Connecting UniSIM

June 2015 | Issue 30 | MCI (P) 178/03/2015

UniSIM alumnus returns to school

Highlights

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SG50 – Celebrating The Little Red Dot

2015 is a momentous year for Singapore as it marks the country’s 50th year of independence. It is a milestone for us to reflect on our journey together, celebrate what makes us Singaporean and inspire action to contribute to the future of Singapore together.

Anchored on the theme “Celebrating as One People”, SG50 is an inclusive celebration comprising a series of activities contributed by the people, private and public sectors. The SG50 logo celebrates the Singapore spirit that bonds all of us across generations, gender and race. It comes in many forms and, more importantly, it is in you, in me and in everybody.

I work near the City Hall area and am privileged to witness daily the set-up for the upcoming National Day Parade. These behind-the-scenes efforts by the organising team are reflective of this spirit. It is really everywhere in the air and all around us.

I am also taken by the stories of the men and women who embody this spirit in their own special way. I am particularly impressed by 19-year-old national wrestler Eddy Khodzer, who did Singapore proud in 2013 by finishing in third place at a pre-SEA Games wrestling tournament. He shared this teaching that he was taught: “When you’ve got the fight in you, you can fight anyone.” Inspiring words indeed!

UniSIM is also taking part in the nation’s golden jubilee celebrations by partnering to present complimentary SG50 lifelong learning courses for seniors. The fact that they were oversubscribed is an indicator that UniSIM is establishing itself well as the University for Lifelong Learning. This is something that we should be proud of, support and celebrate, and is especially meaningful in 2015 as we celebrate not only Singapore’s 50th anniversary, but also UniSIM’s 10th anniversary!

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

INTERVIEW WORKSHOP

By Tan Seow Heng

Having relevant job interview skills is one of the key factors in getting the desired job. Mr Steven Yeong, a recruiter with 15 years of experience, shared the importance of such soft skills during a two-hour evening workshop attended by 30 alumni and guests at UniSIM on March 27.

According to Mr Yeong, good job interview skills would include the ability to anticipate the questions to be asked and being aware of the “do’s and don’ts” during interviews. He added that role-playing can also enhance good interview skills, which he has tried and found effective. He advised candidates to apply for as many jobs as possible, and to attend all interviews, as “practice makes perfect”. He opined that a thank-you note is not necessary, to avoid flooding the recruiter’s mailbox.

Mr Yeong also highlighted the importance of creating a professional LinkedIn profile to one’s career. According to him, candidates without such a profile risk a 60% chance of not getting employment in white-collar positions. He briefed the participants on the setting-up of the profile, and reminded all to use a corporate-looking profile picture as LinkedIn is used by many companies, and is a link to employers of choice.

Conducted in a highly interactive manner, Mr Yeong attracted many questions from the participants during the workshop. When asked whether a cover letter is required for the curriculum vitae, Mr Yeong shared that it is important only for fresh graduates.

There were mixed reactions on the workshop. For alumna Ms Chan Shihui, Bachelor of Science in Business, Class of 2011, she found the session enjoyable. On the other hand, Ms Chai Mui Song, a guest, felt that it was not sufficiently in-depth. She suggested that the workshop be held over the weekend and over a longer duration, which would allow for more in-depth coverage of the topics and more questions to be asked and answered.
What do J-League football and Shakespeare have in common? Sports television producer and SASS alumnus Mohamed Abdullah, who completed his Bachelor of Arts in English with Business in 2014, answered this intriguing question on April 1. Speaking at a sharing session for the English programme’s students, he gave an eye-opening talk on how his degree provided him with greater insight into the beautiful football game and his work in the television broadcasting industry. Having worked in the television broadcasting industry over the last 12 years and interviewed football greats including Wayne Rooney and Kazuyoshi Miura, he held his audience rapt with his many fascinating stories.

Mohamed Abdullah covered the many aspects of making a sports programme, such as conceptualising the storyline, pitching the idea, researching the content, gathering the footage, organising the shoots here and overseas, interviewing key personalities, finding appropriate music, and editing the footage. He shared that understanding the way language works is invaluable when writing a script for maximum impact. Knowledge of literature and film also trains broadcasters to recognise interesting angles and craft compelling stories; for example, a story about a football player is more gripping when portrayed as the struggle of an underdog. He illustrated his points by showing and commenting on clips from the J-League 20th Anniversary Commemorative Programme, a one-hour television documentary special that he produced and that was broadcast worldwide, and is available on YouTube. During the lively question-and-answer session, the attendees discussed excitedly with him the applicability of the English degree – both at work and in other aspects of everyday life. Student Edwin Ong said that the talk has given him “an interesting insight into the journalism profession”. He especially enjoyed it when Mohamed Abdullah talked about “his work experience and how the UniSIM English programme has enriched his life”.

Mohamed Abdullah speaking at the English programme sharing session.

Unwind Saturday Meet & Movie – Avengers: Age of Ultron

By Daniel Koh & Tan Seow Heang

On April 25, UniSIM’s Alumni Relations team warmly welcomed alumni and guests to Golden Village Max Theatre at VivoCity for a screening of Avengers: Age of Ultron. Movie screenings never fail to attract our alumni, and some 500 of them and their guests turned up for this screening.

The event began with a pastime familiar to Singaporeans – snacking. Even as the crowd streamed into the foyer where the reception was held, some of them seized the chance to have their photos taken with replicas of props used in the movie.

Once all the moviegoers were seated in the theatre, Professor Cheong Hee Kiat, President of UniSIM, welcomed them and shared the good news that UniSIM had recently been identified as one of the partners to spearhead the Government’s SkillsFuture programme. He encouraged all to participate in the lifelong learning journey to maximise their potential.

Following his address, the much-anticipated movie screening began. The adrenaline-packed movie, which showcased the new Avengers team, ended with them triumphing over the evil Ultron. As we left the cinema, we could still feel the lingering remnants of the superhuman powers, which touched the hearts of the alumni: perhaps this power had transferred to us and grown stronger!

Two of the attendees, Ms Tan Li Xian and Ms Yeoh Siew Ping, who were from the Class of 2011’s Bachelor of Science in Business, gave the movie and especially the event, which enabled them to catch up and network with ex-classmates, the thumbs-up.
Advance and Achieve

Dear Alumni,

Celebrating UniSIM’s 10th anniversary together with SG50 seems like a double bonus. There are new activities coming on-stream each month, targeting different stakeholder groups. Even our annual events are being planned on a bigger scale. At UniSIM, we would like to share this buoyant and festive spirit with our alumni too as you have been a key pillar of our success.

Our 10th anniversary celebration kick-started on April 10 with a luncheon where Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam was the Guest-of-Honour. Some of our students and alumni were also present at the event to celebrate with staff, our board and advisory committee members, and our institution and industry partners.

In his speech, DPM Tharman noted that “In 10 years, you have, starting from scratch, arrived at a position where you are already a leader in the field of lifelong learning.” He also highlighted three of UniSIM’s key strengths which have contributed to our success: “…These are real strengths: your open admissions policy and modularised structure; your focus on integrating learning with the real world; and thirdly, your experimentation and pioneering efforts in methods of learning, especially in the use of online techniques and its integration with on-campus learning.”

With 10 years of effort and experience behind us, a firm foundation has been laid to take us into the next decade and beyond. Significant announcements such as the SkillsFuture and Earn and Learn initiatives attest to the fact that UniSIM is on the right path in enabling lifelong learning. Our “learn today, apply tomorrow” maxim is never more relevant than it is today. We urge you, as our alumni to continue living this and also to take advantage of the various fee concessions available to you. Further your education and knowledge acquisition by taking a graduate or continuing education programme at UniSIM. There are choice offerings.

We look forward to your active participation in the upcoming events and conferences in this 10th anniversary year. UniSIM will always have our doors open to welcome all alumni.

Best wishes,

Evelyn Chong
Director, Office of Student and Alumni Relations
What makes a great educator? Is patience a great virtue or passion to impart knowledge and skills a greater characteristic? If you were to ask Mr Lam Thye Nyap, Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature, Class of 2009, he would probably tell you that an educator has to be a “jack-of-all-trades”.

Clean-cut and boyish-looking, the 50-year-old Associate Faculty at UniSIM’s School of Arts and Social Sciences, is also the Level Head for English at Nan Chiau Primary School. According to Thye Nyap, an educator must have an innate interest to impart one’s knowledge to others. He added with a dash of Singlish: “Of course, if one intends to give back to society through teaching, one must still possess relevant educational qualifications. Without specialised knowledge, there is nothing to teach (eh?)”

When he first started as a primary school teacher, Thye Nyap who was armed with a diploma, felt that it was sufficient to enable him to field questions from not-too-inquisitive students. It was also adequate for him to command respect from parents who hailed from an era where the general thinking was to “best leave the kids to the teachers”.

But times have changed. The parents of today are educated and well-travelled and they demand more from educators. With the internet an arm’s length away, kids can gain easier access to more information. As a result, he encountered students who fielded more complex questions.

In 2006 — after five years of teaching at Nan Chiau Primary School, Thye Nyap decided to further his education. In order to be relevant in a fast-changing education landscape, he pursued a part-time degree programme in English Language and Literature at UniSIM.

“The decision to embark on another learning journey was a difficult one because my work schedule was heavy and I am fearful that I may short-change my students due to my academic focus. If not for the encouragement from Mr Tan C.M., former principal in Nan Chiau, I might not have completed the programme.”

Thye Nyap chuckled, revealing the lighter side of him: “Being a teacher by day, I admittedly felt a little awkward playing the role of a student by night. At times, I felt like correcting my tutor’s way of conducting lessons!”

Advocating the educators’ creed that one must embrace learning and pass on the love of learning, Thye Nyap continued with his academic pursuit after completing his basic degree at UniSIM. He recounted: “The days of rushing to UniSIM for my evening lessons with a fatigued body and spending the many weekends rushing school assignments had, somehow, evolved nicely into a routine. Without realising it, I had been working and studying to a steady rhythm. Towards the end of my degree programme in 2009, I thought to myself: ‘Since I have come this far, why not continue with a graduate education?’ And with that,

I enrolled myself in a Masters programme at the National University of Singapore.”

A lifelong learner, Thye Nyap is planning to take up a Doctorate programme in Australia. He remarked: “I would want to do a Doctorate. But this might have to wait as I need to shift my priority towards caring for my ailing mother.”

Obtaining the kind of academic prestige that Thye Nyap currently enjoys did not come easy. The father of a 14-year-old daughter, who volunteers his teaching services in schools in less developed parts of the world, conceded with a grin: “The only family time in my years of studying was meal times. Those moments were the only time that I could let my hair down and spend some relaxing family time.”

In fact, the modules in the Masters programme were so strenuous that Thye Nyap had to apply for a year of no-pay leave to focus on his studies. An avid swimmer and cyclist, who performs yoga occasionally, he advised:

“To achieve a goal, one must not lose sight of the end result. But more importantly, one must enjoy the learning process. I love teaching because when I impart my knowledge to my students, I learn from them too.”
UniSIM turned 10 this year, on 14 April 2015 to be exact! And what a decade it has been. We have grown on all fronts—from the increasing student, alumni and staff population to the number of programme offerings and expansion of our campus; and our growing stature in the Singapore higher education landscape with the Government selecting us to offer full-time programmes, similar to the autonomous universities, and host Singapore’s third law school.

To celebrate our achievements, more than 500 guests were invited to a special lunch at Mandarin Orchard Singapore, four days ahead of UniSIM’s actual “birthday”. This event was graced by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Mr. Tharman Shanmugaratnam.

In his welcome address, Professor Cheong Hee Kiat, President of UniSIM, gave thanks to all who have journeyed with and helped UniSIM. He also shared a glimpse of UniSIM’s future plans, which were echoed through the screening of a video.

Speaking next, DPM Tharman hailed UniSIM as “a leader in the field of lifelong learning” and announced that individuals who complete the Government’s SkillsFuture Earn and Learn programme will be able to get credit exemption or advanced standing if they pursue a part-time degree programme at UniSIM. DPM Tharman and various UniSIM representatives then led everyone to sing a birthday song for UniSIM and toasted to the joyous occasion, before settling down to lunch.

The highlight of the event was the presentation of the inaugural UniSIM LEAP Award, which honours individuals who have contributed significantly to the establishment and development of UniSIM. Mr. Gerard Eu, Chancellor and Chairman of UniSIM, presented the award to Mr. John Yip, former Director of Education at the Ministry of Education; Mr. Sean Chong Tian, Group Director of SIM Group Corporate Services; Professor Aline Wong, Academic Advisor at UniSIM; and Professor Cham Tao Soon, Founding Chairman of UniSIM and Special Advisor to SIM Governing Council.

Recognising the importance of giving back to the community, UniSIM board members and staff also contributed $30,000 to the Asian Women’s Welfare Association (AWWA)—a voluntary welfare organisation that provides a range of services to the needy.

The celebration ended on a high note with a wonderful rendition of the UniSIM song “Onwards and Beyond” by UniSIM Psychology programme alumnus Mr. Syed Raizal Hamid Al-Edrus, who also debuted the song in 2006.

DPM Tharman and guests toasting to UniSIM’s past achievements and future possibilities.

Mr. Eu (centre) presented the UniSIM LEAP Award to (second from left) Mr. Seah, Prof. Wong, Prof. Cham, and Mr. Yip. Prof. Cheang (extreme left) provided the citations of the award recipients, while DPM Tharman (extreme right) witnessed the presentation.

Every guest went home with the UniSIM 10th anniversary commemorative book and a specially-commissioned medallion.

Ms. Janice Ang, Chairperson of AWWA, receiving our contribution from Prof. Cheang.

Raizal singing the UniSIM song “Onwards and Beyond”.

UniSIM celebrates 10 Years Of Making A Difference.
Flash Your Alumni Card To Enjoy These Special Deals:

15% off the total bill with minimum spend of S$150.
Promotion is valid till December 31, 2015.

10% discount on the total bill on dine-in à la carte menu.
Promotion is valid till April 1, 2016.

10% discount on the private event package.

50% discount for all Music Workshops.
Promotion is valid till December 31, 2015.

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

CONTEST GIVEAWAYS!

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

Newsletter<space>Pl number<space>Email address<space>Answers for Q1 and Q2.

Example: Newsletter Q1234567 alumni@unisim.edu.sg
Answers for Q1 and Q2.

QUESTIONS

Q1 Where was the alumni event Unwind Saturday Meet & Movie held?

Q2 Who was the speaker for the Interview Workshop?

Closing Date: July 21, 2015

Congratulations to the Contest Winners of Issue 29!

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEO WEE LIM</td>
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<td>ONG JIANI</td>
<td>BXXXX810</td>
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<td>LAI TUCK PENG</td>
<td>WXXXX540</td>
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<tr>
<td>KESSLER STEPHANIE ANN</td>
<td>TXXXX46X</td>
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For advertising enquiries, call 6248 9215 or email alumni@unisim.edu.sg
## Upcoming Events

### LinkedIn Seminar

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<th>July 24, 2015</th>
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<tr>
<td>Venue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>6:30pm – Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7:00pm – Start of Seminar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8:00pm – Tea Reception</td>
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<td>9:00pm – End of Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fee</td>
<td>Alumni / Guest – $5.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Each alumnus is allowed to register a maximum of four seats only, inclusive of the alumnus’ seat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
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### Traditional Chinese Medicine Talk

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>SIM HQ, Clementi Road (exact venue to be confirmed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fee</td>
<td>$5.00 (Alumnus) / $8.00 (Guest)</td>
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<td>* Each alumnus is allowed to register a maximum of four seats only, inclusive of the alumnus’ seat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td><a href="http://www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events">www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events</a></td>
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### UniSIM Alumni Family & Friends Get-together!

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Venue</td>
<td>Marina Barrage, 8 Marina Gardens Drive Singapore 018951</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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<td>Fee</td>
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<td>* Each alumnus is allowed to register a maximum of five seats only, inclusive of the alumnus’ seat.</td>
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