

SUNWAYIAN

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The Sunway Campus Magazine



20 Years in Partnership



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HELLO SUNWAYIANS

Attention explorers, because we are embarking on another mission to uncover the shining treasures hidden within the 22nd issue of Sunwayian.

Our map points to a remarkable journey spanning two decades, stretching across continents and connecting countless stories, achievements, and opportunities.



The first clue leads us to the people who have shaped this extraordinary partnership over the years. The Sunway University-Lancaster University partnership reveals how a collaboration that began in 2006 has grown into a globally recognised alliance that continues to open doors for students today.

As we venture deeper, we uncover a collection of hidden gems from our student community, from a reflective poem by AUSMAT student Emaan and beautifully hand-painted postcard invitations by students from Sunway International School Kuala Lumpur, to an interview with A-Level student contributor Khairina Aliya, each bringing its own colour and character to this journey.



The trail then leads us to a treasure chest filled with stories, achievements, and celebrations from the #MostHappeningCampus. Inside, we discover this edition's Leader's Log, featuring Andrew Yap, Co-Founder and CEO of BookXcess, whose story proves that some of life's greatest treasures are found not in gold, but in books and the knowledge they hold.



As we continue our expedition, we encounter a standout explorer, A-Level alumnus Khow Jin Xen, the only Malaysian to have earned a place at Harvard University, who shares valuable wisdom gathered from his own extraordinary journey.

But as every seasoned treasure hunter knows, the greatest treasure is rarely found at the end of the map, but in the impact we make along the way. Reflecting the spirit of #CampusWithAConscience, Sunway University partnered with Space Panda Malaysia to bring Claws for A Cause to campus, combining fun with purpose as proceeds from the initiative were donated to the Malaysian Association for the Blind.



Now, fellow treasure hunters, here's your next clue. Make your way to page 27 for Around the Corner and put your campus knowledge to the test by identifying these hidden spots. Crack the challenge, and you could be one of two lucky explorers to win a Montigo Go Bottle.



The map is now in your hands, explorers.

So start flipping through these pages and discover the treasures that await. From inspiring stories and remarkable achievements to hidden gems from our community, there's something waiting to be uncovered at every turn.



Sunway University Media Day 2026

Sunway University Media Day is back again this year, bringing together 27 media partners from 14 media houses. Guests toured the Faculty of Engineering and Technology before heading to the University's new campus at Sunway Square, where they explored the facilities at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Sunway Business School, while connecting with academic leaders.



CAMPUS

VU Entrepreneurship Day 2026

The Victoria University @ Sunway Entrepreneurship Day 2026 brought classroom learning to life as students from the Entrepreneurial Skills class operated 10 business booths at Sunway College Boulevard in collaboration with local businesses. Generating close to RM10,000 in sales, the event provided students with hands-on experience in entrepreneurial, marketing, negotiation, and teamwork skills.



SUF "CHUP: Mix & Mingle"

Sunway University Foundation (SUF) hosted "CHUP: Mix & Mingle," a welcoming event for January and April 2026 international student intakes. The event gathered students from diverse backgrounds, creating a warm and friendly space for them to interact and build connections.



SIS Iskandar Runs for A Cause

In a heartwarming gesture, the Sunway International School (SIS) Iskandar Puteri community came together for a day filled with energy, smiles, and community spirit to make a difference at the Charity Fun Run. Special thanks to all parents, students, teachers and staff who supported the event and made it memorable.



Building Bridges in Global Education

Sunway University School of American Education was honoured to host the Memorandum of Understanding signing between Sunway University and Fulbright Malaysia (Malaysian-American Commission on Educational Exchange – MACEE), alongside the Partnership Engagement Reception held in conjunction with the EducationUSA Spring Fair 2026. The event brought together education leaders from Malaysia and the United States to foster academic partnerships and future collaborations.



Sunway University Partners with IUH

Sunway University School of Hospitality and Tourism Management is pleased to partner with the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City (IUH) to enhance experiential learning through academic exchanges and joint initiatives.

UPDATES



Malaysian Designer Dickson Lim Shares Fashion Insights

Sunway College & STYLO hosted a fashion industry sharing session featuring acclaimed Malaysian designer, Dickson Lim. He shared his personal journey in the fashion industry, offering valuable insights to students from the Diploma in Fashion Design Technology and Fashion Media programmes, alongside a hands-on workshop demonstrating professional design techniques.



A Night at the SIS Iskandar Museum

The SIS Iskandar Puteri campus was transformed as students brought stories and history to life by dressing up as iconic museum characters, turning the exhibition into a fun journey through culture, creativity, and imagination.



SISKL Year 4 Students Camp Outing

Over the course of three days, our Year 4 students from SIS Kuala Lumpur (KL) stepped out of their comfort zones and immersed themselves in an adventure-filled camping experience. The unforgettable trip definitely brought new experiences, stronger friendships, and so many great memories.

A HISTORIC LEAP FOR MALAYSIAN CHEERLEADING

Malaysia has made history as the Sunway University Cheerleading Team became the first Malaysian team ever to compete at the prestigious FISU World University Championship Cheerleading 2026, returning home with a silver medal in the Coed Elite Division. Competing against top university cheerleading teams from China, Brazil, Hungary, and Sweden, the team's achievement marks a defining milestone for Malaysian university sports and cheerleading.



Held in Gothenburg, Sweden, the championship was organised by the Swedish University Sports Federation, Swedish Cheerleading Federation, and Gothenburg & Co. The tournament celebrated the academic and cultural diversity of participating institutions from around the world.

Speaking on behalf of the team, President of the Sunway University Cheerleading Team, Nicholas Low Kah Hung, who is a student from Bachelor of Business Victoria University @ Sunway, said, "We are extremely proud and grateful to have won a silver medal for Malaysia as Sunway student athletes. This achievement would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our coaches and Sunway University."



Prior to the competition, Sunway University hosted a special send-off ceremony on campus to commemorate the team's historic participation. The event brought together university leaders, students, staff, and supporters to wish the athletes success as they prepared to represent both the university and Malaysia on the world stage.

As a mission-driven, fifth-generation university, Sunway University remains committed to nurturing well-rounded graduates who excel beyond academics by empowering students through opportunities in leadership, sports, innovation, and global engagement. The team's historic feat highlights Malaysia's growing presence in international university sports while inspiring future generations of student athletes to pursue excellence and global opportunities with confidence.





Engineering Team Shines at UM EcoGregate Bowl 2026

A huge congratulations to our Year 2 Engineering students who emerged as 2nd Runner-Up at the Universiti Malaya Civil Engineering Competition 2026: EcoGregate Bowl. The competition involved participating teams from local universities as well as international teams from Hong Kong, Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Taiwan, and the Philippines. The students demonstrated excellent performance in both their video presentation and technical report throughout the competition.

MONIN Cup 2026 Brings Multiple Wins for Sunway

Sunway University School of Hospitality and Tourism Management was proud to serve as the venue sponsor for the MONIN Cup 2026 – Student Category, welcoming talented contestants from universities across Malaysia. Congratulations to Saw Kai Wei (Champion, Cocktail Category), Ken Ng Xian Ming (1st Runner-Up, Mocktail Category), and Alex Wong Min Hui (2nd Runner-Up, Cocktail Category) for their outstanding achievements.



Sunway Students Achieve 19 Awards at OCLA



Sunway College Kuala Lumpur, Sunway College Johor Bahru, and Sunway International School (SIS) Kuala Lumpur continued their tradition of excellence at the May 2026 Outstanding Cambridge Learner Awards (OCLA), with 17 students earning 19 distinctions across A Level, AS Level, and IGCSE, including Top in Malaysia, Top in the World, Best Across Three, Best Across Four, and High Achievement.



AVENUE OF ACHIEVEMENTS



AUSMAT Team Impresses at ASEAN Innovation Challenge

Invest and Trade Western Australia's ASEAN Hub delivered the ASEAN Student Startup and Innovation Challenge, bringing together students from across Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam. Representing Sunway College, the Australian Matriculation (AUSMAT) team, Urban Miners, impressed the judges with their sustainable and innovative solution of transforming e-waste into recoverable resources.

Champion Grapples His Way to the Top

Demonstrating utmost dedication, resilience, and fighting spirit at the Asian Sport Jiu Jitsu Federation Malaysia International Open, Ouka Aoki from Sunway International School (SIS) Kuala Lumpur showcased exceptional skills on the mat and brought home the gold medal. This victory serves as an inspiration to the community.



SIS Iskandar Puteri Fencer Achieves Gold Glory

SIS Iskandar Puteri's Clara Liang Hao delivered an excellent performance at the Central Fencing Challenge 2026, successfully earning her a gold medal in the U14 Girls Epee Individual category. Her dedication, discipline, and fighting spirit in fencing truly stood out, bringing pride to the school community.

Sunway University and Lancaster University, United Kingdom, proudly celebrate 20 years of their landmark partnership, a collaboration that has helped redefine transnational higher education in the region. Since its establishment in 2006, the Sunway-Lancaster partnership has grown into one of the world's largest and most successful cross-border education collaborations.

As we commemorate this milestone, let us hear from some of our students and alumni as they share their experiences and memorable journeys as part of the Sunway-Lancaster partnership 🌍

20 Years in

Jane Yap Jia Ling

BSc (Hons) in Accounting and Finance [2024]
MSc in Investment Management and Financial Analysis,
Lancaster University [2025]

The Sunway-Lancaster partnership gave me access to a globally recognised UK education while studying in a familiar and supportive environment. Surrounded by people from diverse backgrounds, I became more open-minded, adaptable, and appreciative of different perspectives on communication, teamwork, and everyday life. This experience reshaped how I see the world: I became more curious, less judgmental, and far more comfortable with uncertainty.



Sonia Lim

BSc (Hons) in Accounting
and Finance [2012]

The student exchange programme is a distinctive aspect of the Sunway-Lancaster partnership, offering an immersive experience in cross-cultural collaboration. Exposure to diverse academic and cultural environments has significantly contributed to my personal growth by pushing me beyond my comfort zone. It has provided me with a glimpse of global mindset, which is invaluable in preparing me to navigate today's interconnected world. I'm grateful for this memorable experience during my university journey.



Aeslinn Noel

BA (Hons) in
Communication [2026]

I greatly enjoyed participating in the short-term exchange programme at Lancaster University. It was my first time living away from home, and although it was daunting at first, I soon came to enjoy the independence, new experiences, and friendships with people from around the world. It was also extremely rewarding to be





Partnership



Justin Yong
 Bachelor of Software
 Engineering (Hons) [2026]

able to enrol in the UK modules such as Documentary History & Theory and Global Fans & Audiences as these subjects are rarely offered without postgraduate specialisation in Malaysia. I'm also grateful for the strong support between the Study Abroad team and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, which greatly eased my credit transfer process.

The most valuable aspect of the Sunway-Lancaster partnership is something that goes beyond what either institution could offer alone: it allowed me to experience the familiarity of Sunway campus and the adventure of studying abroad. Moving between the two gave me the opportunity to see two sides of the same coin, not just in how different the campuses felt, but in how differently I engaged with learning in each of them. Each campus shaped a different version of the same learning journey. That is something neither a purely local nor a purely overseas degree could have given me.

Khalil bin Khairuddin
 BSc (Hons) Business Management [2022]

The Sunway-Lancaster partnership has opened doors to many things I wouldn't have otherwise come across, and the exchange trip was the perfect example. We went over during a semester break, and because there was no fixed class schedule, the activities and sessions were curated specifically for us, which turned out to be the best part. Looking back, I don't think I fully appreciated how much a short trip like this would shape me. If I hadn't been able to go, I genuinely believe my life would've taken a different direction. That's the real value of the partnership. It's not just the qualification or the name attached to your degree, but the opportunities, adventures, and memories it creates.



Sunway University Celebrates International Sun Bear Day for Visit Malaysia 2026

Sunway University marked International Sun Bear Day 2026 with a vibrant celebration held in partnership with Tourism Malaysia, highlighting a shared commitment towards biodiversity conservation, environmental education, and sustainable tourism in conjunction with the Visit Malaysia 2026 campaign.

Hosted at Sunway University campus, the event brought together representatives from Tourism Malaysia, academics, students, and members of the community to raise awareness about the importance of protecting the Malayan Sun Bear, while positioning Malaysia's natural heritage as a cornerstone of the Visit Malaysia 2026 narrative.

Among the distinguished guests present was Mr Mohd Akbal Setia, Senior Director of Advertising & Digital and Head of Secretariat Visit Malaysia 2026, whose presence underscored the strong collaboration between Tourism Malaysia and Sunway University in promoting conservation awareness through education and community engagement.

As one of the world's most biodiverse nations, Malaysia is home to the Malayan Sun Bear, the smallest bear species in the world and a significant symbol of the country's rich natural heritage. The species has also been selected as a key icon for the Visit Malaysia 2026 campaign through its official mascots, Wira and Manja, reflecting Malaysia's

identity as a vibrant, welcoming, and environmentally conscious destination.

The presence of Wira and Manja alongside Sunway University's own mascots, Samson and Sophia, further symbolised the shared vision between the University and Tourism Malaysia in promoting awareness and appreciation for Malaysia's biodiversity.

Professor Sibrandes Poppema, President and Vice Chancellor of Sunway University shared, "We are proud to host this event in support of biodiversity awareness, and in alignment with the Visit Malaysia 2026 campaign. As a Campus With A Conscience and a mission-driven, fifth generation university, sustainability is not a slogan. It is embedded in our teaching, our research, and our partnerships. We believe that education must go beyond the classroom, shaping individuals who are not only knowledgeable, but also responsible stewards of the environment."

The celebration also coincided with Teachers' Day, offering a meaningful opportunity to recognise the contributions of educators in shaping future generations to be socially and environmentally responsible.

As Malaysia prepares for Visit Malaysia 2026, this partnership aims to strengthen global appreciation for Malaysia's unique biodiversity while encouraging more sustainable and responsible engagement with nature.

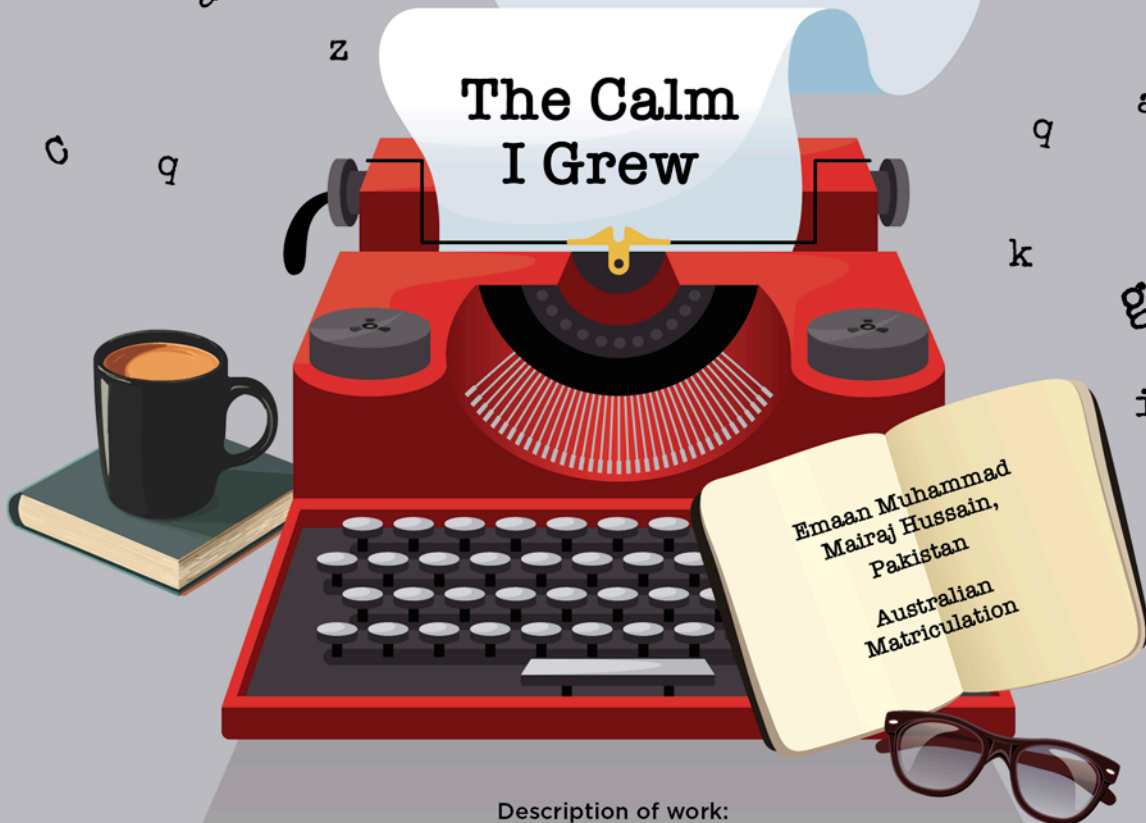


I stepped into a place that felt like a new beginning.
 I arrived unsure, where fear was spinning...
 but the people I met made it easier to stay
 I started finding my own way.

Felt myself shift into someone new,
 and I found a version of life I never knew.
 I felt a quiet comfort within myself...
 and I found a calm I couldn't find somewhere else.

I know there will be ups and downs ahead;
 and there will be moments I feel like I'm misled.
 Like Was i meant to tread?
 But I've learnt to walk my own path instead.

The Calm I Grew



Description of work:

This poem traces a quiet journey from uncertainty in a new environment to gradually finding a sense of belonging. Through meeting new people, adapting to change, and experiencing everyday moments, life begins to feel lighter and more familiar. There is no dramatic turning point, only a gentle easing into a new chapter and the growth that comes with it. Ultimately, the poem reflects the idea that becoming comfortable with who you are takes time, and that there is beauty in discovering yourself along the way.

In Defense of BookTok

Whether you are an avid reader who regularly browses bookstores and libraries, or a casual reader who prefers to peruse magazines in waiting rooms, you have probably come across BookTok more than once. Even if you do not read, if you have watched or heard of movies like *People We Meet on Vacation*, *It Ends With Us*, and *The Housemaid*, that is arguably the result of BookTok.



What is Booktok?

BookTok is a portmanteau, coming from the words “Book” and “TikTok”. BookTok is the younger, more widely known counterpart of Bookstagram (Book and Instagram). Both these online book communities focus on reviewing books, sharing recommendations and bonding over a shared love of all things written.

Bookstagram has a reputation of being slower-paced, with multipage carousels dedicated to breaking down the pros and cons of a book, offering quotes and more. Instagram also offers longer captions, which allow reviewers to go in-depth with their thoughts.

However, BookTok is its own beast. Since short-form content is favoured on TikTok, reviewers often work to compress their videos into a more bite-sized offering for our attention-deficit generation. Interestingly, BookTok has now become one of the driving forces for physical book sales. According to an article by the New York Times, BookTok helped authors sell 20 million printed books in 2021. This means that if a book goes viral on BookTok, it will likely become a bestseller.

Echo
MEDIA

Written by:
Sarah Wong

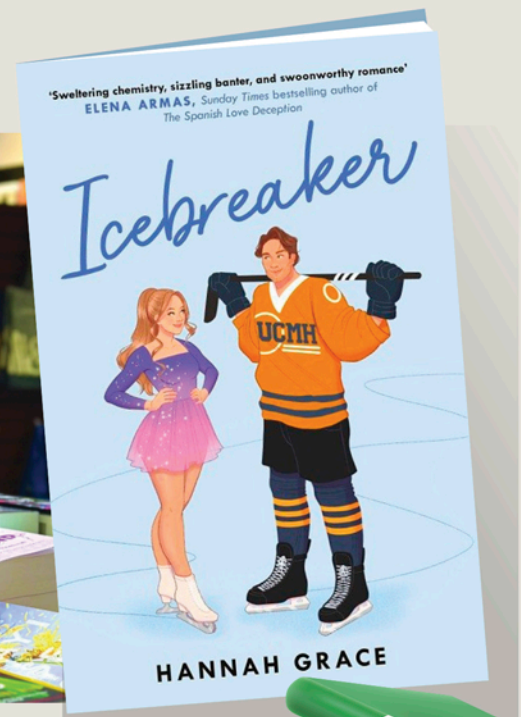
Edited by:
Sherman Yap

BookTok Promoting Literary Junk?

I am not pretending that everything BookTok promotes “deserves” to become a bestseller. There is a clear difference between mere production and the art of crafting. This begs the question: Does BookTok promote the publication of “bad” books, simply because they sell well?

Capitalism demands that “the supply shall meet the demand”. If the market likes viral, easily digestible books, who are we to deny them? However, when all that the market consumes is easily digestible books, it begs the question: At what point does purchasing these books turn into mindless consumption? When a certain type of book is repeatedly promoted to users, it becomes the norm for engagement, creating somewhat of an ouroboros.

So, when BookTok viral books flood the market in droves, they blur into one another; sure, *Icebreaker* and *Wildfire* are easy to read in one sitting, but do they have any staying power? Some of them do, some of them do not, but some books are designed for immediate emotional impact rather than mindful, long-term reflection.



The BookTok Spectrum

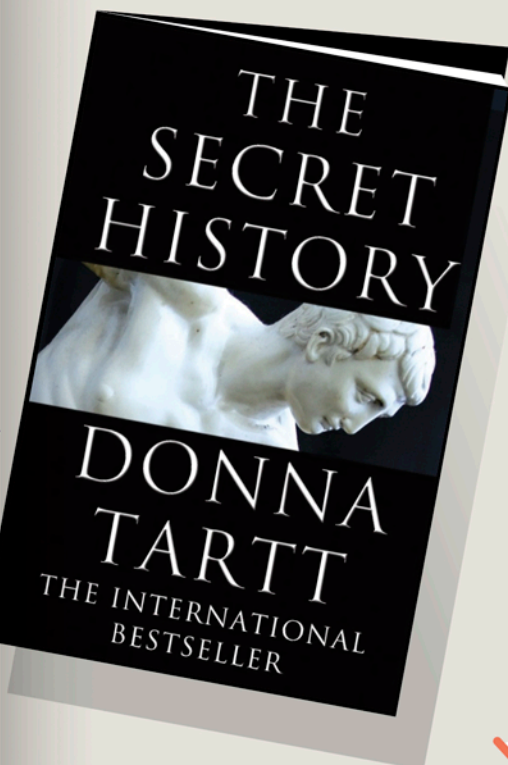
However, claiming that BookTok is all bad is false and disingenuous. While BookTok has its flaws, it also does an important job of pushing powerful, lesser-known narratives and shaping the cultural zeitgeist. Remember the dark academia craze of the 2020s? It was partly pushed and promoted by BookTok. Without it, many people would not have known about *The Secret History* by Donna Tartt, which is now touted as a dark academia staple and a modern classic. The branch off of this includes other books like *If We Were Villains* and *Babel, or the Necessity of Violence* (one of my personal favourites) by M.L Rio and R.F. Kuang respectively, which have both also gone viral on BookTok. Hence, this shows BookTok's role in the revival of thematically dense works and how it continues to inspire many.

BookTok pushes different perspectives and cultures into the global market; where else would I have found out about Sally Rooney, or read about her takes on Marxism from an Irish perspective while her characters fall in and out of love? How would I have discovered Khaled Hosseini's works about the Afghan struggle? BookTok provides users with a platform to access various forms of literature that would not be discovered otherwise, pushing lesser-known books into the mainstream, and actively shaping our modern literary landscape at large.

The Death of Nuance

In this day and age, I believe we constantly straddle a line between two extremes: taking things too seriously or not at all. In other words, the death of nuance. In this context, you could argue that reading should not be an intellectual exercise meant to perpetuate academic elitism, but a means of relaxation and enjoyment. Conversely, you could also say that reading “bad” books and encouraging their publication is the death of critical thinking and an insult to the art of writing. Both are extremes.

Instead, acknowledging BookTok as a useful distribution tool, albeit a flawed one, seems like a balanced way to move forward. BookTok reflects consumer taste, a place where book virality means success, as well as a place where gems are unearthed and brought to light. While it blurs the line between fast-paced consumerism and thoughtful reading, it still promotes reading: a slow habit in our fast-paced world, a feat that is impressive in itself. And somewhere amongst the sea of BookTok books, there is always a chance that you will find a story that lingers and inspires.



Building Spaces Where Books Find People

It is a true honour to be featured in Sunwayian Magazine and to contribute to the Leader's Log alongside individuals who are helping shape communities, industries, and ideas in meaningful ways.

The Sunway Library by BookXcess is a project that is especially close to our hearts. Although it only opened in December 2025, it already feels like a place that belongs naturally within the Sunway community. Seeing students, families, professionals, and readers gather here at all hours of the day has been deeply rewarding, and we are grateful to be part of the wider Sunway ecosystem.

For Jacqueline and me, bookstores have always been about much more than selling books.

In today's world, people no longer discover books the way they once did. We live in an age of endless digital distractions competing for our attention every second of the day. If we want reading to remain relevant, we cannot simply wait for people to find books. We must create environments where books can find people.

That philosophy became the foundation of The Sunway Library by BookXcess.

Today, it stands as the largest bookstore in Southeast Asia and Malaysia's only 24-hour bookstore. Yet what matters most is not its size. What matters is that it was designed as a space that welcomes everyone, whether they come to read, study, work, meet friends, or simply spend time surrounded by ideas.

The concept of a 24-hour bookstore emerged naturally from observing the Sunway education ecosystem. With Sunway University and many neighbouring institutions nearby, there are tens of thousands of students building their futures here. We recognised a need for a safe, comfortable, and inspiring environment where learning never has to stop because the clock says so.

In many ways, however, this story began long before The Sunway Library.

This year, BookXcess celebrates its 19th anniversary. Jacqueline and I started the business with a small bookstore in Amcorp Mall, guided by a simple but deeply personal belief: access to books should never be a privilege reserved for only a few.

Something not many people know about me is that I never completed my SPM, partly because of mild dyslexia. Those early experiences taught me an important lesson. Access to knowledge can profoundly influence a person's confidence, opportunities, and future. No child should ever feel that learning, imagination, or opportunity is beyond their reach simply because books are inaccessible.

This became the foundation for both BookXcess and the Big Bad Wolf Book Sale.

19 years later, BookXcess has grown to 22 bookstores across Malaysia and Singapore, while the Big Bad Wolf Book Sale has travelled to more than 55 cities across 17 countries.

Over the years, we have met countless readers who have told us that a single book changed the direction of their lives. Some discovered a new ambition. Some found the courage to pursue a dream.

Others found comfort during difficult periods in their lives.

Stories like these remind us that books do far more than deliver information.

Books expand perspectives.

Books build empathy.

Books strengthen voices.

Books quietly shape the people we become.

That is why spaces like The Sunway Library matter.

Looking ahead, I hope The Sunway Library by BookXcess becomes more than a bookstore. I hope it becomes a place where students discover their future passions, where families create memories together, where friendships are formed, where ideas are exchanged, and where lifelong readers are born.

Most importantly, I hope it becomes a place that reminds people that learning does not end when we leave a classroom. It is a lifelong journey.

As Sunway continues to grow as a hub for education, innovation, and community, we are proud for The Sunway Library by BookXcess to play a small part in that story.

Because ultimately, bookstores are not really about books. They are about people. And every great community deserves a place where ideas can come alive.

Andrew Yap,
Co-Founder and CEO of
BookXcess



ART BRIDGING BORDERS FROM SIS TO THE WORLD

In conjunction with the International Day celebration at Sunway International School (SIS) Kuala Lumpur campus, our elementary and high school students got creative, and personally designed and hand-painted postcard invitations to be sent to international embassies across Malaysia.

Diligently crafted by the students themselves, every piece reflected thoughtful design choices inspired by themes of unity, diversity, and international connection, making them unique and personal.

Focusing on creativity, cultural awareness, and communication through visual design, this authentic, real-world learning experience allowed students to apply their artistic skills beyond the classroom while developing a deeper appreciation for global engagement.



SUNWAY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Name: **Vegina Adio-Moses**



- ✓ My name is Vegina Adio-Moses, though most people know me as CoachVegy. I am a 44-year-old student from Belgium currently pursuing Diploma in Fashion Design Technology at Sunway College & STYLO Fashion Design Technology Hub. Beyond being a student, I am also a mother, life coach, lifestyle coach, fashion stylist, beautician, and philanthropreneur.
- ✓ I wear many hats, and while balancing them can be challenging, I have come to realise they are not competing with one another, they are connected. Coaching makes me a better mother, design makes me a better stylist, and learning makes me better at everything. As a philanthropreneur, I believe profit and purpose can exist together. I do not separate making a living from making a difference. For me, they are part of the same journey.

That same belief led me back to the classroom. Studying at 42 was one of the best decisions I ever made. Sunway College was exactly the kind of environment and community I needed. I believe growth has no expiry date. Lifelong learning is not a hobby for me, it is a lifestyle.

Living and studying in Malaysia has been one of the most eye-opening experiences of my life. What strikes me most is the multicultural environment. You can find Malays, Chinese, Indians, and people from all over the world living, laughing, and learning together.

Being surrounded by people with different worldviews, values, and approaches to problem-solving sharpened and widened my perspective. As someone who strongly advocates for peace, I believe all human beings are one family on planet Earth. Malaysia reaffirmed that belief every day.

If someone asks where I am from, I often say, "the world." But if they ask me which country that made sense to me, I would say Malaysia.

Throughout my journey, I have been inspired by remarkable leaders. Mr Augustine Wong, Director of the Fashion Design & Media Technology Department, has been my closest inspiration. His calm, purposeful, and people-first leadership reminds me that mentorship is not always loud. Sometimes it is simply someone believing in you before you believe in yourself.

Professor Dato' Elizabeth Lee inspires me through her vision and dedication to education. Her belief that education is the great equaliser resonates deeply with me as someone who spends every day helping others discover their potential.

- ✓ Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah is the reason I believe business and humanity are not opposites. His commitment to philanthropy and education demonstrates that success carries a responsibility to give back. As a philanthropreneur, that lesson stays with me every day.
- ✓ Sunway also transformed my perception of technology. I now understand that technology is neither good nor bad on its own. Used wisely, it can educate, connect, empower, and create opportunities for people around the world.
- ✓ To international students considering to study in Malaysia, do not limit yourself to one version of who you are. Your many interests are not distractions; they are part of your design. Second, it is never too late to begin again or become who you are destined to be. Whether you are 18, 40, or 70, the best time to learn something new is always now. Third, use technology wisely. Your generation holds some of the most powerful tools in human history. Use them to lift people, not divide them.
- ✓ Be curious. Be kind. Be global. And never, ever stop becoming.



SUNWAY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- My name is Halime Ince, I am 24 years old and I am from Türkiye. I am currently studying Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Computer Science.
- When I was searching for universities, I came across Sunway University and learned that it offers a Computer Science programme in partnership with Lancaster University. I first completed a one-year Canadian International Matriculation Programme (CIMP) at Sunway College. I had a great time and learned a lot during that year, which really solidified my decision to continue my studies at Sunway University.
- I have had a very fulfilling experience studying and living in Malaysia. It has been amazing seeing so many cultures come together in one place, and I got to try so many new foods that I had never tasted before. I also had the chance to meet many wonderful people and become friends with them. Some of them are local students, while others are international students like me, which made the experience even more meaningful. Living in Malaysia has allowed me to grow not only academically but also personally, as I learned to adapt to a new environment and appreciate different ways of life.

Name: Halime Ince



I have had many wonderful lecturers who have been very inspirational and supportive throughout my academic journey. During my CIMP studies, I took a subject called Computer Science (ICS4U), which was my first introduction to coding. At first, everything felt very new and challenging, and there were moments when I felt stuck and struggled to solve certain problems. However, my lecturer, Mr. Kevin Wong, was always patient, understanding, and encouraging. He took time to explain concepts clearly and made the learning process enjoyable. His teaching style helped me build a strong foundation in programming and, most importantly, helped me gain confidence in myself and in my decision to pursue computer science.

Another lecturer who has played an important role in my journey is Dr. Chin Teck Min. He was my capstone project supervisor, and for two semesters he consistently guided me with valuable feedback and support. Whenever I had questions, he always

responded clearly and guided me toward the best possible direction. His feedback helped me improve both the technical and presentation aspects of my work. Thanks to Dr. Chin, I was able to complete my capstone project successfully and gain a deeper understanding of research and problem solving in computer science.

I have been given countless opportunities to take part in many seminars, workshops, and tech club events. These experiences have been very valuable as I have had the chance to listen to industry professionals from different areas of the tech industry sharing about their work, career journeys, and the skills needed in the field. The university also provides guidance during the internship search process, and with the knowledge and support I received, I was able to secure a great internship position.

- My advice to international students would be to fully enjoy the beauty of Malaysia, try different foods, and make friends from different backgrounds. The warm climate, rich culture, and friendly people make Malaysia a very special place to study and live. Sunway University has a very lively and active campus where students are encouraged to explore different hobbies, join clubs, and participate in various activities. I would highly recommend studying at Sunway University and choosing Malaysia as a study destination, as it offers both academic growth and unforgettable life experiences.



Lifelong Learning in Leadership

The importance of lifelong learning cannot be overstated. By continuously seeking new knowledge and skills, individuals can foster personal growth, enhance professional development, and remain adaptable in an ever-evolving world. Sunway alumna Her Excellency Cham Nimul, Cambodia's Minister of Commerce, embodies this spirit of lifelong learning through her inspiring journey with Sunway's Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programme.

For Her Excellency, the motivation to pursue further studies stemmed from a desire to continue growing intellectually while serving the community. In government office, particularly in commerce, issues such as trade, digital transformation, supply chains, entrepreneurship, and international cooperation are closely interconnected. Recognising the need for a stronger academic foundation, she sought to deepen her understanding of these complexities and strengthen her evidence-based approach to policymaking.

She was particularly drawn to Sunway's Master of Public Policy programme because of its practical focus on contemporary economic and social issues. Many of the topics explored in the programme reflected key policy issues faced by governments across Southeast Asia. The discussions on economic development, trade, governance, and evidence-based policymaking were closely aligned with Cambodia's development priorities.



Furthermore, the programme strengthened her analytical thinking and enhanced her ability to develop robust policy frameworks in a rapidly changing regional and global environment. Her studies encouraged her to evaluate policies more critically by considering available evidence, those affected by policy decisions, and their long-term implications.

Among the subjects that had the greatest impact on her was Quantitative Research Methods, which reinforced the importance of data and evidence in decision-making. Economics and trade-related subjects were especially relevant as they helped her view trade not merely as figures and agreements, but as a force that influences businesses, employment, competitiveness, and national development. The programme's strong Southeast Asian perspective also broadened her understanding of regional challenges and highlighted the value of cross-border learning.



Her studies have shaped the way she approaches trade facilitation and export diversification. Rather than focusing solely on increasing exports or attracting investment, she learned to reflect on broader questions surrounding business readiness, information access, women entrepreneurial opportunities, digital adoption, and international market standard compliance. She learned to view commerce policy not solely from the management level, but including the perspective of the businesses on the ground.

The flexible learning models offered through ODL play a vital role in expanding access to education, particularly for public servants, women leaders, and mid-career professionals. Reflecting on her own

experience, Her Excellency highlighted how Sunway's ODL mode enabled her to continue her studies from Cambodia while fulfilling her official and family responsibilities. Although balancing public office and academic commitments required effective time management, she regarded learning as an essential part of her responsibility as a public servant.

Another challenge she faced was adapting from a fast-paced decision-making environment to the reflective nature of academic learning. While government work often requires immediate responses, academic study demands critical thinking and analysis. This experience trained her ability to assess complex issues more thoughtfully and evaluate policy choices with greater depth.



She emphasised that continuous learning is a form of humility. Leadership does not mean having all the answers, but rather remaining open to new ideas, questioning assumptions, and making informed decisions based on evidence. As trade, technology, business practices, and consumers' expectations continue to evolve, leaders must complement their experience with ongoing learning to remain relevant.

In governance, lifelong learning reminds leaders to listen, consult, evaluate evidence, and adapt when circumstances change. Strong leadership is defined not only by authority but also by sound judgment and a commitment to serving people effectively. For economic leadership, learning helps leaders identify risks and opportunities clearly, enabling the development of policies that are practical, inclusive, and forward-looking. She

highlighted that, above all, policy is about people, livelihoods, businesses, and the future.

Ultimately, Her Excellency hopes her journey will inspire women, particularly young and working professionals, to continue investing in their personal and professional growth. She believes that learning should never cease, regardless of one's stage in life or leadership journey. Beyond expanding knowledge, education has the power to transform how individuals think, lead, and contribute meaningfully to society.

Her Excellency was awarded the Sunway Distinguished Alumni Award 2025, which recognises the remarkable accomplishments of alumni who have distinguished themselves in their chosen fields, professions, or the community, and whose endeavours reflect admirably on and bring honour to the Sunway institutions.

SUNWAY STARS

In this chapter of Sunway Stars, Khaw Jin Xen from the Cambridge GCE A-Level programme exemplifies what it means to be a truly well-rounded scholar, having received offers from 12 world renowned universities.

Join us as we explore the 18-year-old's journey, from his academic pursuits to the passions and experiences that have shaped his remarkable path.



We understand that you may be the only Malaysian accepted into Harvard so far in 2026, how does that feel?

It feels quite surreal to have been accepted to Harvard, especially as the only student from my cohort to receive an offer. What makes the acceptance particularly meaningful to me is that everything I pursued outside the classroom came from genuine interest rather than a strategy for university admissions. While I do wish more Malaysians had received offers this year, I am proud of what this represents beyond my own achievement. I hope it encourages students across Malaysia who may feel that they are "not good enough" to consider applying.

What do you think sets you apart in your applications?

I think what helped me most was simply enjoying my school experience. Universities value a well-rounded education, and I spent my time exploring a wide range of interests, from Olympiad competitions and academic organisations to performing in the 24 Festive Drums. Doing well academically is important, but what is often missing from a more formulaic approach is passion. Kindness, generosity, and the ability to connect with others matter more than people often realise. I also believe it is important to let your personality come through. While I have a strong academic and competitive side, authenticity and individuality go a long way.

Do you have any tips you would like to share with others?

My advice is to avoid centering your entire life around university applications. Focus on doing what you love. Remember that taking the first step is what truly counts. You never know what might be possible until you try. As the saying goes, "belum cuba, belum tahu," you will never know unless you give it a chance. Trusting the process is important, and Malaysian students are often far more capable and resilient than they give themselves credit for.

What made you choose Sunway College?

The scholarships offered at Sunway are truly unmatched. Some lecturers bring decades of experience, and that level of expertise is clearly reflected in the quality of teaching. The support system has been exceptional, especially when I had to travel abroad for Olympiads. My lecturers have consistently gone the extra mile to help me catch up on missed content, often on their own time. I have also really valued the mentor-mentee system, which made the university application process far more collaborative and manageable.

How has your experience at Sunway College shaped your perspective and contributed to where you are today?

I have absolutely no regrets about choosing Sunway College. One of the most meaningful aspects of my experience was being part of such a close-knit community within a large and vibrant #MostHappeningCampus. I was also pleasantly surprised by how sociable the A-Levels community is. There is a strong sense of camaraderie, which makes the academic journey much more enjoyable. Being in such a dynamic environment also helped me develop greater independence and practical life skills. Having the freedom to navigate campus life on my own was an important part of my personal growth.

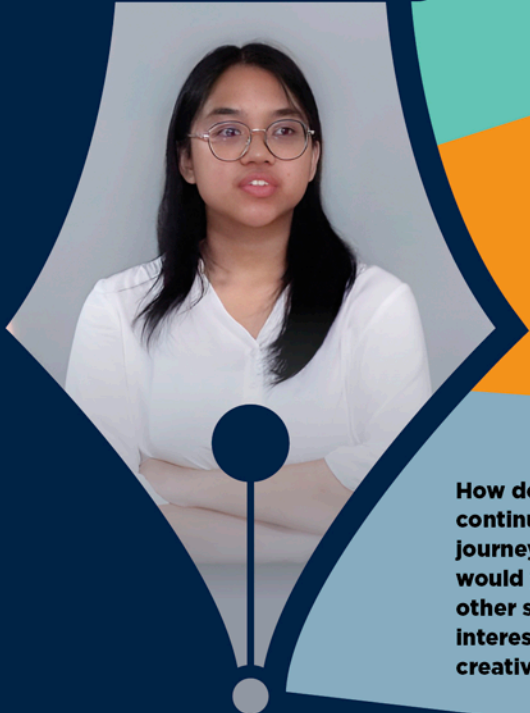
Is there anyone you would like to give a shoutout to?

I would also like to express my appreciation to those who have supported me throughout this journey: Dr Lee Ping Yin, my Mathematics lecturer and university applications mentor, for her invaluable guidance and encouragement; Dr Yeap Weng Siang, Mr Leong Yee Pak, and Ms Lim Aik Lan, for making their classes consistently engaging and inspiring; as well as my teaching group friends and my family, whose constant encouragement has meant everything to me.



Your Stories in Sunwayian

In this special feature, we have Khairina Aliya binti Khairul Annuar, our Sunway College A-Level student, who has contributed several creative pieces to the Sunwayian magazine. A passionate storyteller with a keen imagination, Aliya enjoys crafting narratives that allow her to express her thoughts and explore new ideas. Through Sunwayian, she has found a platform to share her creative voice with the wider Sunway community. We speak to Aliya about her love for writing, her creative journey, and how the experience of being published has inspired her growth as a young writer.



Can you tell us how your passion for writing first began, and what inspired you to start creating your own stories?

I've always found it easier to write things down than say them out loud. My brain tends to overthink everything, so writing became a way to organise all those thoughts into something that actually makes sense.

It started with reading when I was younger, which quickly turned into a "I'm going to write a book one day" phase. That eventually became short fiction stories for fun (I can't promise any of them were particularly good, haha), but it sparked my love for creating stories and sharing ideas.

What writing do you enjoy most, and how would you describe your personal writing style?



Fiction is probably my favourite because it gives me complete creative freedom. As an A-Level humanities student going into Law, most of my writing follows a structure, so fiction feels like a chance to make up the rules for once.

My writing style depends on where I'm writing. For the *Sunwayian* magazine, I like to keep things light-hearted and engaging while still talking about meaningful topics. On my personal blog, though, it's usually a mix of reflections, observations, and the occasional passionate rant about things that probably didn't need to bother me as much as they did.

As a contributor to Sunwayian, what has been the most rewarding part of seeing your work published?

Definitely people's reactions. I never really announce when I've written something, so I usually just hand the magazine to my parents and watch their reaction. Seeing how proud they are never gets old. One moment that really stood out was when a student I'd never met before messaged me on Teams after reading my women's day article to say she found it relatable. Knowing that something I wrote connected with a complete stranger was a really rewarding feeling.

How has the Sunwayian helped you develop your confidence and skills as a writer?

It's made me much more confident about sharing my work. Before, I'd spend forever second-guessing every sentence. Now, I'm more willing to put my writing out there and trust that it will find the right audience. Seeing my work published all pretty and professional, and receiving feedback has also reminded me that writing isn't just about what I want to say—it's about connecting with other people too.

How do you hope to continue your writing journey, and what advice would you give to other students who are interested in sharing their creative work?

I currently write on my Substack, *Unstabliya*. I don't post on a strict schedule, but I enjoy having a space where I can keep sharing my thoughts and ideas. For anyone thinking about sharing their creative work, I'd say just go for it. It's normal to feel nervous, but seeing your work published and knowing people are reading it is incredibly fulfilling. You never know who might connect with what you've created until you put it out there.

Passionate about writing? *Sunwayian* welcomes submissions from across the Sunway community. Whether it is creative writing, poetry, personal reflections, or opinion pieces, we would love to hear your voice. To contribute or find out more, email kainingc@sunway.edu.my. We look forward to showcasing your stories 😊

My interpretation of *otak otak* draws inspiration from a traditional Mesoamerican dish known as *tamales*, humble parcels of seasoned filling wrapped in corn husks and cooked with quiet patience. This idea reveals how food cultures can resonate with one another across different regions of the world.

Often regarded as one of Malaysians' favourite dishes, *otak otak* is a dish that highlights our pride in local spices and ingredients. Fragrant fish custard, enriched with fresh aromatics such as turmeric, chillies, lemongrass, and candlenut, along with creamy coconut milk, is carefully wrapped in corn husk instead of the usual banana or attap leaves. Each fold is intentional, each parcel carrying both tradition and creativity.

When grilled, the husk gently dries and chars, releasing a warm, earthy aroma that blends beautifully with the smokiness of the fire. As the custard cooks, it sets delicately while remaining soft and moist, infused with layers of spice and herbal fragrance. The first bite is silky and tender, followed by a gentle heat, a savoury sweetness from the seafood, and a lingering smokiness on the palate.

Choosing corn husk is not only a culinary expression but also a sustainable one. It serves as a natural, biodegradable wrapper that preserves moisture and enhances flavour while reducing reliance on synthetic materials. This approach embraces the use of whole ingredients, transforming what is often overlooked into something meaningful and refined.

For me, this dish represents continuity, where traditional Malaysian flavours meet global inspiration, where time honoured techniques remain relevant in contemporary kitchens, and where sustainability is not an added concept but something that has always been present within our culinary heritage.

Otak Otak

By Chef
Norhafizatul
Akma Binti
Hamzah

Teaching Fellow,
School of
Hospitality
and Tourism
Management,
Sunway
University



Spice Paste

- 1 red chilly
 - ½ red onion
 - 1 lemon grass (white part)
 - 1 candlenut
 - 1-inch fresh turmeric
 - 5g coriander seed, toasted
- Using a mortar and pestle, pound all the ingredients into a smooth paste. Alternatively, you may blend using an electric blender.



Fish Paste

- Spice paste
- 1 egg
- 10ml coconut milk
- 10 corn flour
- 5g sugar
- 5g salt
- 200g Spanish mackerel

Add in egg, coconut milk, corn flour, sugar, and salt into the spice paste. Add in half of the mackerel fish and continue to blend until smooth in texture. Then add in the remaining mackerel fish and pulse blend slightly for a coarser texture. Remove from the blender and keep aside in the chiller for 15 minutes.

To assemble

- Corn husks
- Oil

Clean corn husk and wipe dry. Brush a thin layer of oil on the corn husk and place about 2 tablespoons of the fish paste at the centre. Fold the long sides of the husk covering the paste and another side on top. A long strip will be achieved with the paste at the centre. Then, fold in both the left and right-side inwards. Tie it with a piece of corn husk to secure the folded ends.

Cooking

Heat up a grilled pan until slightly warm. Place the folded fish paste on the pan and cook for 5-8 minutes. Repeat on the other side until the fish paste is cooked through.



Made by Malaysians

As we celebrate Merdeka, it is a fitting time to reflect on the many achievements that have shaped our nation. Among them are the remarkable inventions created by Malaysians, innovations that showcase our creativity, ingenuity, and pioneering spirit.



Nehemiah Wall

A common feature along Malaysia's highways, the hexagonal-patterned Nehemiah Wall is a homegrown engineering innovation developed by Johor-born engineer Nehemiah Lee in 1993. The patented retaining wall system supports flyovers and embankments, offering a durable and cost-effective construction solution. By 2015, over 1.5 million square metres had been built across Malaysia, with the technology also expanding to countries such as Singapore, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and India.

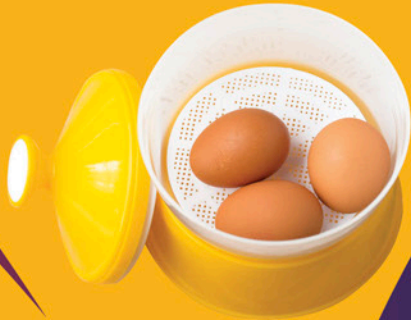
Biometric Passports

Malaysia made history in 1998 as the first nation to introduce an electronic passport. Developed by homegrown technology company IRIS Corporation, the groundbreaking e-passport incorporated a microchip capable of storing biometric information, including facial images and thumbprints. Launched five years before the International Civil Aviation Organization established global e-passport standards in 2003, this innovation positioned Malaysia at the forefront of secure travel technology. Today, the Malaysian e-passport remains a testament to the country's pioneering spirit in technological advancement.



Egg Boiler

Perfectly cooked half-boiled eggs, a beloved Malaysian breakfast staple, became easier to enjoy thanks to an invention by Datuk Hew Ah Kow. Inspired by his frustration with overcooked eggs while working at a lumber camp in Kelantan in 1973, he spent a year experimenting to find the ideal water-to-egg ratio. His simple yet effective device consistently produced perfectly soft-boiled eggs and was later sold as a prototype for RM7,000.



Surgical Face Mask

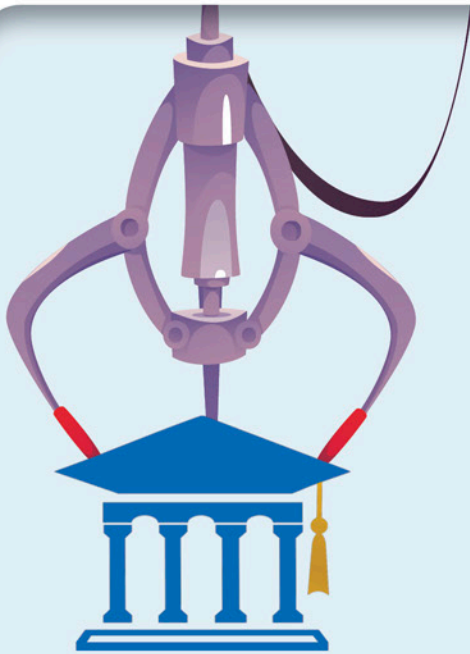
Long before face masks became an everyday essential during the COVID-19 pandemic, a Malaysian doctor pioneered their use in modern medicine. In 1910, Penang-born epidemiologist Dr Wu Lien-teh developed the world's first surgical face mask while combating the deadly Manchurian Plague in China. Made from layers of cotton and gauze, the mask helped prevent the airborne disease from spreading and laid the foundation for the protective masks used around the world today.



Sustainable Animal Feed

At just 11 years old, Maryam Muzamir from Kuantan, Pahang, developed Yam 2.0, a sustainable livestock feed made from discarded seafood shells such as shrimp and sea snail shells. Designed to reduce food waste, her invention gained international attention and was even featured on The Late Late Show with James Corden. Maryam has since earned multiple accolades at the International Invention Competition in Toronto, including a gold medal, the Canadian Special Award, and the Best Young Inventor Award.





Claws for A Cause

What started as a simple, yet addictive game became a powerful act of giving as students and staff came together for Claws for A Cause, a week-long campus activation that embodied Sunway University's Campus With A Conscience spirit.

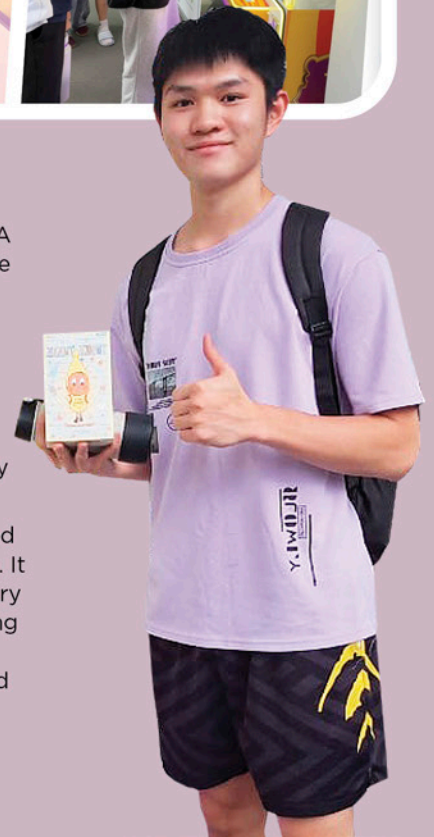
Generously sponsored by Space Panda, the activation transformed the excitement of winning prizes into an opportunity to create meaningful impact. Throughout the week, members of the Sunway community enthusiastically participated in the initiative, helping to raise a total of RM4,880 for the Malaysian Association for the Blind.

Professor Dr Sibrandes Poppema, President and Vice Chancellor of Sunway University, said, "At Sunway University, our mission extends beyond academic excellence. Initiatives such as Claws for A Cause reflect our commitment as a mission-driven, 5th generation university to create meaningful impact through education, research, innovation, and community engagement. We are grateful to Space Panda and everyone who contributed to this effort. Together, we have demonstrated how collective action and compassion can create positive change and make a tangible difference in the lives of others."



Director of Space Panda, Mr Marcus shared, "We are honoured to be part of Campus With A Conscience and to have the opportunity to give back to the community through our support for the Malaysian Association for the Blind. At Space Panda, we believe that even small acts of kindness can make a meaningful difference in someone's life. Being able to contribute to an organisation that empowers and supports individuals with visual impairments is incredibly meaningful to us."

The success of Claws for A Cause demonstrated the power of collective action and compassion. It reflects the shared commitment of both industry partners and the Sunway community to creating positive social impact, proving that even the simplest activities can become a force for good when driven by purpose.

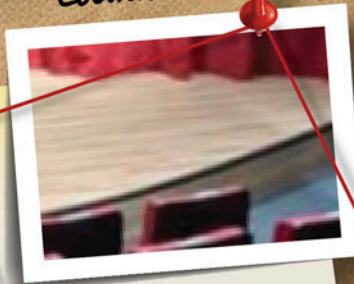




AROUND THE CORNER

Think you know the campus like the back of your hand? Identify these mystery locations and two of you will stand a chance to win a Montigo Go Bottle.

Location 2



Hint

A front-row experience

Location 3



Hint

A jungle for the mind

Location 1



Hint

20 years together

Ready to play? Submit your answers using the QR code or the link below.



<https://forms.gle/w2HwiHKNriuAZSW4A>

SUNWAY
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A CLASS ABOVE

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP



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