A Winner’s Joy
National Day Award Recipient 2012

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THE TIMES ARE CHANGING

Those who are familiar with Bob Dylan – a famous American folk singer cum songwriter – would probably know and can identify with one of his songs “The Times They Are a-Changin”.

Many had felt that this title track fully captured the spirit of the social and political upheaval that characterised the 1960s. Likewise, times are changing for us now. Events around us seem bleak; many issues may have impacted us directly or indirectly. Perhaps the biggest shockwave would be felt by businesses in Singapore. Experts have forecasted that our economic growth will fall between 1.5 to 2.5 percent this year.

Many of our alumni currently pursuing further education may be affected and need to tighten purse strings in order to weather the anticipated oncoming financial storm. However, we are hoping for relief, just like from the extremely warm and humid weather right now. We wish for a hot summer season to gradually cool to a bearable autumn.

On August 26 during the National Day Rally, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced that SIM University (UniSIM) will be participating in the Government’s plan to increase the number of publicly-funded, full-time university places.

PM Lee also announced that part-time students at UniSIM will now be eligible for government bursaries and loans, similar to their counterparts at the Singapore autonomous universities.

UniSIM has withstood the challenges and affirmed itself as a reputable institution of higher learning. Playing an important role of supporting Singapore’s economic growth, UniSIM provides skills and knowledge upgrading pathways for working adults. These skills and knowledge have opened more doors for us, as alumni members, for which we may ‘consider the future with hope’, an important message from our PM’s Rally.

Singaporeans on a tight budget, juggling family and work commitments would find this news particularly welcoming. They may even decide to further their dreams. Remember Dorothy – the protagonist in The Wizard of Oz – as she cries: “Somewhere, over the rainbow, skies are blue, and the dreams that you dare to dream really do come true.”

Take time to enjoy the precious moments with your family and friends for truly “The Times They Are a-Changin’.”

Gregory Francis  I  Editor (Alumni Volunteer)  I  Newsletter Editorial Group

WHITE TEA, THE DANCING LADY

On June 30, the UniSIM Alumni Relations Department held a tea appreciation workshop at Yixing Xuan Teahouse at Tanjong Pagar Road, that was attended by 33 alumni and guests.

Vincent Low – the teahouse owner and speaker at this workshop – has conducted tea workshops and appeared in various radio and television talk shows over the past 24 years. He spoke about the origin, culture and benefits of drinking tea. He also shared that Yixing Xuan Teahouse has a wide selection of tea leaves and tea-making equipment from China and Taiwan, and that an adjacent shop – belonging to him too – serves dim sum lunch, high tea and dinner with tea.

So, just what did the participants learn from Vincent?

A monk in China started the tea drinking tradition 4,000 years ago. The tea leaves come from only one tea shrub – the Camellia Sinensis. Tea is classified as White tea, Green tea, Oolong tea and Black tea. Tea drinking was later introduced by Yu Lu – a scholar from 760 AD – to Japan and Korea, and later to the rest of the world.

White tea or the Dancing Lady is the most expensive type of tea, not because it dances but because the flowers have the highest anti-oxidant potency. It is the product of a labour-intensive picking of single shoots, which are then steamed and dried. Green tea, which is picked from two shoots, is supposed to help fight cancer and reduce blood pressure. Oolong, picked from matured leaves, is partially fired. It is also the most fragrant type of tea and is popular for assisting the body-building process and losing weight. Black tea – the only tea made from the leaves and stems – is a dark-coloured tea and most often have flowers such as jasmine added to flavour it. It is also the cheapest type of tea and when compressed, is called ‘brick tea’.

Tea Demonstration

Vincent demonstrated the art of drinking tea by first pouring hot water into a teapot before emptying the content into teacups. He explained that this would help to enhance the aroma of the tea. Tea leaves were then added to the teapot before hot water was poured in and immediately drained to open the tea leaves. He added hot water again and let the tea stand for 30 seconds to one minute. Vincent then poured tea into tall and small cups. He encouraged all to sniff the tall cup of tea to enjoy the aroma, and to drink from the small cup to savour the full fragrance.

By Janet Yong
Asked if there were side effects from drinking tea, Vincent shared that there was none, although he did caution that drinking tea, especially one that is concentrated, on an empty stomach can get a person “high”.

Vincent also shared that while a Japanese tea ceremony is more formal, Chinese tea appreciation is a social event, whereby intellectual, cultural and philosophical conversations are exchanged.

After the workshop, the participants were served dim sum and a selection of tea.

Ms Yap Ling Yen, Class of 2012, BA Translation and Interpretation, shared that she joined the workshop as she was interested to find out how tea drinking relates to health. She said, “I now know drinking white tea and drinking less coffee is healthier”.

Ms Tong Hwee Kwan, Class of 2010, BA English Language and Literature, participated as she wanted to know more about tea drinking. She also enjoyed the get-together with the fellow alumni members and had this to say, “There are nice people around and I would like to learn about the culture of tea drinking”.

Joel Zhou, Class of 2010, BSc Marketing, found out that “drinking fresh tea is so healthy”.

Damien Tay, Class of 2009, BA Psychology with Business, found this workshop useful and shared that he would definitely be signing up for more events organised by the Alumni Relations Department.

On July 14, the Alumni Relations Department organised its first Alumni Family Movie Event featuring the long-awaited ‘Ice Age 4: Continental Drift’ – a humorous and heartwarming movie suitable for both young and old. This event, which received overwhelming response, bore testament once again to the closely-knit UniSIM community.

Mr Adrian Lee – an alumnus of the School of Arts and Social Sciences who attended the event with his wife – felt that such events were good for fostering relationships among the alumni and family members. He thanked the Alumni Relations Department for organising it and said that he looked forward to more of such family-oriented activities.

All were treated to a delectable menu and entertained throughout the evening with fun-filled activities as the emcee for the night had an array of games such as a modified version of the current hottest game show ‘We Are Singaporeans’ and ‘Song Titles From The 80s’.

As the sky darkened, the guests soaked in the beautiful fireworks display from the National Day Parade – the highlight of the evening. The evening ended on a high note as the vessel sailed past the outskirts of Sentosa, allowing guests to indulge in snippets from the ‘Song Of The Seas’ pyrotechnics display and the breathtaking views of Sentosa Cove.

As the Imperial Cheng Ho returned to shore, the berth was filled with the joyful sounds of laughter and chatter; a wonderful sign of yet another enjoyable event for the UniSIM family.
Alumna Presented With The National Day Award 2012

It did not cross Kong Gaik Suan’s mind when she first took up teaching that she would one day be conferred the National Day Long Service Medal by the Singapore Government. It was an extremely happy and pleasant surprise though when she was informed as she was reassured that all her expended energy and concerted effort invested in education did not go unnoticed. Gaik Suan, who has been in the education service for more than two decades and taught in the same school since her pre-service training days, has witnessed how the educational landscape has evolved and made her persevere on to educate the young minds under her charge.

Gaik Suan has remained steadfast in her belief that it is a privilege for one to be at the centre of influence. She has set an example to her students and colleagues that education is truly the prime mover in one’s life. She was among the first cohort to graduate from the BA English Language and Literature from the Open University programmes conducted in Singapore under the auspices of the Open University, United Kingdom. She has continued to upgrade herself and has completed her graduate studies with the University of New South Wales. Gaik Suan is truly a shining example of someone who walks the talk.

Staying true to her goal as a lifelong learner, Gaik Suan has recently submitted an application to study in the United States of America. She hopes that she would be able to hone her teaching skills and improve herself as an educator in the primary school level during this full-time scholarship programme for the academic year 2013 - 2014.

As an educator, Gaik Suan sees the need to keep in touch with the social and economic issues in the global community. She would like students to understand that education is not confined to the school, and that education is not a means to an end. Gaik Suan wants her students to learn about life through their educational activities and programmes within and outside the classroom. She wants her students to demonstrate that an educated person not only possesses knowledge but also knows how to make use of it to help the community. Gaik Suan looks forward to continuing to teach with fervour because she appreciates the greater need to mentor the current generation of youngsters.

We wish Gaik Suan all the very best, and that her teaching continues to enhance her life which in turn enriches those whom she teaches. Congratulations to Gaik Suan on being presented with the National Day Award!
Ms Phyllis Lee started on the General Studies Programme (GSP) in July 2008 and graduated with flying colours in December 2011.

Tired of her predictable role as a full-time General Manager at a Japanese manufacturing company, Phyllis longed for more excitement. She also wanted a more flexible schedule as she felt her children, aged 11 and 17 respectively then, were at crucial stages in their lives, and needed more guidance. Phyllis discussed this with her husband, who supported her idea to quit her job and enrol with UniSIM.

Phyllis shared that the modules offered in GSP have enriched her life. She added that the experience she has gained has given her more confidence and made her a better person. Since her first encounter with western oil paint, she has now branched to sculptures and human portraits. According to Phyllis, many who have seen her works, said that they have a 70-80% resemblance to the actual objects.

Studying Traditional Chinese Medicine in GSP has also helped her realise her passion for medicinal herbs. She now participates actively in related research projects. Phyllis felt that the GSP degree has transformed her from a retiree into a passionate and enthusiastic person who is always on the move.

The knowledge acquired in GSP has benefited her in her year-long journey with the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC). She engages and assists the underprivileged through various activities including art therapy, befriending old folks in a nursing home, mentors challenging students, and works with patients at the Institute of Mental Health.

Whenever she sees the smiles on the faces of her beneficiaries, she feels gratified that all her years of studying and learning have been fruitful.

The epitome of lifelong learning, Phyllis has gone on to complete a Master’s degree in Counselling and is now pursuing a Master’s in Gerontology at UniSIM. She is grateful that UniSIM’s GSP has created a pathway for her to achieve her intellectual pursuits, making her a well-rounded person.

"A ship in a port is safe, but that’s not what ships were built for" — this phrase was coined by Grace Murray Hopper who inspired the belief that getting out of one’s comfort zone is the key to success.

Today we take a look at Amy Gu — a UniSIM finance graduate and successful petrochemical broker at the age of 27 — whose undergraduate experience at UniSIM has inspired her to reach greater heights.

Amy was just a regular student who wanted nothing more than a degree to help her enter the job market. Having an active social life, she used to dread examinations. She felt that assignments were just a waste of time; when she could be out partying with her friends. Never did she realise that her studies in UniSIM would prepare her for the greatest challenge of her life.

On graduation from UniSIM, Amy easily secured finance-related positions, an ease she felt was due to the industry recognition of the University. She subsequently chose to work at the Bank of China.

Not satisfied with just any mundane position and driven by the need for greater challenges, reminiscent of when she was balancing examinations, work and her final thesis at UniSIM, Amy decided to move out of her comfort zone. She subsequently took up the exciting position of a petrochemical broker at OceanConnect Singapore Pte Ltd.

As a petrochemical broker, Amy acts as a go-between in the domestic or international petrochemical products market. As most deals are not long-term, Amy is required to provide supply at a moment’s notice should there be a buyer thus becoming the unobtrusive link between buyer and seller. She must also watch the market vigilantly to monitor fluctuations. This keeps Amy busy at all times though working round the clock is nothing new to her.

Despite the change from an 8 to 5 job to one that requires her to be in contact with clients at all hours, Amy does not regret her decision. In fact, she feels that this is the same challenge that she faced in her final year of studies at UniSIM.

She shared that UniSIM lessons, assignments and examinations are of great value as they bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real world application.
On July 12, SIM University announced the launch of UniSIM Mobile – a free mobile application that brings university life to Android™ and Apple® iOS mobile devices. Students, alumni, faculty and staff can download the application for free through App Store and Google Play.

Developed by UniSIM’s Mobile Learning Group and Campus IT Services, the application provides mobile access to essential information and services such as campus floor plans, courses, events, latest UniSIM news and a directory that allows students to contact faculty and administrative staff. Check out more by visiting http://www.unisim.edu.sg/mobile/.

R&R @ UniSIM
Recognition and Reputation

Dear Alumni,

2012 has been a very busy and exciting year for UniSIM to date. There have been many activities and events, both at the University level, as well as those that impact our students or alumni. It is heartening to note that UniSIM is gaining increasing recognition both nationally and in the industry. The value of industry experience while pursuing a university education is the new model that is being explored as Singapore looks towards providing additional pathways to meet the educational aspirations of Singaporeans. This speaks well of the value that UniSIM has always been providing to its students, i.e., “Learn Today, Apply Tomorrow”. Some of you have had the opportunity to share with our Prime Minister your views, experiences, challenges faced and aspirations during his visit to UniSIM on August 7 and also heard his commitment that he “will do more to help Singaporeans, like them, upgrade themselves and fulfill their dreams”. This promise has been translated into action with his announcement at the National Day Rally on August 26 that the government will make bursaries and study loans available to UniSIM students who are pursuing their studies while holding a full-time job. In addition, UniSIM will join the league of the autonomous universities to offer full-time degree programmes.

This year, we are also engaging our alumni in many of the University’s initiatives. For example, we invited our alumni to a town hall session on June 2 to share the plans for Phase 2 of our Campus Development Master Project and to seek feedback from our alumni. In mid-September, some alumni were also invited for conversations with members of the Quality Assurance Framework for Universities (QAFU) audit panel. We value your contribution and partnership.

Our alumni is one of the key pillars of our success. Come alongside us in working towards improving our University’s recognition and reputation.

Best wishes,

Evelyn Chong
Director, Office of Student and Alumni Relations
Shop online at [https://store.brandsworld.com.sg](https://store.brandsworld.com.sg) and receive a free organiser bag or plate and bowl set (for purchases over S$120). Simply key in your alumni ID in the ‘Remarks’ column.

Promotion is valid from October 2012 to December 2012.


Enjoy 10% off all dental treatment and services at Royce Dental Surgery. Simply present your UniSIM alumni card on your appointment day. This promotion is not valid with other discounts, offers and promotions.

Promotion is valid from October 2012 to April 2013.


UniSIM shall not be held responsible for any changes in the promotion or quality of the products/services offered.

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**CONTEST GIVEAWAYS!**

Share with us your most memorable experience as a student of UniSIM. We are giving away exclusive UniSIM 8GB Credit Card-sized Flash Drive for the 10 best stories. Selected entries will be published in our quarterly newsletter. Your story should not be more than 150 words.

Simply email your story to alumni@unisim.edu.sg with the subject header “Contest Giveaway Issue 19” including your name, NRIC number and mobile number in your submission.

**Closing Date: October 19, 2012**

**Congratulations to the Contest Winners of Issue 18!**

- **KONG GAIK SUAN** SXXXX071J
- **CHUA AH ENG JOCELYN** SXXXX809H
- **ONG HUI SIEW** SXXXX315C
- **HO BAN CHYE** SXXXX299Z
- **YAP SWEE LING** SXXXX176I
- **PANG CHING CHING** SXXXX533C
- **WONG SIAO CHEN** SXXXX290B
- **MOHAMMAD FANDI BIN ADAM** SXXXX344I
- **TAN KIM JOO** SXXXX789I
- **JEFFRI BIN KHALID** SXXXX086C

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

### Graduates’ Night 2012

**Date:** October 13, 2012 (Saturday)

**Venue:** Movida @ St. James Power Station

**Time:** 7:00pm to 10:00pm

**Fee:** S$25 per ticket (Purchase four tickets at the special rate of S$90)

Check out more details at www.unisim.edu.sg/gradsnigh2012

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### HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS®

**Date:** October 20, 2012 (Saturday)

**Venue:** Universal Studios Singapore®

**Time:** 8:00pm to 12:00midnight (Collection of tickets at 7:00pm)

**Fee:** S$30 nett / Alumnus | S$48 nett / Guest (Published Public Rate: S$68/Adult)

Register at www.unisim.edu.sg/alumniportal

Each ticket is inclusive of entry to Universal Studio Singapore® from 8pm to midnight. Entry valid only for October 20, 2012. Ticket holders are entitled free unlimited rides at the Monster Rock, Accelerator, Battleship Galactica: HUMAN vs. CYLON, TRANSFORMERS The Ride: The Ultimate 3D Battle, Revenge of the Mummy, Canopy Flyer, Jurassic Park Rapids Adventure and Shrek 4-D Adventure & Enchanted Airways. Alumnus can invite up to 2 guests.

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### Healthy Living Starts With You!

**Date:** November 3, 2012 (Saturday)

**Venue:** SIM University, HQ, Block A, Level 2, LT 2.17B

**Time:** 2:00pm to 4:30pm

**Fee:** FREE for UniSIM alumni, S$5 per guest

*Alumni can invite up to 2 guests. Light snacks will be served during the break.

**Session 1**

**Healthy Bones Begin With You**

Brought to you by the Health Promotion Board, learn about osteoporosis, its risk factors and what you can do to prevent it. Find out how much calcium you need each day and discover the types of exercises that are good for building stronger bones.

**Session 2**

**Nutrition Throughout The Years**

Brought to you by the Changi General Hospital, learn about nutrition throughout the life cycle and nutritional issues faced from our youth to the twilight years.

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