Our Editors Chill Out

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The Art of Volunteerism: Connecting and Re-connecting

Volunteering is a great way to stay connected with UniSIM whether you are an alumni or student. And with our inaugural intake of full-time students in August last year, the pool can only get more interesting.

Our young and growing alumni volunteer community can provide and can also look forward to a wide range of opportunities to socialise, network and mentor our students and alumni. These partnerships auger well for everyone as at the very heart of them is connectivity – the art of connecting and re-connecting.

Staying connected is important, especially to one’s happiness. Keeping ties strong matters to happiness as a great way to boost it in the present is to reminisce happy times from the past. It is even more valuable to keep relationships strong. According to some researchers, a key to happiness is strong ties to other people. We need intimate, long-term relationships; we need to belong; and we need to give and receive support.

During our recent Chinese New Year dinner for volunteers, 16 alumni members were presented with the UniSIM Volunteer Service Awards for their dedicated and valued services towards the University. It was a proud moment indeed for the volunteers, but what was more significant was the fact that the foundation has been set up for future volunteers.

In his dinner speech, UniSIM President, Professor Cheong Hee Kiat thanked the volunteers for their contributions and called for the engagement of the UniSIM community as a collective whole towards building a vibrant university. Let us, alumni members, heed this call and connect!

“The first step in the evolution of ethics is a sense of solidarity with other human beings.” – Albert Schweitzer

Gregory Athastaraj Francis | Editor (Alumni Volunteer) | Newsletter Editorial Group

Having a “Goat of a Time”

Feng Shui Forecast

By Grand Master Tan Khoon Yong

By Janet Yong

The Feng Shui talk organised by the Alumni Relations Department every year has always been well attended by alumni and students. This year was no exception. More than 100 alumni and students packed the lecture theatre to listen to Grand Master Tan Khoon Yong, a renowned Feng Shui practitioner.

According to Grand Master Tan, the Chinese Zodiac calendar changes animal signs every year. 2015 will see the “Goat” ruling the year and according to Grand Master Tan, three “Jade Warrior Stars” will dominate the astrological constellation.

He forecast positive influences on students and working individuals. He also said that it will be a good year for budding entrepreneurs to venture on new opportunities and he called for greater restraint and caution on one’s emotions as some individuals may face “disputes and troubles” with the law. He also predicted many unforeseen troubles occurring in or originating from Asia.

Grand Master Tan captivated the audience with his animated and often humorous presentation. Ms Tan Lai Choo, a first year BSc Human Factors and Workplace Safety programme student commented: “I wanted to learn more about Feng Shui from a reputable speaker. I understand that Grand Master Tan was once an academic advisor to the Department of Philosophy at Peking University in 1993.”

Alumnus Ms Michelle Tok, BSc Business with Psychology, Class of 2012, said: “I was interested to hear what could be in store for me in 2015. This is my second Feng Shui talk for the year. Grand Master Tan was detailed, humourous and clear, making it easy for me to understand.” When asked how she knew of this event, she replied: “I always read the Alumni Newsletter for updates.”

At the end of the talk, many participants lingered to ask Grand Master Tan more questions and he obliged them to the best of his ability.
It is said that Chinese New Year is a time for family members to welcome the new year with good food and hearty well-wishes. That was exactly what our own “family” did when UniSIM and alumni volunteers met over a delectable Chinese New Year inspired buffet spread on Feb 26. To kick-start the evening, ‘yu sheng’ was tossed exuberantly by all attendees.

UniSIM President, Prof Cheong Hee Kiat; Provost, Prof Tsui Kai Chong; Registrar, Assoc Prof Yip Woon Kwong; and Deans graced the occasion.

The Alumni Relations Department took the opportunity to mark UniSIM’s 10th anniversary, which is celebrated this year, with the presentation of a birthday cake during the dinner.

Prof Cheong and four volunteers cut the cake amidst much cheer.

The celebration continued with UniSIM presenting 16 of its alumni volunteers with the inaugural Volunteer Service Award. It was a proud moment indeed for the awardees.

To cap the evening, Mr Yip Shu Shan, a renowned master of Chinese Rainbow Calligraphy was present to interpret first names through his skilled and colourful brush strokes. Guests waited patiently for Mr Yip to work on their personalised mementoes.

May the “Year of the Goat” bring much laughter and joy to all. May everyone stay “yang” and healthy always!
UniSIM Commemorates and Celebrates

Dear Alumni,

2015 is a special year for UniSIM. We celebrate our 10th Anniversary! Looking back, the University has grown, literally on all fronts—from the growing programme offerings to increasing student, alumni and staff population to the significant campus expansion. An important milestone is the growing stature of the University as evidenced by the Government’s recognition of UniSIM with the mandate to offer full-time programmes similar to the other autonomous universities and the impending third law school.

All these are only possible with the contribution of many stakeholders, the Board and advisory committees, staff and associates, students, alumni, industry partners and well-wishers.

Our alumni is one of the key pillars and voice of the University in industry and the community. Each of you, having gone through the UniSIM education experience, is an important UniSIM spokesperson and advocate. The changing education landscape and the frequent call to be lifelong learners attest to the right approach that UniSIM has adopted since its establishment in 2005 to offer working adults an opportunity to attain their degree qualification while continuing to work. The “Learn today, apply tomorrow” philosophy is never more apparent than in the learning journey of a UniSIM student.

As we cross the 10th year, we are proud to have been the enabler for tens of thousands of students who passed through our doors to realise their potential and dreams. Do continue to support and contribute as an active alumni in the next lap of the University’s development as we embark on new initiatives in support of the national SkillsFuture movement. Through this movement, the skills, passion and contributions of every individual will drive Singapore’s next phase of development towards an advanced economy and inclusive society. You are the true pioneers of lifelong learning!

Best wishes,

Evelyn Chong
Director, Office of Student and Alumni Relations

Pre-CNY Shopping Trip to JB

By Dennis Tan

On Feb 7, before the sun was up, our alumni and their loved ones boarded a coach at UniSIM in eager anticipation of a fun-filled day in Johor Bahru. Though some had taken part in a similar trip last year, there was a sense of excitement among all.

After clearing the usual border formalities, we stopped for an appetising breakfast at 777 Restaurant in Gelang Patah. We were not disappointed as the all-time favourites of “roti prata”, “paus” and noodles were mouth-watering!

Our tour guide, Mdm Prabha, was hilarious. Her funny anecdotes from the start got us in stitches and the journey became even more interesting as she started to share the history behind the places we passed by.

For example, Tanjong Kupang may have been just another name to us but according to Mdm Prabha, it translates to “green lipped” mussels that are found in abundance there. As for Gelang Patah, it refers to the broken porcelain discovered around the area.

Our very first shopping destination was Layang-Layang, which is famous for the fresh tidbits and chips, at wholesale prices. Our alumni wasted no time in filling their bags. Next stop was AEON Tebrau City for lunch and more shopping. After this, we headed to KSL (Koo Soo Lee) Mall - famous for “tau sar piah” a local snack. Rumour has it that the developer tore down the building and rebuilt the place in order to “free the dragon” underneath, so that the business could boom!

What an extraordinary trip indeed! Besides the “tons” of goodies bought from across the Causeway, we got much more in return when we least expected it.

We ended with a delicious dinner at Soul Thai Restaurant that serves authentic Thai cuisine. Ms Cecilia Tan, BA (Hons) Psychology with Sociology, Class of 2012, shared that she enjoys such events. In fact, she had participated in previous shopping trips organised by the Alumni Relations Department and found those exciting.

Time flies unexpectedly when we are enjoying it. With our goodies in tow, we headed back to home sweet home!
Helping our alumni members stay connected with the UniSIM community via this quarterly newsletter is our Newsletter Editorial Group – all of whom are alumni volunteers.

Here we talk to its Editor and Assistant Editor to learn more about their work and them.

Shiwei: Hi. Can you share with our readers your roles in the Newsletter Editorial Group? Perhaps we can begin with Greg.

Greg: Greetings! As Editor, I meet and engage with the team on a quarterly basis. We decide what articles to publish and who to write them. I finally edit the articles and present them for approval before final publication.

Shiwei: What about you, Ambrose?

Ambrose: As Assistant Editor, I perform the first level of editing of articles before it goes to Greg.

Shiwei: Tell us some personal bits about yourselves.

Greg: Let me begin first, Ambrose...(giving Ambrose a wink)

I started volunteering in 2008 and am in fact a pioneer alumni volunteer. I started off as secretary for the Newsletter Editorial Group before assuming the role of editor.

I am happily married and have an avid interest in music especially in the genre of blues and rock classics. Music from John Lee Hooker, Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan and Rush to name a few.

I recently picked up the bass guitar. I am also a football fan and my favourite team is Manchester United. I dream of visiting the Theater of Dreams at Old Trafford.

Shiwei: Wow, your volunteering history is really impressive and your interests are really varied... dating back to Woodstock, which was all about love and peace. What about you, Ambrose?

Ambrose: I am a training coordinator and graduated with BSc Business from UniSIM in 2010. Personally, I am a self-professed geek who likes to get to know people. I am as curious as a cat, I read voraciously. Anything from what makes cancer cells resistant to treatment to how flamingoes get their pink coloring.

In my spare time, I like to spend time with my family, hang out with friends, play games, take photographs, try to be active at church, jog and read. I enjoy humorous and light-hearted movies.

Shiwei: Ambrose, flamingoes?! Seems like your curiosity and interests know no bounds.

With such active lives, how do you both balance your volunteering work with your career and family life?

Greg: I have managed the balance well with support from the team and my family. With Ambrose, Gaik Suan (Secretary) and our extremely supportive bunch of members including the Alumni Relations Department, we overcome obstacles together.

My wife is understanding and supports my volunteerism. She looks forward to reading the newsletter and provides constructive critique! Ambrose, over to you buddy.

Ambrose: I feel blessed to be in this team. My work is cyclical and finding time is difficult, but I try my level best to edit the articles.

I found the support given by my wife and family invaluable, as they understand my commitments. They are my beacons.

Shiwei: Guys, good to hear that you balance your commitments harmoniously. Greg, as editor, tell us some of the challenges that arise during the course of producing every issue?

Greg: Timelines are crucial and one challenge that I particularly enjoy is rushing through deadlines. Such an adrenaline rush! More importantly, our team understands the requirements and work to meet publishing demands.

Shiwei: Well-said, Greg. Now, I have an important question our readers would be interested to find out. What do you enjoy most about your time as a volunteer?

Greg: I enjoy the camaraderie. I look forward to meetings and the fruitful banter that culminates with ideas and humour.

Ambrose: It’s being in the company of like-minded, yet diverse individuals. I try to catch up with them at various events.

Shiwei: What would you tell our alumni who are thinking of coming onboard as volunteers? Greg?

Greg: Contribute and share your talents. UniSIM is young and as volunteers, we can grow and take root together. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, once said: “Talent is always conscious of its own abundance, and does not object to sharing.”

Ambrose: Our volunteers from Newsletter to Events are wonderful. Look no further and join us!

Shiwei: Thank you,
On April 14, UniSIM will be celebrating its 10th anniversary. It has been a decade since the University has been making a difference to the lives of the people it has touched, with its aspiration to lead in lifelong learning, equipping its learners for a better future and to serve society. As part of the celebration, UniSIM will be organising/hosting four international conferences in 2015.

14th International Tamil Internet Conference
Date: May 30 - June 1
Venue: UniSIM
Website: http://tamilinternetconference.org/

Organised by International Forum for Information Technology in Tamil and UniSIM, this three-day conference – with computer aided language teaching, natural language processing and mobile technology as applied to Tamil as its themes – will see government officials, academics and professionals from all over the world deliberate on the various aspects of internationalising Tamil language computerisation programmes.

10th e-Learning Forum Asia (eLFA 2015)
Date: June 17 - 19
Venue: UniSIM
Website: http://elfa2015.unisim.edu.sg/

The theme for eLFA2015 “Innovations In Education: Responding Intelligently To Diverse Learning Needs” highlights innovations in education and explores their impact on learning. It will take a close look at recent developments and innovations in the education ecosystem, with a view to identify emerging technologies and innovative pedagogical practices that will become the mainstay of the education landscape in the next decade. Participants and delegates to this event, hosted by UniSIM, will identify and share novel ideas, pedagogical approaches and educational technology that they have successfully incorporated in their teaching, learning design and assessment of students’ learning in both formal and informal contexts.

19th International Symposium Of The International Consortium For Social Development (ICSD 2015)
Date: July 7 - 10
Venue: UniSIM
Website: http://icsd2015.unisim.edu.sg/

ICSD 2015 will focus on social change and societal transformation dealing with key international social development issues. The symposium theme “Transforming Society: Trends And Models In Community Leadership And Social Development” emphasises good governance, as well as new and emerging issues in social development requiring attention. Vibrant models of social development for transforming communities will also be explored in addressing the pertinent current issues, as well as the challenges and opportunities in the coming decades.

9th International Conference On Researching Work And Learning (RWL9)
Date: Dec 9 - 12
Venue: School of the Arts Singapore and UniSIM
Website: http://www.rwl2015.com/

How does globalisation mediate skills, performance and work? What are the implications of the changing nature of work for learning through work? In what ways can Vocational Education and Training policies and systems be responsive to the changing nature of work and global and regional pressures? RWL9, organised by the Institute for Adult Learning, together with National Institute of Education and UniSIM, will seek to address these questions. Themed “Work And Learning In The Era Of Globalisation: Challenges For The 21st Century”, the conference seeks to offer a forum where established and emerging ideas about learning and work are appraised and their applicability to the needs of workers, workplaces and national economies are countenanced.

Attendees to these conferences can expect lively discussions, in-depth analysis, and gain valuable insights and inspirations as they engage and exchange cutting-edge ideas with the distinguished speakers and presenters, leading scholars, thought leaders, practitioners and industry experts in the fields of Tamil language, e-learning, social development, and researching work and learning.

So, do sign up for the conferences now!
Flash Your Alumni Card To Enjoy These Special Deals:

- Free 10-minute Fish Spa with purchase of 20-minute Shoulder Massage or Aromatherapy Hand Reflexology @ $38
- 40-minute Shoulder Massage / Foot Reflexology + 30-minute Fish Spa @ $75

Promotion is valid till December 31, 2015.

10% off regular-priced tickets and merchandise, except family tickets.

Promotion is valid till January 20, 2016.

10% discount off total bill.

Promotion is valid till January 31, 2016.

20% off on www.wiley.com with promo code ‘SIM20’

Promotion is valid till March 28, 2016.

UniSIM shall not be held responsible for any changes in the promotion or quality of the products/services offered. Merchants’ terms and conditions apply. Refer to the UniSIM Alumni website for more information.

CONTEST GIVEAWAYS!

We are giving away five exclusive UniSIM caps. Simply SMS the answers to the two questions below to 9113 6795 in the following format:

Newsletter>Pl number>Email address
Example: Newsletter 01234567 alumni@unisim.edu.sg
Answers for Q1 and Q2.

QUESTIONS

Q1 Name one destination we visited during the Pre-CNY Shopping Trip to JB.
Q2 Who was the speaker of this year’s Feng Shui Talk?

Closing Date: April 21, 2015

Congratulations to the Contest Winners of Issue 28!

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For advertising enquiries, call 6248 9215 or email alumni@unisim.edu.sg
Upcoming Events

Unwind Saturday Meet & Movie

Date: April 25, 2015
Venue: GV Max, Golden Village, VivoCity
Time: 4:30 pm - Ticket Collection & Tea Reception
*5:30 pm - Movie Screening
*(timing is subject to confirmation by Golden Village)
Fee: *$8.00 (Alumnus) / $9.00 (Guest)
* Each alumnus is entitled to purchase a maximum of two tickets, inclusive of alumnus’ ticket. Comes with popcorn combo and tea reception. Enjoy savings of up to $25.00! Price is inclusive of 7% GST.
Special Promotion: Purchase up to 4 tickets at *$6.00 each.
Seats will be allocated at the first three rows from the screen.
* Each alumnus is entitled to purchase a maximum of four tickets, inclusive of alumnus’ ticket. Comes with popcorn combo and tea reception. Price is inclusive of 7% GST.
Registration: www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events

28th SEA Games @ Singapore 2015 Opening Ceremony

Date: June 5, 2015
Venue: Singapore National Stadium Hub
Time: 8:00 pm – 10:30 pm
Fee: Alumni / Guest – $25.00 (CAT 2 Tickets)
* Each alumnus is allowed to register a maximum of four seats only, inclusive of the alumnus’ seat. Price is inclusive of 7% GST.
Registration: www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events

One Day Volunteer Opportunity with YMCA

Date: May 9, 2015
Venue: Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled
Time: 2:15 pm – 5:00 pm
Registration: www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events

Kukup, Malaysia Day Trip

Date: June 13, 2015
Venue: Assemble at SIM University, SIM HQ, Clementi Road
Time: 7:00 am – 9:00 pm
Fee: $35.00 (Alumnus) / $55.00 (Guest)
* Each alumnus is allowed to register a maximum of four seats only, inclusive of the alumnus’ seat. Price is inclusive of 7% GST.
Registration: www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events

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