The knowledge and experience that I have gained while studying in DPA has definitely helped me in my career.

I am currently attached to an online channel which will be launching soon, and will be producing the content for their videos. But producing content for my own YouTube channel has been most gratifying. In my channel, there are travel vlogs, topical vlogs, pranks, and more. The whole idea behind all this content is not only to indulge in fun ideas, but to also give simple messages, such as the need to be nice to others, and to inspire others to do something positive.



A Diploma in Performing Arts is my foundation, and it is a steady platform for me to progress further in my career. As I began to fit into the society, I definitely became more mature and responsible. My advice to all young graduates: Don't give up on your dreams. Work Hard! Dream Big, and Stay Humble! Always allow your parents and mature friends to speak in your life, and never lose sight of your Creator. My time in Sunway definitely played a part in shaping my character today. The importance of having good people skills are so valuable for our generation now. Coupled with a good attitude, I am positive that we can achieve our dreams, and be who we want to be! **BLAZE**

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ON THE MOVE

Unexpected surprises turned up ever since I joined the Procter & Gamble (P&G) finance department. Upon working in the SK-II multifunctional team, I was privileged to attend various company events that were graced by the presence of celebrities such as Angelica Lee Sin Jie and Godfrey Gao. From there, I got to see the end-to-end process on how those events are organised and handled.

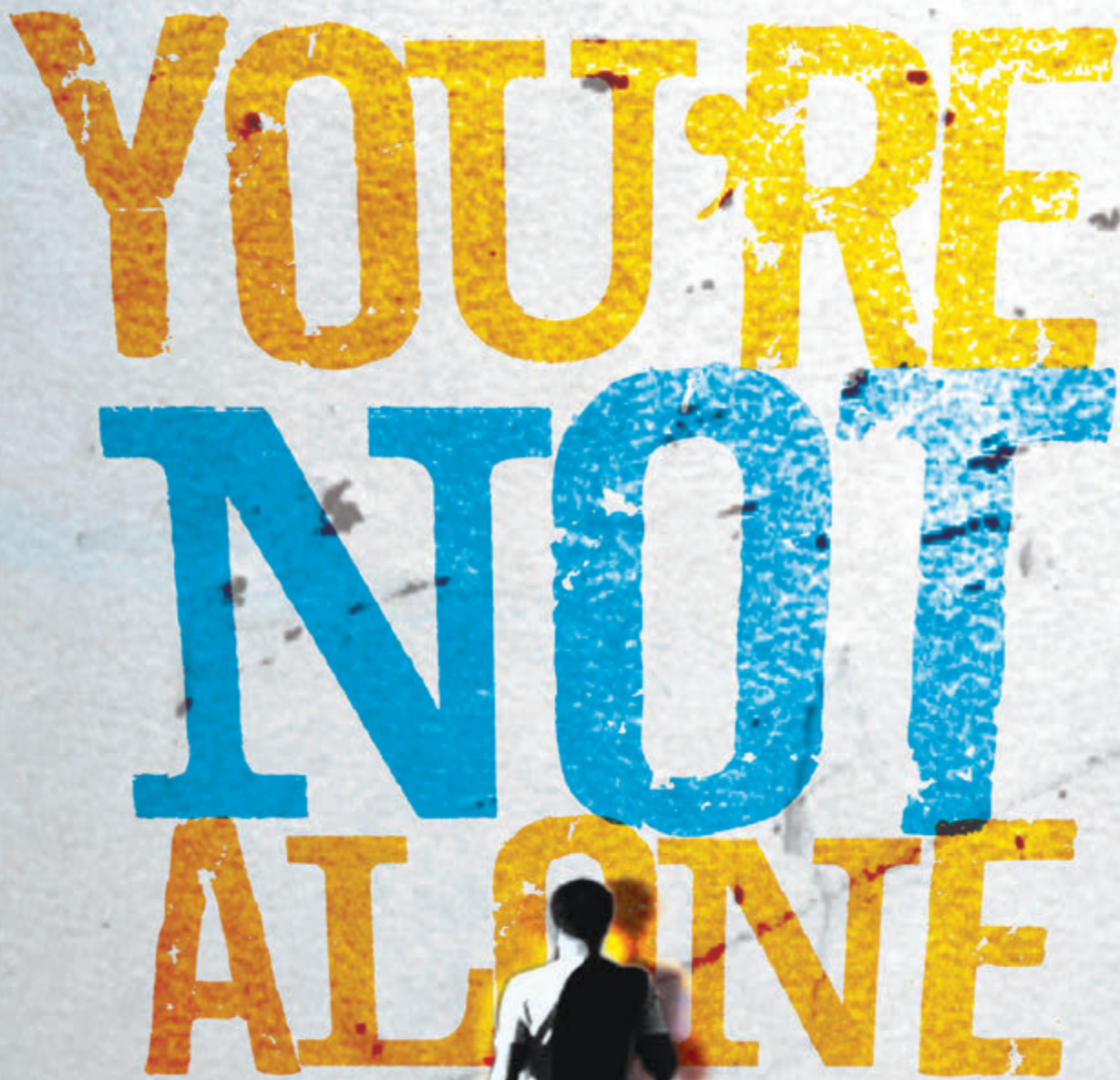
As a new hire in the organisation, I was elected to be one of the committee members of the Recreational Club – and all the

work that I did the planning and undertaking company events with the seniors strengthened our relationship. We had a Family Day at the KL Bird Park – where, by happy coincidence, my family won first place in the *Bird Hunt* treasure hunt!

There is a saying that goes: "Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow; it only saps today of its joy." As such, listen to your heart and chase after your dreams. Be courageous, and take on that adventure! Cheers! **BLAZE**



**YOU'RE  
NOT  
ALONE**



**WE ARE HERE TO HELP**

Reach out to our Counselling Unit by:

- Walk-in (Student Services Department)
- Call 03-7491 8622 Ext. 8019
- Email: [counselling@sunway.edu.my](mailto:counselling@sunway.edu.my)

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