A Personal Odyssey – Bring out the Best in You!

I could not help but ponder about myself recently while standing at my own crossroads. The signposts were many and I had to make choices. Risk-taking in my opinion is an essential part of life. The words of Shakespeare rattled from Hamlet’s soliloquy “To be, or not to be, that is the question” had played on my mind constantly over the past year. I am sure some of you would have experienced the thought of wanting some change in your lives at some point. It could be a career switch or further education.

So, I did the inevitable and took both pathways to roads less travelled. Early this year, I completed a “WSQ Advanced Certificate in Training and Assessment” or ACTA – a competency-based certification programme at the Institute for Adult Learning. I am now a certified trainer and this certification equips me with the essential skills to deliver training and assessments across different industries.

The other pathway was to change jobs; partly to experience new challenges and of course, get off the beaten track. Emboldened with faith as my shield and with my wife’s unconditional support, I made the brave decision to venture into the unknown. Change comes at a risk and a price, more or less. A golden opportunity to travel and experience the sea life, which is a love of mine, opened up. I grabbed the chance and now enjoy what I do as a Port Captain. I superintend ships at load ports around the region to ensure my company’s client interests are met. Notwithstanding, as an adult learner always, I enrolled for shipping courses scheduled in the latter half of this year. Life is A Never-ending Learning Process!

The idea of bringing out the best in you takes effort and courage, I must say. Fear is only natural when taking a risk. So, go on! Jump out of that plane (with a parachute, of course!) into the world of your dreams.

‘What is now proved was once only imagined.’
– William Blake

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

ALUMNI TAKE ON THE X-MEN

By Lee Siew Kuan

A high-spirited afternoon lay in wait as UniSIM’s alumni community gathered for the much-awaited annual Unwind Saturday event on May 24 at Golden Village’s Max Theatre in Vivocity.

It was heartwarming to have graduates like Ms Lim Liza, Class of 2010, BSc Marketing and Ms Elaine Chua, Class of 2005, BA English with Business, and many like them to remain connected to the vibe of UniSIM and supportive of the activities organised by the Alumni Relations Department.

Tickets to the blockbuster movie X-Men: Days of Future Past was highly sought-after with a full house turnout of alumni and guests. Cheers of joy and birthday wishes rang out around the theatre as our alumni took the opportunity to commemorate and celebrate SIM’s 50th Anniversary.

The presence of UniSIM President, Professor Cheong Hee Kiat, and senior management staff demonstrated the commitment of our leaders to the alumni community. In his opening address, Prof Cheong shared the good news that UniSIM has been selected to commence its full-time undergraduate programmes in 2014 and will host Singapore’s third Law School.

This event is highly popular among the alumni community as it provides a good platform for ex-classmates and friends to network and rejuvenate while staying abreast of the University’s latest developments.

It was also an event suitable for both young and the young at heart. Spotted at the occasion were many families with young children, who were impressed by the smooth flow of logistics and welcomed more of such activities.
The entrance to the lotus-inspired ArtScience Museum teases those who stroll by with two dinosaurs beckoning you to dare enter.

The ongoing dinosaur exhibition is like no other. It was more than just one specimen after another in glass showcases. They are connected by a compelling chronological story, depicting the evolution of life, as we know it to be.

As visitors enter the museum, roars bellow from behind a black curtain gives you an auditory perception of what is yet to come.

Visitors are guided through the culculus-like interstitial space of the lower level of museum towards the main highlight of the exhibition through the various modes such as media, graphic and mobile displays, and even a Dinosaurs: Dawn to Extinction mobile app. The app has a running commentary and interesting games to guide you along the way.

This exhibition brings together the fossils of those that baffle us even till today from the American Museum of Natural History and artwork by Peter Trusler.

As visitors move from plinth to plinth, strategically-placed lights and gobo effects are projected onto suspended ceiling shares to create an underwater environment of the Precambrian period.

The narrative then progresses onto the Triassic period and beyond, as the lighting mimics the gradual shifts from daytime to dusk, then to moonlight scenes lit by Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights.

Light projections are just a few of the many creative ways that lead visitors from one period to another. Tied together with ambient sounds, encompassed by a smooth transition of one chronological period to another, it leaves one to wonder, when any of those snarling fossils or fleshed out models might just jump out!

This is an interactive and multimodal exhibition that can be enjoyed by one and all. Do bring the family and let your senses be enthralled before it ends.

The objective of the seminar was for participants to understand more about proper foot care and the requirement for good, well-fitting shoes that help wearers avoid or alleviate problems with their feet. Prior to his session, Owen invited everyone to try out a foot scanner which is used to assess pressure distribution and foot motion. From the individualised foot scans, he patiently explained that the analysis can be used for purposes such as customising shoes that provide whole body support including preventing foot and other bodily injuries.

Besides bodily support, proper footwear and foot care accessories can help alleviate common foot problems such as plantar fasciitis, bunions, heel pain, corns, callus, ingrown toe nails and foot odour amongst others. He cited examples of how footwear with adjustable straps in the forefoot could well accommodate wide feet and bunions, and foot orthoses such as cushioned insoles are helpful for relieving pain caused by corns and heel callus.

Other than foot accessories, Owen also advised that many foot problems could be avoided by adopting simple measures. For instance, toenails should be cut straight across rather than being trimmed too short or if the edges are rounded, as this practice may cause the nail to curl downward and grow into the skin. Another common foot issue is odour due to excessive perspiration and subsequent bacteria breakdown. This can be minimised by a daily change of shoes. Shoes should be allowed to dry for two to three days after each wear. Hence, it makes practical sense for one to ideally own three to five pairs of shoes so as to accommodate alternate wear and minimise unwanted odours.

The talk was beneficial for many whom I spoke to and especially for Ms Yen Chow, BSc Computer Science, Class of 2004, who particularly enjoyed the speaker’s refreshing canour and was “wowed” by his extensive knowledge on foot-related issues.

As for me, I left the seminar feeling inspired and definitely more aware on how to keep my feet “happy”.

I recently relaxed on a Saturday afternoon attending a unique seminar on foot care. Conducted by Mr Owen Oo, a Podorthist from Arch Angel, it was held on the May 3 at UniSIM and was well-received by our alumni and their guests.
Home – where you are always welcome

Dear Alumni,

This year, SIM celebrates its 50th Anniversary. UniSIM, one of the three entities within the Group, has been in the family for nine years. As we celebrate this golden jubilee, we would like to invite YOU – our alumni – to share in celebrating the joys of achievement. For the first time, UniSIM and SIM Global Education are coming together for a combined SIM Alumni Homecoming dinner. It will be held on Friday, July 11, at the SIM Campus Grand Hall (now transformed to “ballroom ambience” standard). Thanks to all who have supported and registered for the event. We look forward to welcoming you home!

For those of you who are unable to join us, you can still participate in other upcoming events as we will have a slew of these in the coming months. There is also a dedicated SIM 50th Anniversary tab on the UniSIM homepage that carries many exciting event details and sharing of memories by alumni, faculty, students and staff. Please feel free to share yours too.

SIM has been growing from strength to strength. To accommodate the rapid expansion we have added two new blocks to the main campus building. As UniSIM gears up to welcome our first cohort of full-time students in August and to cater to the commencement of the third Law School, we should be seeing further campus developments.

For the more senior alumni amongst you who have completed your studies some years back and may not have visited recently, you would be amazed at the changes, especially in the last couple of years. So, do join us for upcoming alumni activities. As part of the UniSIM family, you are always welcome at home!

Best wishes,

Evelyn Chong
Director, Office of Student and Alumni Relations

FAD 2014: Building Knowledge, Inspiring Others

More than 600 associate lecturers, SIM Governing Council members, UniSIM and SIM Global Education (SIM GE) Board members, and staff attended the annual Faculty Appreciation Dinner (FAD) held at Mandarin Orchard Singapore on March 22. This dinner was organised to express SIM’s deep appreciation for all the lecturers’ efforts and contribution towards the success of SIM GE and UniSIM, and to commemorate SIM’s 50th Anniversary.

Twenty-five associates and faculty also received awards for their teaching. Among them, eight were given the SIM Teaching Excellence Award for their outstanding teaching and dedication to their students.

In his speech, Professor Cheong Hee Kiat, President of UniSIM, said: “Many have contributed to SIM’s success. You, our associate lecturers, should take pride and satisfaction that you are a significant part of that ‘many’. SIM’s success would not have been possible if not for the expertise, dedication and services of all of you. You have made an impact, transformed lives and helped individuals fulfil their hopes and “dreams”.

Join us as we celebrate 50 years of ‘Fulfilling Aspirations’ and more on www.SIM50.edu.sg.
UniSIM has opened up the notion of romantic possibilities in life too besides lifelong learning!

Not only did Mr Raphael Ang Bing Xian and Ms April Sim Pei Yun graduate in 2009 with a BSc in Psychology (with April getting her honours degree a year later), they excelled even further with a promise of love towards each other with marriage vows! They eventually tied the knot in March this year.

Raphael and April met in 2007 during their first tutorial. April was slightly late for class. She took a seat next to Raphael as Cupid dictated. Sparks ignited six to seven months later and the rest is history.

“We decided to form a study group (with) other classmates,” explained April as to how they eventually dated.

The bonding amongst this group of friends was fine but the chemistry between the pair was even finer like all good things in life! Private movie dates and dinners soon spun off from weekend group outings. Affection gestated and the transition from being ‘just friends’ to being ‘the significant other’ flowed seamlessly like a flowering bud that blossomed into a full blown romance.

“We just got closer and closer with all the outings... and she was receptive to my overtures,” described Raphael on their eventual courtship. He teased: “It’s probably because she could not resist my charms.” April chortled fondly in agreement.

Their love story may be unique in the social life of part-time adult undergraduates. The camaraderie found within that particular study group during the early semesters fizzled out gradually in the following years according to Raphael.

“We were new here; we were eager to make friends,” Raphael mused. “Perhaps, the stress of juggling work and studies had worn out the novelty of part-time university life. Connection between students could have become more incidental as a result”, reflected Raphael.

April had a different perspective. “I still made friends in my final year,” commented April, who had remained in touch with one of them who eventually became her colleague.

Of course, their individual decision to study psychology at UniSIM had a good outcome for the couple. It proved to be the turning point as their lives began to intertwine as “fate” dictated. Psychology was the binding interest and pull factor for these two Information Technology diploma graduates with Raphael working in a freight-forwarding company whilst April was a teacher in a school for children with special needs.

Undergraduate years at UniSIM were a tough balancing act for both of them.

They were often deprived of sleep or leisure to ensure that they kept up with their studies and family commitments. To top it all was the additional remedial training Raphael had to undergo as a result of not being “fit” enough that took a toll. Yet their lives were enriched, through the acquisition of knowledge and especially through the meaningful relationship forged between the two lovebirds.

And UniSIM, they agreed, is a value-added quality-driven institution of higher learning where adult learners are given opportunities to pursue their dreams.

“I will probably return to UniSIM to pursue a Masters in Counselling or Social Work,” reflected April on the possibility of furthering her studies. Classes are scheduled on weekends so work commitments will not be affected much.

Raphael currently works for Manulife and April is with the National University Hospital’s Administrative Department. They are still taking a breather after their whirlwind wedding and engaged with ongoing renovations to their new home. Studies have taken a backseat for the moment.

We will wait for this “made in UniSIM couple” to return to their studies with UniSIM and be an inspiration to undergraduates and alumni alike.
Professor Cham Tao Soon retires as Chancellor and Chairman of UniSIM; Succeeded by Mr Gerard Ee

Professor Cham Tao Soon, the founding Chancellor and Board of Trustees’ Chair of UniSIM, has retired after nine years at the helm. Succeeding him in both roles on May 16 is Mr Gerard Ee, who had just stepped down from his post as Chairman of the SIF Governing Council.

Prof Cham was instrumental in the setting up of UniSIM in 2005, with a mandate from the Ministry of Education (MOE) to pioneer private university education for working adults. Under his strong leadership, UniSIM has established itself as a university of choice for continuing education. The University is poised to play a bigger role in supporting the nation’s manpower development with its recent appointment to host Singapore’s third Law School, as well as to provide full-time government-subsidised undergraduate degree studies.

During Prof Cham’s tenure, UniSIM established a strong quality system and mindset, and, together with its graduates, earned recognition from the government, industry and employers. In 2008, MOE approved subsidies of up to 40% of tuition fees for UniSIM students; these were subsequently increased to 55% in 2011. Many of our alumni have benefitted from this generous funding from the Government. In 2012, MOE also extended government bursaries, tuition fee and study loans to UniSIM students. Many partnerships were formed with leading industry players to offer programmes that are robust and relevant. Employers also recognise UniSIM graduates through higher pay and better career progression.

Ahead of his time, Prof Cham mandated the University’s strategic focus on e-learning as the primary mode of delivery. This has strengthened the “anytime, anywhere” offering of UniSIM’s programmes and provided enhancement to students’ learning. Under his leadership, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in a large field of disciplines, including those catering to niche and emerging needs such as gerontology and early childhood education, were started. UniSIM also embarked on flagship areas of research in gerontology, human factors, service excellence and technology-assisted learning. UniSIM’s student enrolment more than doubled, from 6,000 in 2006 to 13,000 in 2014.

Professor Cheong Hee Kiat, President of UniSIM, said: “We are very grateful to Professor Cham for his leadership, unwavering support, counsel and encouragement to the UniSIM Management throughout his years as Chancellor and Chairman. On behalf of everyone at UniSIM, we thank him for his contributions to the University.”

New UniSIM Chancellor and Chairman, Mr Gerard Ee, is Chairman of the Canossian School for the Hearing Impaired, St. Joseph’s Institution, Eastern Health Alliance and Changi General Hospital. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants and is its current President. He is also on the boards of EDB Investments Pte Ltd, MOH Holdings Pte Ltd, and others. Other previous appointments included the Chairman of the Public Transport Council, President of the National Council of Social Services and President of the Automobile Association of Singapore. Mr Ee has chaired an extensive range of social service organisations and programmes which include juvenile rehabilitative centres, grassroots organisations, schools, and various programmes for the elderly and youth.
Flash Your Alumni Card To Enjoy These Special Deals:

**10%** discount applicable to any regular-priced footwear purchase.

**Participating outlets:**
- 16 Purvis Street #01-01 Singapore
- The Star Vista | #01-36 1 Vista Exchange Green Singapore

Promotion is valid till March 31, 2015.

**ZALORA**

For **18%** off first purchase, use code: *SIMALUMNI*

For **12%** off subsequent purchase, use code: *SIMA12*

Promotion is valid till December 31, 2014.

**Enjoy the following discount:**
- **10%** off Sentosa Islander Membership
  - Individual: U.P. S$25 per year
  - Family: U.P. S$50 per year

Visit [www.islander.com.sg](http://www.islander.com.sg) and key in the promotion code **“USM11ZU”** for Individual Membership or **“UNSWASM”** for Family Membership on the payment page to enjoy the discount.

Promotion is valid till March 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. Refer to the UniSIM Alumni website for more information.

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**CONTEST GIVEAWAYS!**

We are giving away 10 exclusive UniSIM Luggage Tags. Simply SMS the answers to the two questions below to 9113 6795 in the following format:

*Example: Newsletter S012345678 alumni@unisim.edu.sg Answers for Q1 and Q2.*

**QUESTIONS**

1. Which year did Raphael and April first meet?
2. List down any three common foot problems shared by Mr Owen Oo.

**Closing Date: July 21, 2014.**

**Congratulations to the Contest Winners of Issue 25!**

- CHANG KOK KEONG JOHN  SXXXX211D
- HARRIS BIN ISMAIL  SXXXX594F
- CHAN SOOK YIN, CONSTANCE  SXXXX583H
- MOHAMED HIZAMMUDDIN BIN MOHAMED YUSOF  SXXXX553B
- CHOW MEI YONG  SXXXX369E
- TAY BOON KWONG ROLAND  SXXXX7511
- WEE KIM HUAT LEONARD  SXXXX717C
- YIEW MENG FEI VICTOR  SXXXX025H

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

**UniSIM Alumni versus Student Bowling Competition**

**Date:** June 28, 2014

**Venue:** SAFRA Toa Payoh

**Time:**
- 10:00 am – Registration & Breakfast
- 10:30 am – Start of Competition / Fun Play
- 12:30 pm – End of Competition / Fun Play & Prize Presentation Ceremony

**Fee:**
- $10.00 per Alumnus
- $15.00 per Guest

* Above prices are inclusive of game play, rental of shoes, breakfast and 7% GST.
* No refund for bowler who brings his/her own pair of shoes.

**Registration:** [www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events](http://www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events)

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**1-Day JB Durian Delight Trip**

**Date:** July 12, 2014

**Venue:** UniSIM Campus, SIM HQ, Clementi Road (Tour will start and end here)

**Time:**
- 6:30 am – Assemble and register at SIM HQ, Clementi Road
- 7:00 am – Coach departs for Johor via the Tuas Second Link
- 9:00 pm – Estimated time of arrival at SIM HQ, Clementi Road

* Above timings are estimates and subject to traffic condition.

**Fee:**
- Alumni – $45 per person
- Alumni Guest – $59 per person

* Each alumnus is allowed to register a maximum of two seats only, inclusive of the alumnus’ seat.

**Registration:** [www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events](http://www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events)