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BLAZE

THE SUNWAY UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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FACULTY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

The Scientist Who
Made Headlines
Sunway University -
A trusted brand
GOLD award winner
Nick Vujicic speaks
to the Sunway
Student Community

CONTENTS

Blaze is published quarterly. The name was selected as it signifies Sunway University achievements in recent years. Sunway University, is a “trailblazer” in the area of excellence in education pursued with a flaming passion in the hearts of its staff and students.

Vol 8 / Issue 26 / September 2013

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SUNWAY UNIVERSITY



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The Scientist Who Made Headlines

At the height of the Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) crisis in Singapore in 2000, Professor Poh Chit Laa hit the world headlines with the rapid diagnostic kit that she developed to test for the deadly Enterovirus 71 (EV71) within an hour instead of the normal 29 days it took to diagnose the virus.

This was a major scientific breakthrough that rocked the world of medical science, but few people knew that the lady they read about in the news is a true blue Malaysian, who grew up in the city of Kuala Lumpur.

She was then an Associate Professor in the Department of Microbiology at the National University of Singapore. Citing the lack of opportunity for advancement in 1981, she left for Singapore after spending a year at the University of Malaya as a lecturer with the Department of Genetics and Cell Biology. She had since worked in Singapore for 25 years, and as Visiting Associate Professor at University of New South Wales and Visiting Professor of Biomedical Science at Curtin University of Technology in Perth. She took up a Professorship in Swinburne University in Melbourne in 2007 and in 2009, she decided to return home to Malaysia, where she now hopes to live out her passion in grooming young medical scientists who could someday turn Malaysia into a high-income nation through knowledge and skills. She joined Sunway University as the Head of School of Health and Natural Sciences in 2011 and became the Inaugural Dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology in March, 2012 at Sunway University.

The Story behind the Breakthrough

The outbreak of EV71 which causes Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) had cost the lives of many young children in Asia since the 1970s. The big outbreaks in East Malaysia in 1977 and Taiwan in 1978 had claimed over a hundred lives. Since 2008, HFMD had infected over 1.9 million children in China alone, with at least 900 fatalities being reported.

When the HFMD epidemic occurred in Taiwan in 1998, there were 129,106 cases reported, and at least 78 children died. "I became interested in working with the virus in 1999 when I read the article about the Taiwan epidemic," she said. "The following year, Singapore also experienced a large outbreak of EV71 and five children died from EV71 infection. As a mother of two boys, aged 18 and 11 then, I could feel the pain of the parents who had experienced the loss of their children due to EV71 infection."

What was most hard-hitting was when she saw a family with three children losing two of them, aged 5 and 7, within the span of one week. "That's when I decided to focus my research on the dreadful illness at NUS," she said. "I was able to collect samples of stools and urine of the diseased children, which were sent to the Ministry of Health. With that, our major focus was to develop a rapid diagnostic test for the virus. In those days, the Gold Standard used was by growing the virus in tissue culture cells, which would take up to two to three weeks, followed by another week to serotype the virus by neutralization test. In total, the period to diagnose could be altogether 29 days. In medical science, time is precious, and you do not have the luxury of waiting that long before making a decision as to which child should be admitted when there is a surge of children seeking admissions into hospitals during a large outbreak.

Working closely with pediatricians at the National University Hospital and Singapore General Hospital, Professor Poh was able to develop the rapid molecular diagnostic assay based on the real time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) to positively identify the presence of EV71 in clinical specimens within the hour. "Realizing that, during the large epidemic, we could no longer depend on clinical materials such as stools and urine to grow the virus in tissue culture, I switched to investigate using non-invasive samples such as the saliva to see if the EV71 strain could be positively identified," she said.

The "Eureka" breakthrough happened in around 2007 and 2008, when Professor Poh's research team succeeded in the detection of EV71 in the saliva. "This was a significant breakthrough in the event of a large outbreak of HFMD. The hospitals are now able to depend on quick diagnostic results in order to admit and treat the patients."

Developing Vaccines and Antivirals

Despite the high fatalities caused by EV71, the world is still looking for a vaccine that can prevent the outbreak. Although Chinese scientists have recently published a "killed" vaccine against the C4 genotype, Professor Poh said that the vaccine did not receive approval from the FDA yet, making it "only good for use in China". It is also largely unknown whether the vaccine will be able to protect the children against other genotypes of EV71.

"At Sunway, we have been able to develop novel antiviral peptides which are able to inhibit EV71 replication in vitro," she said, referring to an article which she jointly authored with a co-researcher from University of Malaya, Dr Chan Yoke Fan. The article was published in PLoS One, a scientific high impact journal, in May 2012. "The discovery has been filed for an intellectual property."

However, as a scientist evaluating the anti-viral peptide, she said that since it is based on naturally occurring L-Amino acids, it may not be very stable, "The anti-viral peptide would be susceptible to protease attack in the body when administered *in vivo*," she said.

The project was funded by three different universities since it started in 2010, when Professor Poh was a Professor with the Faculty of Science at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. A PhD student from University of Malaya co-supervised by Professor Poh, is currently working on the project. She is currently working on the development of chemically modified anti-viral peptides, while concurrently undertaking another anti-viral project funded by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), which involves the use of antisense compounds such as the Morpholinos to inhibit EV71 replication.

"The work is in progress," she added. "It is undertaken by a PhD student whom I am

co-supervising with Dr Chan. At the same time, Sunway University is also co-funding a related project looking at the emergence of Morpholino resistant mutants of EV71 and designing ways to overcome such resistance."

Professor Poh is hoping to design a novel live attenuated vaccine against EV71, as the "killed" vaccine developed by Chinese scientists will need multiple injections. These are very exciting areas which she hopes to train postgraduate students and research assistants. This is basically one of Professor Poh's other passions in life – to develop human talents for the betterment of mankind.

The Bigger Picture

"If Malaysia does not invest in developing its young people in the highly skilled areas, we will never be able to attract foreign investors to invest in medical technology. We will forever be caught in the middle income trap. This is what happened in Singapore in the 70's and 80's when the Republic was struggling to produce graduates who were critical thinkers in the field of science. Today, Singapore has a strong medical technology industry. The manufacturing of medical devices is worth about S\$3 billion and created 11,000 jobs in the highly-skilled sector of manufacturing," she said. "According to Dr Thomas Forgorty, an American who is known as the Father of the Medtech industry, the industry is worth US\$336 billion and is expected to grow by about 10 percent a year. The future of medical technologists is therefore very promising and it is time for Malaysia to produce these people who are highly trained and skilled, in order to attract major investors in medical devices and biologics manufacturing in Malaysia in the future."

According to Professor Poh, the field of medical research is still very promising. "For example, in the field of Cancer Biology, cancer is still not totally curable and there is scope to continue looking for anti-cancer compounds, whether natural or synthetic," she said. "Equally attractive is Stem Cell research. We will continue to look for the best way of growing new organs to replace diseased ones as we age."

To achieve this, Professor Poh has plans to roll out two new research-based postgraduate programmes, namely a Master and a PhD in Life Sciences. The MSc programme will be validated by Lancaster

University and the PhD degree a home-grown programme. “We hope to obtain the MQA approval within the next 12 months” she said. She is confident that she has recruited the best team with a wealth of research expertise and experience to supervise MSc and PhD students. Professor Poh had successfully graduated numerous Master’s and PhD students while she was with NUS and Swinburne University in Melbourne.

Meanwhile, the Department of Biological Sciences at Sunway University has recently introduced two undergraduate degree programmes: BSc (Hons) Biology with Psychology and BSc (Hons) in Medical Biotechnology.

“Through the BSc (Hons) Biology with Psychology, we hope to produce behavioral neuroscientists who are interested in understanding the biological basis of human behaviors,” she said. “With an increase in the number of stroke patients, and people suffering from brain tumors or brain damage caused by accidents, these people would require rehabilitation but currently there are not many professionals trained to scientifically monitor the behaviors of these patients during the rehabilitation process. The neuroscientists will work closely with the neurologists in the hospital to provide a holistic treatment for these patients. Alternatively, they may also work as research assistants in brain research institutes. Skillwise, they can command a good salary.” Graduates from the Biology with Psychology programme will also be in high demand by pharmaceutical companies and research institutes which are involved in the search for new drugs to treat Alzheimer’s disease, as well as new antipsychotic drugs and antidepressants. Alzheimer’s disease (AD) is the most common form of dementia with no known cure. There are 35 million people worldwide with dementia, and of that, 50-70 percent have AD. The number of dementia cases is expected to increase to 50 million by 2030 and we can expect a significant jump in AD numbers which are going to impose a high economic and social cost to society. Hence, neuroscientists play a very significant role in society as they are trained to discover or develop new drugs to treat this dreaded disease. Currently, there are two classes of drugs in use in the USA and the beneficial effects last at most 6 months and there are plenty of side effects.

Through the BSc (Hons) in Medical Biotechnology programme, Professor Poh hopes to attract students who are interested in the application of medical biotechnology to benefit mankind. “The list is endless when we talk about the development of medical devices. The “bionic” eye (which enables blind patients to see) and brain stents are just a few to start with. As the knowledge grows, there will be more medical devices being produced,” she added. She has also identified the growth of biologics such as vaccines, antivirals and monoclonal antibodies for treatment of cancers and infection as the future growth areas of the bio-economy in Malaysia.

To teach these programmes, Professor Poh has attracted some high level academic staff from abroad to join her in developing research areas in neuroscience, focusing mainly on neuro-degenerative diseases, infection and immunity, cancer biology and the development of anti-cancer compounds, and stem cell research.

For example, Professor Beek Yoke Chin (featured in blaze March 2013 edition) is an eminent scientist in the field of toxicology and immunology who had previously worked in the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Centre in Boston. She is currently researching the use of low dosage of Carbon Monoxide that can be used as a bactericidal agent.

Three other Associate Professors will be joining the Department of Biological Sciences in the next six months, specializing in neuro-degenerative diseases, cancer biology and stem cell research, respectively. “They will also be lecturing in the two new programmes at the undergraduate level as well as supervision of postgraduate students once the Master and PhD in Life Sciences have been approved,” said Professor Poh.

The diversity of programmes enriches the Faculty of Science and Technology and offers tremendous opportunity for academics to teach and conduct research across disciplines. The BSc (Hons) Biology with Psychology programme illustrates a spirit of collaboration in teaching and research across disciplines between the Department of Biological Sciences and Psychology. Other programmes in the planning stage are MSc in Health Informatics to be offered by the Departments of Health Sciences and Information Systems. Collaboration across faculties with Sunway

University Business School (SUBS) will see new programmes emerging like MSc in Health Administration and Medical Biotechnology with Entrepreneurship.

The Faculty of Science and Technology is proud of its achievements in attracting external grants and research publications in international journals since its inception in March, 2012. Academics from IT, Biological Sciences and Psychology attracted over RM1.7 million in external grants and published over 50 internationally-refereed journal papers. The Faculty of Science and Technology hopes to build on this success and continue to attract significant external grants to contribute to the growth of Sunway University into a research intensive university. Academics are also filling Intellectual Properties (IPs) arising from their research inventions in Biological Sciences and Information Technology.

Academics from the Faculty of Science and Technology are active in recruiting and supervising MSc and PhD students in Computer Science and Information Systems. To date, there are 26 Postgraduate students who have enrolled in the MSc in Computer Science and Information Systems programmes and seven in PhD programme. The Psychology Department is offering a MSc in Psychology (by Research).

The Faculty of Science and Technology is actively engaged with industry through signing several MOUs with Sunway IT Shared Services, HILTI and SAS in Malaysia. Industries are sponsoring postgraduate students to work on projects of mutual benefit to the academic researcher and industry. We hope to see more collaboration between academics and industry to train students who are ready to solve ‘real-world’ problems as they will be more employable.

Last but not least, Professor Poh believes in women to excel in building good careers and strong families. Her passion for research in Medical Microbiology has seen her achieving a H-index of 20 in her research publications and she has two sons and two daughters-in-law practising Medicine. Her love for educating the young to achieve excellence is driving her to look forward to graduating more PhDs who are critical thinkers and movers for science and technology innovations.

blaze

Made International Conference Speakers



Koh Tse Young, Chan Yuen Yeng and Cho Wai Hong.



Derek Ong



Lee Ying Ying, Kong Yee Wei, Lee Sung Li

Sunway University Business School's lecturer, Derek Ong and his final year Bachelor of Science (Hons) Accounting and Finance student, Lee Ying Ying presented their research papers in South Africa and Greece in July this year.

Ong also presented two papers on behalf of his students at the "2013 World Academy of Researchers, Educators, Scholars in Business, Social Sciences, Humanities and Education Conference", in Cape Town, South Africa.

The two papers by Ong are based on the work of his students who attended the module, STA 2024 Research Methods. These students are now in their final year of the Business and Accounting Finance degree.

Ong's first paper entitled, "Motivation of learning: An Assessment of the Practicality and Effectiveness of Gamification within a Tertiary Education System in Malaysia", is jointly written by Chan Yuen Yeng, Cho Wai Hong and Koh Tse Young.

"In the light of many criticisms about the Malaysian education system that it is unable to stimulate intrinsic academic motivation among students, this research paper found that gamification does, in fact, it helps to tackle the academic motivational problem Malaysia's education system is currently facing," Ong said.

Gamification is broadly defined as "the use of game design elements in non-game contexts to achieve the desirable outcome or behaviour" (Sicart, Deterding, Nacke, O'Hara and Dixon, 2011).

The second paper entitled, "A study of Malaysian Accounting Education in Higher learning Institutions: Is Malaysia Preparing Undergraduates for a Tsunami of Fraud?", looks into the interesting reality of the comprehensiveness of current accounting education in meeting the ethical demands of the real world in curbing fraud. Derek Ong and Co-writers, Ameera Al Mashoor, Eric Siew Weng Chung and Ng Qing Song, agreed that the current education system does not really equip students for the real accounting profession preparation against fraud and as such, needs a revamp of the syllabus.

Meanwhile, Lee Ying Ying is expected to present a paper entitled, "The recent shift of focus from foreign direct investment (FDI) to Domestic Direct Investment (DDI) in Malaysia's Economic Transformation Programme (ETP): Is it the right move?" at the 8th Annual International Symposium on Economic Theory, Policy and Applications organised by the Athens Institute for Education and Research in Athens, Greece.

The paper was jointly written by Kong Yee Wei, Lee Ying Ying, Lee Sung Li and Derek

Ong. "The fact that these students initially had no prior research experience," Ong said, "is amazing that they are able to produce a conference-ready paper just after completing the entire research process in 12 weeks. They had to then present their research findings in front of a panel of judges."

According to the abstract, the research showed that with the current economic environment, the DDI has become more relevant to the economic growth of Malaysia, as compared to FDI despite being constrained by the domestic savings and market size. "FDI is now seen only as a complement of DDI," Lee said. "As a result of this, we have recommended the development of small and medium enterprises, politics and economic inclusion as well as indigenous technology of Malaysia in the future, in order to attract more DDI and ensure the success of the ETP."

Ong said that as an educator, he strongly believes that students can realise their full potential to perform incredible feats as long as they are given the right motivation and guidance. "It is good that educational institutions like Sunway University provides continuous support of cultivating change in experiential learning and serves as a platform for students' educational and character development," he added. **blaze**



Job completed!

Sunway Volunteer Society students delighted that the job was completed finally

Every job must be completed, with no unfinished task.

That's the lesson that we can learn from Sunway Volunteer Society (SVS) students. When one team started the painting job on a 70-year-old bungalow in Jalan Mohet, Klang in June this year, another two teams continued the work until the job was completed. The bungalow is to be used to house a library and administrative office for a school of 250 migrant children in Klang.

What's more encouraging is that when a fellow Sunway alumnus, Chan Jinn Yep first learnt about the noble project, he decided that he wanted to do his part.

Jinn Yep managed to get the approval from the management of Jotun Paints (Malaysia) to donate 60 liters of Jotun Gardex Premium Gloss, a premium low odour enamel paint for wood and metal for this charity project.

A Sunway University Bachelor of Science (Hons) Business Management graduate, Jinn Yep is now the Regional Exterior Category Manager for Jotun Southeast Asia & Pacific. He joined Jotun after graduating in 2010.

Second Year ACCA student, Soh Chee Kern who led a team of 42 volunteers took three hours to paint the interior of the building, including all the rooms upstairs.

"I am glad to have this chance to lead our volunteers to paint the learning center for migrant kids," he said. "I hope with this, it would give them a better place for study. I also learnt a lot during this project, especially on how to communicate and work with the other volunteers who gave their precious time in contributing back to society."

Feedback

One of the volunteers, A-Levels student, Ng Hao Ning said that it was his first time doing voluntary service. "I am looking forward to other up-coming activities organised by the SVS," he said.

Like Ng, fellow A-Levels student, Joel Chan Ern Zher said that he, too, enjoyed himself during the trip and made more friends during the voluntary work.

Foundation in Art student, Lim Wei Yang said projects like this gave him a chance to



Sharon Lee (A advisor of Sunway Volunteers Society), Soh Chee Kern and Tan Xue Wen (President of SVS) meeting Chen Lee Siong (Regional Marketing Director, Jotun Southeast Asia & Pacific) and Chan Jinn Yep at Jotun Malaysia

help out with the refugee work. "The fresh coat of paint makes the old bungalow more conducive for the children," he said. "Instead of just donating money, helping them in this manner is much more meaningful to me."

Low Jing Tung, who is currently doing his Degree in Hotel Management, said that the job did not require one to be a professional painter. "It takes just some enthusiasm," he quipped. "We still did the job professionally. Kudos everyone!" **blaze**



Sunway University - A Trusted Brand GOLD Award Winner

The Reader's Digest recently awarded Sunway University with the Trusted Brands GOLD Award 2013 in the Malaysian Private University category.

This is the third consecutive year that the University has won this award. The two earlier occasions were in 2011 and 2012.

According to Walter Beyleveldt, Managing Director, Asia-Pacific for Reader's Digest, the awards given out in various categories were based entirely on consumer voting and are compiled in a transparent and statistically reliable manner, and are thus accepted and trusted by consumers and marketers across Asia.

"We are proud to be given this award which endorses us as a leading university in Malaysia among consumers. We shall endeavour to continue to provide quality education to our students. At Sunway University, we prepare young minds to be critical and independent thinkers through our student-centred and outcome-based education," said Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University.

In 2012, Sunway University had also achieved a Tier 5 (Excellent) rating in the MQA's rating exercise for Malaysian Higher Education Institutions (SETARA 11) and Tier 5 rating in the Discipline-Based Rating (D-SETARA) exercise for the Hospitality and Tourism Discipline for undergraduate programmes in the Centre for Tourism, Hospitality and Culinary Management (CTHCM).

The University is progressing on schedule with the construction of a new 12-storey state-of-the-art academic block with a 2-level basement car park and a brand new football field which will be completed in 2014. The new block, with an environmentally friendly design and concept in construction, incorporates energy and water efficiency and also includes innovation for good natural lighting and ventilation systems. The block will be able to accommodate another 9000 students. In line with that, Sunway University is also developing a whole new suite of programmes to be offered when the new academic block is ready.

Sunway University's programmes are recognised and validated by prestigious international partners, including Lancaster

University, a research-led institution that is ranked as one of the top 10 UK universities and the world-renowned institute synonymous with culinary education excellence, Le Cordon Bleu. This ensures that the undergraduate qualifications gained at Sunway are recognised all over the world.

In contrast to other private universities in Malaysia, Sunway University is fully-owned and governed by a not-for-profit foundation. Through the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation, all of the University's surpluses are ploughed back to provide scholarships and to support education and research. The Foundation is an important example of community outreach that helps students in their understanding of corporate social responsibility. It was established by Founder and Chancellor, Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah AO, as an expression of his deeply held beliefs that education is a vital social good that nurtures success and transforms lives. **blaze**



Master Chef Arnaud (seated in the middle) with the students after a Pastry Master Class

Top Chef shares his opinion

Master Chef Jean-Francois Arnaud is one practical man with a balanced view about the way he sees the current controversy in his country over how one should label an eatery. Blaze asked him for his views when he was at the Centre for Tourism, Hospitality and Culinary Management (CTHCM) recently to conduct a Pastry Master Class for over 50 Diploma in Culinary Arts students.

The French are saying that eateries which serve industrial food (whether canned, frozen or microwaveable) should not be labelled as a 'restaurant', in comparison with one which has a full-fledged chef working in the kitchen. "About ten years ago, the same controversy revolved around the bakeries in France," he explained. "Shops that were selling bread produced in another location were not allowed to call themselves bakeries."

What's more important to Master Chef Arnaud is the level of awareness that needs to be raised through the media. "The consumers have to know how to differentiate a good meal that is served by a chef working in the kitchen, compared to one where the food is served out of the freezer," he said.

While fully agreeing that the chefs "who prepare the food from scratch" deserve to be respected and protected, Arnaud opines that in the pastry business, it's quite

different. "We need the economies of scale to make traditional Western pastries more affordable," he said. "Therefore, it makes sense to invest in big machines in one location, and then distribute them to a few outlets. I agree that in the pastry business, franchising is the right model."

However, Arnaud said that at the production kitchen, there must always be proper quality control by professional chefs who will ensure that the palates and the quality of the finished products are not compromised. "This is one big advantage that the Western chefs have when it comes to Western pastries because we have tasted the same dish the way it is prepared by the older generation during childhood. It is in our memory how each pastry should taste like," he said.

The 52-year-old pastry chef, who has been appointed as an industry consultant for CTHCM, said the same is true with a



Master Chef Jean-Francois Arnaud

Malaysian dish. "The way it is prepared here is different from a Malaysian restaurant overseas," he said. "You know how the best *nasi lemak* should taste, compared to a foreigner who is preparing it."

This is why, he added, restaurants or bakeries with well-qualified foreign chefs can demand for premium prices in their menu, besides using the best ingredients. A professional chef all his life, Master Chef Arnaud has won the Best Craftsman in France for Pastry 2000 and bestowed the prestigious *Undes Meilleurs Ouvriers de France* (Patisserie Confiserie) by the French Government.

Sunway CTHCM students are very privileged to have the opportunity to observe and interact with a world reknown French Master Chef! **blaze**

LIMBS

Nick Vujicic speaks to the Sunway Student Community

Everywhere Nick Vujicic went, his message was clear – whatever disability you have in life, there is always hope and meaning in life. A Christian by faith, his faith in God was what pulled him through. And today, he travels to any part of the world to spread God's message of love and hope.

There is no problem too big that God cannot solve, and there are no disabilities too overwhelming that He cannot overcome. When you mention the name, Nick Vujicic, it immediately conjures the image of a motivational speaker extraordinaire whose faith in the Almighty has turned him into a champion at the finishing line. He is the evidence that there is still hope in life and God is always there in the lowest moments of one's life.

Born as Nicholas James Vujicic, the Serbian-Australian evangelist and motivational speaker with tetra-amelia syndrome has earned an extraordinary reputation, making him in the ranks of other disabled people like renown speaker and artist, Joni Eareckson Tada and English theoretical physicist, cosmologist, author, Stephen Hawking. They all exhibit the beauty of what life can be, when one learns to accept their disabilities and pressed on to achieve new heights in life.

“Nick” as he is fondly known, was born with tetra-amelia syndrome, a rare disorder which is characterized by the absence of all four limbs.

Despite his disability, at the age of 17, he set up his own non-profit organisation, which is now known as “Life Without Limbs.” At the age of 19, he was already travelling around the world, sharing his story with millions of people, sometimes in stadiums filled to capacity, speaking to a range of diverse groups such as students, teachers, young people and business professionals. He was, as someone put it nicely, “God’s instrument where weakness is there to shame even the proud and mighty”.

It is no wonder that during his first public talk at Sunway University, Vujicic attracted an audience of 5,000 people. The talk was sponsored by Jeffrey Cheah Foundation and Sunway University as part of their efforts to bring in top international speakers on Malaysian soil. Sunway University is already known for more than 8 years as the host of the Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Speakers Series, which organises talks at the campus for free.

Although Vujicic’s talk was primarily organised for students of all institutions in the Sunway Education Group, it was also open to the public. When the registration site for the public went live at 8pm on May 17, 2013 via online registration on first-come-first-served basis, free tickets were snapped up within 45 minutes. Due to the strong interest in Vujicic, the talk was beamed live to 21 halls, classrooms and lecture theatres on the campus, to allow as many people to watch him speak. The biggest hall on campus where Vujicic was speaking in accommodated 1,500 people of which more than a thousand were students. The talk was also telecast live to Sunway International School, Monash University Malaysia, Sunway College Johor Bahru and Sunway Resort Hotel & Spa.

Life is Precious

Having overcome his own mental and emotional struggles as a child, Vujicic realised that life has to go on. Despite

his limitations, Vujicic leads a very normal life. He is a musician and an actor, and his hobbies include fishing, painting and swimming. He also has three books to his name: ‘Life Without Limbs’, which was published in 2010, ‘Unstoppable’ in 2012 and ‘Limitless’ in 2013.

Vujicic, who was born in Australia, captured world’s attention with his determination to take control of his life, by asking what he can do with his disabilities instead of lamenting on his disability. With that thought in mind, Vujicic mastered the life skills of an able-bodied person to lead his life just like any other person. Today, he is an inspiration not only to the disabled community but to millions of able-bodied people around the world. If a disabled person like Vujicic could live a meaningful life, there is no reason why an able-bodied person could not live his life to the fullest. Failures and disappointments in life are only temporary. “We need to find the truth of our value, the truth of our purpose and the truth of our destiny,” he said.

Vujicic confronted the challenges he faced in school and during adolescence by finding companionship in God. The loneliness and depression he experienced growing up as a child were under control since then. The choices one make in life will determine the path that he takes, and Vujicic has chosen the road less travelled.

During his talk he made the crowd in the hall gasp, laugh and cry with his stories of hope, love and faith. Vujicic said every country has a lot of needs but rather than waiting for someone to help, we need to be the first to help our own people. He also said that it was very important to love oneself first before loving others to help inspire as well as change the lives of others.

When introducing Vujicic to the audience, Senior Executive Director of Sunway University and Sunway Education Group, Elizabeth Lee said: “I feel so blessed being here this morning, so blessed to be in the same room as Nick Vujicic, so blessed to be able to feel the electricity from the audience in the hall. Nick, even before you

speak, you have filled this room with so many individuals who admire and love you so much.”

“We all have our own life challenges. They are nothing compared to Nick’s. He’s been empowered by God to be in charge of his own life and he uses it to the fullest”.

Lee also expressed her appreciation to Vujicic for making a very quick stop in Malaysia in spite of his tight schedule in this region. “Response from the students and staff has been tremendous and they join me in thanking Nick for choosing to come to Sunway.”

Twenty students had earlier earned the privilege to meet Vujicic in person. They were the winners of the Sunway University Facebook contest conducted in early May and ended mid-May 2013. **blaze**

Dear Sunway Students,

Do you need counselling?

In the most difficult times in one’s life, it is easy to give up. But as the idiom goes, ‘When the going gets tough, the tough gets going’, are you giving up so easily when you are about to reach the top like Nick Vujicic?

If you are facing personal, family or relationship problems, please come and see our trained counsellors at the Student Services Department. They may be able to help and move you on in life.

Confidentiality is assured.

You can choose to locate a counsellor in many ways:

- Call our phone line 03-74918622 ext 8019
- Email us at: counselling@sunway.edu.my

Or just walk in! The counsellors’ office is located at the Student Services Department (next to the Cafeteria, inside the Student Centre).





Raising the Standard of Teaching

The facilitators, Dr Alison Cooper and Dr Tony Luxon (from right: fifth and fourth, respectively) with the participants during the recent CAP workshop

Both Annyza Tumar from Centre for English Language Studies (CELS) and Saravanamalar Surarajah from Department of Art & Design (DAD) have been inducted as Champions in the Sun-U Champions Network for their contributions to the academic staff training and development.

Annyza has contributed to the staff induction programme and done sharing sessions on classroom management since 2011, while Saravanamalar bagged the prize for the e-learning contest for the best designed Course Site in June 2013. In recognition of her involvement outside her main scope of work, Saravanamalar received a prize from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Pua Eng Chong.

"I am grateful and honoured to be part of the e-learning contest," said Saravanamalar. "In fact, this contest had given the opportunity for every participant to explore creative media, learn various teaching tools, and apply new teaching and learning methods using different web technologies. E-learning platform is one of the best collaborative learning environments to nurture young generation towards a successful outcome-based education."

As a champion of the Sun-U Champions Network, Annyza has facilitated workshops focusing on enhancement of teaching and learning. "These workshops enable academics to collaborate with each other and overcome their teaching challenges," she said. "Participants have often found the workshops useful and I believe that this will also contribute towards improving students' overall satisfaction with their learning experience."

There were 20 participants who had registered and attended the Certificate in Academic Practice (CAP) workshops which is a Lancaster University in-service programme designed to support and accredit the academic development of a range of staff. The workshops are available as a form of support for lecturers and teaching fellows who are new to the higher education industry in the United Kingdom or those who are new to Lancaster.

The programme is also targeted at lecturers with considerable experience who wish to further develop aspects of their teaching and curriculum design, as well as part-time teaching staff, research associates and postgraduates who have substantial teaching duties and prior professional accreditation.

Each of the participants is linked with a mentor who will provide them with support. According to the Head of Teaching and Learning, Academic Policy and Quality Assurance Office (AQO), Wang Sooi Fong, efforts will be undertaken to organise a sharing session among the new CAP participants with some of the would-be-mentors to facilitate a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) session on CAP and how to start on the assignments.

Both the CAP facilitators, Dr Tony Luxon and Dr Alison Cooper from Lancaster University have expressed their intentions to return in 2014 for the second leg of their CAP workshops, making it a bi-annual event. They have also recommended that members from the current CAP cohort, who have not participated in the Lancaster University Educational Development Programme be given the priority to visit Lancaster University. **blaze**

Mural way of spreading “Anti-Dadah” message

For three consecutive days between May 20 and 22, SMK Bukit Jelutong in Shah Alam was a hive of activities.

Nine students from the Department of Arts and Design, together with their lecturers, Sammy Chong and Nasarudin Ahmad created a one-of-a-kind mural on the wall of the school's building. Sammy was the main coordinator of the project, while Nasaruddin personally designed the mural.

Daniel Su Shanhua, Soh Mun Hon, Teoh Pin Hwa and Thurgeshwaren were from the Department of the Diploma in Interior Design programme (DID), while others

were from the Diploma in Graphics and Multimedia Design (DGM) -- Puvishanan, Joel Wong Zhun Meng, Chang Zhi Xuen, Janice Tan Mae Ru and Gan Yee Shan

The school, represented by its teacher, Nursyakin Mohd Yusof sponsored the materials, while Sunway students gave of their talent and time to complete the mural.

According to Nasaruddin, the theme of the mural is “Anti-Dadah”. However, he said that the acronym, *DARIH*, is used, which stands for “*Dadah, Alkohol, Rokok, Inhalan, HIV/AIDS*” (Drugs, Alcohol, Cigarette, Inhalants and HIV/AIDS).

“The concept of circles in this mural represents the activities which is highly balance and perfect without the influence of *DARIH*,” he said.

“The vibrant colour of the mural depicts happiness and energetic life without the influence of *DARIH*. Meanwhile the black and white on the mural represents the outcome of *DARIH* which is dull and uninteresting.”

blaze



Nine students from the DAD, together with their lecturers, Sammy Chong and Nasarudin Ahmad created a one-of-a-kind mural

Online news never sleeps

A former WMU student of Sunway University shares the exciting part of being a newsman ...

PHILIP Golingai is one newsman who believes in being there where the actions are.

The 46-year-old Sabahan of Kadazan origin is presently the editor of Star Online, which boasts of its own breaking news and scoops.

“Scoops? Breaking news?” he quipped. “When news breaks, it just happens. As an editor, you don’t have a choice. You have to be literally on the alert 24 hours, seven days a week.” This is especially true when the Internet became the medium for transmission of news around the globe.

At 8.46am, when five hijackers crashed American Airlines Flight 11 into the World Trade Centre in New York, within minutes, the whole world had learnt about the fateful 9/11 attacks by the Al-Qaeda.

On the local shores, when the ramp at the Penang Second Link collapsed, the accident happened unannounced. “We had to immediately send our team to the site to get the latest story. While the rescue team worked round the clock, the moment a body is extricated, our men on the ground has a news break,” he explained.

“This is how news works. Time is the essence, where news, especially online news is concerned. Technically, online news does not sleep. When kidnap victim, William Yau’s body was found, our reporter had to stake it out into the wee hours of the morning to get the latest news update from the family.”

What’s interesting about this alumnus of Sunway University, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (majoring in Communications and minoring in Journalism) from Western Michigan University, is that he prefers to be on the ground. “My philosophy is that if you are there in the ‘happenings’ to coordinate the way news is obtained and reported, you get to understand the background of things better,” he said. “Instead of working from the ivory tower at Menara Star, the story becomes more interesting.”

Sometimes, it also means sacrificing his time with wife, Vera Mopilin and their five-year-old daughter, Apsara. The recent incursion of Lahad Datu by 300 Sulu gunmen is a good illustration. On Friday March 15, there was an unexpected clash between the Sulu armed men and the police. The skirmish continued the next day in Semporna. “When the decision was finally made to send in the military, I decided to fly to Lahad

Datu myself on Sunday with my team of a dozen crew members to cover the story. In total, we had to spend two weeks in the battlefield to gather first-hand information,” he said.

With the nature of his work, Philip can work from anywhere, as long as he has a laptop and the Internet connection to upload the story. It also means that citizens can tweet their “news” from different places at the same time. “Star Online is more interactive. We are not confined to time and space. Over here, we encourage the public to tweet the latest news of say, a disaster, to us. With “Storify”, we then pick up some of the best pictures or stories to be featured in Star Online,” he said.

Having spent all his working life with the English daily since 1994 – this being his first job – Philip had spent a good six years with the news desk, before moving to Star Two and later StarMag for another six years. When posted to Bangkok from 2006 through 2010, he maintained a regular column, “Thai Takes.” After a brief stint as the paper’s iPad Editor, he moved on to become the Deputy News Editor at Star. In January this year, he took on a new challenge to be the Star Online Editor. **blaze**



MoU with Hilti inked



Seated from left: Thoo Poh Wai, Christoph Baeck, Professor Graeme Wilkinson and Professor Poh Chit Laa. Standing: Elizabeth Lee (seventh from left) with Sunway staff

Sunway University signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a construction solutions company, Hilti Asia IT Services Sdn Bhd on July 16, to collaborate on research and share expertise on specific technology.

The MoU is expected to facilitate exchange of ideas, expertise and visits in the pursuit of research and development as well as curriculum development and jointly participate in seminars and conferences relevant to the industry.

Senior Executive Director of Sunway Education Group, Elizabeth Lee said that it is an honour to be associated with Hilti, a leading-edge technology company specialising in products, systems and services for the construction industry.

“Through such activities, our students’ learning will be enhanced and industrial placements, which are necessary for personal and career development, will be possible. In future we also hope to provide financial support for qualified postgraduate candidates to enrol in Sunway University programmes”, she said (as per written in pen).

Lee also added that through this partnership and synergy, their ultimate objective is to encourage innovation and critical thinking, which may lead to the development of new technologies relevant to the industry.

Hilti Asia IT Services Sdn Bhd is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hilti Corporation, a forward-looking technology company, based in Europe.

At the ceremony, Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University signed for Sunway University, while Christoph Baeck, Head of Hilti Asia IT Services Sdn Bhd signed on behalf of his company. **blaze**



Thoo Poh Wai, Regional IT Infrastructure Team Lead at Hilti; Christoph Baeck; Elizabeth Lee; Professor Graeme Wilkinson; and Professor Poh Chit Laa, Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology

“Through such activities, our students’ learning will be enhanced and industrial placements, which are necessary for personal and career development, will be possible”

- Elizabeth Lee

Rethinking Business and Charity



Referring to the nursery rhyme “Humpty Dumpty”, Dr Pamela Hartigan made a sharp observation of the world we are living in. “I believe,” she said, with conviction, “we are living in a Humpty Dumpty world where a good many of the king’s horses and king’s men are scrambling to put Humpty back together again because they lack the courage and vision to do otherwise.”

The Director of the Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship at Saïd Business School, Oxford University, Dr Hartigan used the Humpty Dumpty model to illustrate “a growing movement of men and women, with imagination, commitment, persistence and a very strong ethical fibre who are working furiously to achieve economic and social justice and arrest the destruction of this planet.”

“We are in a very interesting phase of new thinking and experimentation and we must seize this huge opportunity,” she said, during a talk titled, “Needed: Courageous Leaders to Rethink Business and Charity”. “This is why the establishment of the Sunway Institute for Social Entrepreneurship (SISE) by Sunway University is so important.”

Dr Hartigan is one of the world’s leading proponents for social entrepreneurship. Her public address, as a guest speaker for the Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Speaker Series (JCDSS), covered how the 20th century models of leaderships are no longer appropriate to adequately address the increasingly complex and interconnected world we live in today. She also explained how to break away from this out-dated way of operating a business, using 21st century models of leaderships as we evolve to become better leaders.

Trends

Dr Hartigan noted that over the last few years, citizen movements have risen to new heights in shaping the new status quo, propelled by the newest technology that connects them to one another around the world. The many protests and movements in the past have highlighted various plights of the people that have each demanded the same thing worldwide; a systematic change that would provide greater dignity, transparency, participation and access to opportunities but the current government, corporate and foundation leaders responded to the situation by continuing their business as usual.

“For me, we have to look at the entrepreneurial approaches to social economic and change. These new approaches are the harbingers of the new types of organisational and business models that our compartmentalised world so sorely needs in order to integrate where we make our money, and where we do good,” she explained.

The JCDSS is a way Sunway University gives back to the community and public by encouraging lifelong learning and intellectual empowerment. The Founder and Chancellor of Sunway University, Tan Sri Dr Jeffrey Cheah has always been passionate about providing quality education to all and seeks various methods to empower the community through education. Through the JCDSS, the public is presented with an opportunity to listen to a series of experts speak on a vast array of topics. Sunway University has also conducted many socially responsible activities in the past and is on a mission to contribute to society through education. **blaze**



Christine Yu (BSc (Hons) Psychology. Graduated: 2008) went on to pursue her Masters in Speech and Language Therapy at the University of Reading (UK) and completed in December last year. While studying for her Masters, she worked as a part-time tutor for children with autism and taught music during her spare time.

“Currently, I am a speech and language pathologist at Sau Seng Lum Paediatric Rehabilitation Centre, Petaling Jaya,” she said. “With a background in psychology, I find that it is easier to interact and engage with people of all ages, from children with developmental disabilities to adults with neurological disorders. Every day is a new and exciting day for me, as I learn new ways of helping my patients to communicate meaningfully.”

Her experience as a student at Sunway University has moulded her into a more holistic person, and helped her realise that at the end of the day, the knowledge and skills she has gained is to help others in need and to make a difference in the society. **blaze**

Cheah Hang Guan, American Degree Transfer Program (ADTP) (2005-6) transferred to Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan in early 2007, where he spent the next two years pursuing a Bachelor in Electrical Engineering.

“I graduated and returned to Penang in 2009. The following three years, I worked as an engineer in the semiconductor industry in Bayan Lepas,” he said. “Late last year, I quit my day job and started my venture as a mobile/web developer.”

Hang Guan later founded Chak Development (<http://chakdev.com>) which provides mobile application and web development services. He also developed two new products, namely the Rainbow Shopping List (<http://rainbowshoppinglist.com>), an intuitive shopping app that can predict shopping lists based on its user’s past purchases, and The Arc (<http://thearc.io>), a web platform for mobile app developers to cross-review and provide feedback on each other’s apps.

“My girl-friend, Lee Pei Li, who is also a Sunway alumna, and I were brainstorming for an idea for the hackathon AngelHack KL. Pei Li came up with the idea of creating a website that provided all the information needed about recycling plus a shout-out feature informing other members that you have recyclable items up for grabs,” he explained.

“We would put our common household recyclables such as plastic items, paper, bottles, aluminium cans into separate bags and take them to Tze Chi’s, a local collection centre. Although we had been doing this for few years, we noticed that not many people in Malaysia are recycling. With the help of technology, we wanted to help change the world.”

With that, both Hang Guan and Pei Li created the idea known as SoGood, which is short for Social Good. After many hours of coding and with only an hour of sleep, SoGood became a finalist at AngelHack KL. A week after the hackathon, SoGood was rebranded as SoGoodx and re-launched on June 17 (<http://sogoodx.org>.)”

The core mission of SoGoodx is to get everyone involved in social good in any way they can. SoGoodx provides a platform that encourages personal involvement by providing flexibility and power to individuals. “If you are busy, you can contribute less; if you have fewer commitments and care a lot about our world, you

can contribute more,” Hang Guan said. “The goal is to harness everyone’s inner passion for a better world, no matter how big or small that passion is, and turn it into collective action.”

At the moment, he and Pei Li are the only ones directly involved in this project but he hopes that others will join them in taking SoGoodx to the next level. For more information, please email Cheah Hang Guan at hgcheah@gmail.com

blaze



Liliana Genevieve (Bachelor of Science (Hons) International Hospitality Management, Graduated: 2010)

Immediately after graduating, Liliana Genevieve took part in a work-and-travel programme in the United States of America which allowed her to work as a housekeeper there for four months, and thereafter to tour around the USA for a month.

Looking back at her time in Sunway, Liliana found that the learning process which placed a lot of importance on internship and practical training helped her to develop self-confidence when dealing with people. "The classes had given me a clear picture of what hospitality is really all about and that served as the basic foundation for me to venture into the real working world," she said. She has been working as a flight attendant with SilkAir, an airline based in Singapore for two years. "Sunway has helped me to develop the skills and ability to deal with people from different backgrounds and provide a high quality of service, which are the important aspects of my job." **blaze**



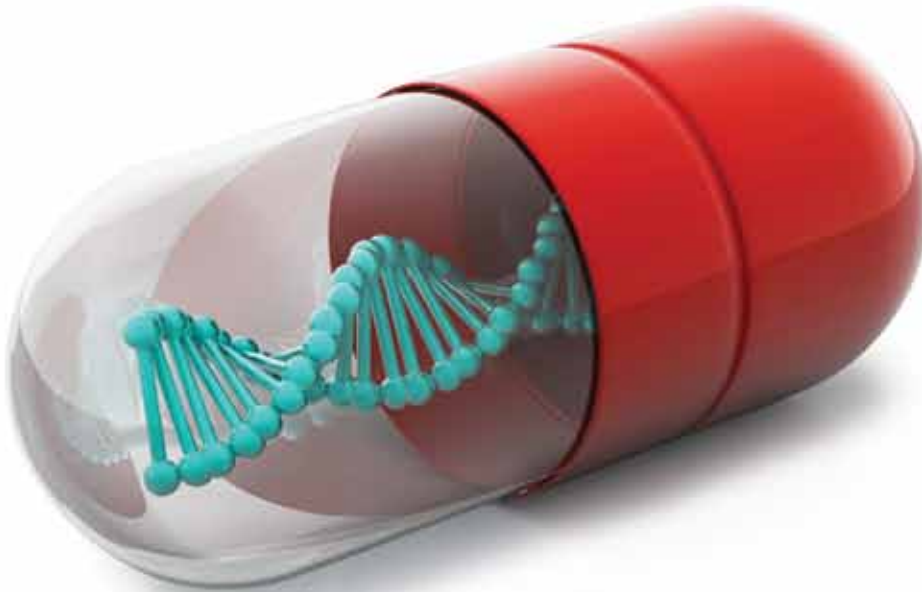
Chie Qiu Ting (BSc (Hons) Psychology, Graduated: 2009)

After a short stint with the Prospective Students' Office at Monash University Sunway Campus, in 2010, Qiu Ting pursued her Masters in Health Psychology at the University of West of England (UWE), Bristol, United Kingdom, where she graduated with merit in 2012. Upon returning from the UK, she re-joined Monash University Sunway Campus as a Research Assistant with the School of Medicine Education Unit for a year and then as a Research Assistant with the Department of Psychology and was accepted as a PhD (Med) in Psychology candidate.

"If all goes well, I should be able to graduate in 2016," she said. "I believe the learning skills and subject content in my programme at Sunway University definitely gave me a head start. I found it much easier to cope with the style of teaching and doing research for my Masters in the United Kingdom. This is because the curriculum for my master's degree was quite similar to that of Lancaster University's undergraduate degree. The only difference with the Masters programme was that the topics were more specialised. The opportunities given to engage in community projects and participate in academic symposiums have also given me the confidence to network wisely on both local and international levels. From this, I learnt to be more resourceful and open-minded in searching for avenues to improve myself in addition to working and researching on topics that I enjoy."

Qiu Ting found her internship with Emmanuel Care Centre, an educational centre for children with learning disabilities, very eye-opening. "It was definitely rewarding to see how the children were able to blossom with proper guidance, love and care," she said. The experience inspired her to give her very best in whatever she does and to contribute back to the community through her work and research. "In a way, I was also lucky that my lecturers instilled good work ethics such as passion, diligence and good time management in my cohort from the beginning. At the same time, they also encouraged us to practice a healthy work life balance." **blaze**

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