Olá from Rio!

Highlights

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Win!
8GB Credit Card-sized Flash Drive
An Autumn’s Tale of Growth & Transformation

As September rolls in, we, alumni members, will have plenty to cheer about as we can look forward to more events that have been planned for the rest of the year. We could volunteer our services at the Mid-Autumn Festival celebrations by the Harmony Activity Centre & Geylang East Neighbourhood Link to be held on Sept 13. The community outreach by alumni for this event is in its second consecutive year. We envision growth in this aspect of alumni involvement by the Alumni Relations Department.

An Alumni Family Day – slated to be an annual affair – will be held at the Singapore Zoo this year and is an opportunity for alumni to catch up with friends and family. Health issues concern everyone, and as such, health talks and screenings have become a regular fixture in the alumni calendar. Many more activities are in the pipeline for the rest of the year.

These events have always been well-attended and tickets are often sold out well in advance. SIM University (UniSIM) subsidises these events substantially and the Alumni Relations Department does its best to ensure the continuing growth in relationships between the University and its alumni. Benefits such as special deals for alumni to purchase items or services with various vendors are always sought after. These events and benefits aim, not only, to strengthen the connectivity among the alumni, students and UniSIM, but also the society at large.

Journalist-Author-Speaker Malcolm Gladwell’s response when asked what message he wanted people to take away after reading one of his bestselling books Outliers: The Story of Success (2008) sums up well what UniSIM sets out to do for and with its alumni. He said: “What we do as a community, as a society, for each other, matters as much as what we do for ourselves. It sounds a little trite, but there’s a powerful amount of truth in that, I think.”

UniSIM’s alumni relations has grown and transformed over the years. I believe that we will continue to see and enjoy the fruits of labour being harvested for many years to come as the relation keeps growing. And I encourage all alumni members to support UniSIM in realising its aim by actively participating in the events it organises for us.


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

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UniSIM Alumni vs Student Bowling Competition

The UniSIM Alumni vs Student Bowling Competition 2014 held on June 28 at the SuperBowl, SAFRA Toa Payoh, attracted about 50 alumni and students. The warm response to this event was not surprising as bowling provides an excellent platform for enthusiasts to bond, as well as have fun.

The participants started to bowl competitively after enjoying a sumptuous buffet breakfast spread and a warm-up trial session. The players competed in pairs for the top prize, which would go to the team with the highest pinfall total of three consecutive games. Bowling lanes resonated as the balls found their mark and struck down the pins with a thunderous roar!

Mr Kanesan S/O Narayanasamy, Diploma Management Studies, Class of 2008, who also participated in last year’s competition, is a keen bowler after picking up the game in his late 20s. Sharing some tips on bowling, he said that one should fix his eyes on the arrow marks on the lanes when bowling as these provide a more accurate assessment as to where the ball will hit the pins. He said that consistency in bowling accurately is a great asset. He added that he would always feel a great sense of achievement whenever all the pins are struck down with the first throw in a frame. In bowling terms, this is known as a “strike”.

After the total scores of all competing teams were tabulated, the event culminated with a prize-giving ceremony for the top three pairs and individual bowlers. Mr Vincent Ang, BSc Business, Class of 2010, and his guest Mr Theodor Tan, won the competition with total pinfalls of 1,156. Mr Goh Chee Boon, BSc Technology with Electronics, Class of 2007, and his guest Mr James Ui, was the first runner-up while Mr Aboul Rahman, BSc Mathematics, Class of 2006, and his guest Mr Khairul Saleh, came in as the second runner-up.

Ms Lim Swee Leng, a BSc Human Factors and Safety programme student, won the Ladies’ Top Individual title with the highest game score of 182 while Mr Vincent Ang won the Men’s Top Individual title with the highest game score of 233.

A shout out to all bowling enthusiasts: Do join us for next year’s UniSIM Alumni vs Students Bowling Competition!

Ms Tan Cheng Hui, BSc Marketing, Class of 2013, commented: “I came here for the fun of the game!”
When one imagines a durian trip, one would immediately think about the aroma, the bittersweet or sweet taste and creamy texture of each and every delectable durian. The Alumni Relations Department recently organised an unlimited durian tasting trip that offered more than that while keeping it relaxing for the participants.

Before the sun was up on July 12, 44 alumni and guests – all durian lovers, myself included – were already wide awake and gathered at UniSMA, eager to set off for the Causeway for our little adventure. We met our Malaysian guide, Mr Singh, who after the usual formalities gave us an insight into the meaning of some Malaysian cities. Did you know that Johor Bahru translates into “The New Gem” whereas Kuala Lumpur is the “Muddy River Junction”?

The journey seemed short as our guide dispensed more of such juicy nuggets and before long, we arrived at Kampung Indah Kempsa for a breakfast of authentic kampung nasi lemak with big, appetising, freshly fried mushroom grown at a local farm.

We moved on to Yong Peng – the highlight of the trip – for the much anticipated “king of fruits” buffet at an actual durian plantation.

Bird’s nest, another delicacy, was next on our menu. Stopping at a factory, we learnt how bird’s nests are harvested and its nutritional value. We also savoured an exotic bird’s nest concoction – boiled with wolfberries and longan – for just RM35! We were also spoilt for choice with the many different types of “piahs” – a Chinese snack – and other pastries! An hour or so later, we headed to Aeon Tebrau City Shopping Centre for more shopping. The trip ended with a sumptuous seven-course Chinese dinner at a halal restaurant!

At the end of the trip, Ms Phyllis Lee, an alumna from the Master of Gerontology programme, Class of 2014, commented that the trip was enjoyable and well-planned. Mr Simon Ng, who graduated from OUIK's BSc Computer Science with Management, Class of 2000, quipped that “it will be better if the next trip can be two days”.

We savoured the “king of fruits”, rambutans, mangosteens amongst others, which were consumed in no time!

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It is said that “A picture is worth a thousand words”, and 35 of our alumni members and guests discovered just how true it was when they visited the Trick Eye Museum on Aug 23. This attraction arrived at the Resort World Sentosa’s Waterfront in June this year.

The Trick Eye Museum – one of Korea’s top museums – opened its doors in 2010 and has well-established museums in Seoul, Jeju and Busan. The Trick Eye Museum Singapore is the fourth addition and the first of its kind outside Korea. The museum’s name is derived from the French word “Trompe-foeil” or “Deceive the eye” which is the art technique that miraculously transforms 2-D paintings into 3-D paintings, as well as the surrounding environment, through optical illusions. The paintings on the museum walls, floors and ceilings, pop out to create an illusion, making them life-like.

The artworks, which visitors are encouraged to touch and interact with, featured here are not repetitive of the other museums as they have been localised to suit the Singapore context. There are six themed galleries – “SAFARI Kingdom”, “Star of CIRCUS”, “World of MASTERPIECES”, “Love in WINTER”, “ADVENTURE Discovery” and “Dreams of FAIRY TALE”.

“Woah!”, “Wahs!”, “Smile!”, “Say ‘Cheese!’” and laughter rang out in the different galleries as our alumni members had a whale of a time with their loved ones. All of them were clicking away with their cameras while interacting and exploring the artworks and stepping inside the paintings to create their own everlasting memories of their visit through creative and imaginative poses.

It was definitely a treat for the eyes – tricked by illusions amidst reality!

An Alumnus and guest posing at one of the exhibits.
Up Close and Personal with the World Cup

By Charles Lee

Dennis had taken part in an essay writing contest organised by the Straits Times, in partnership with Komoco Motors, and won a 12-day sponsored trip to Brazil to watch three FIFA World Cup matches.

I met up with the 57-year-old Purchasing Manager at a coffeehouse in a heartlands mall to talk about his fortuitous win and experience in Brazil.

Lady Luck must have been smiling on you, Dennis! Most of us can only dream of watching a World Cup match in the host country. Tell us more about this contest.

I am attributing this to a delightful combination of luck, happenstance and some brain work. I was reading the Straits Times when this bold advertisement “Here’s a chance to Samba at the Maracana” attracted me to take part. All I needed to do was to submit a video or a picture, together with a short essay on why one should be picked for the trip.

By the time the judges finished reading my essay, they would probably understand the football “ louco” (“crazy” in Portuguese) fan that I am and perhaps this infatuation, fortunately, won me the lifetime opportunity to watch three matches, specifically the Columbia versus Uruguay and the Nigeria versus France matches – both Round of 16 matches – plus an enticing quarter-final match which involved France and Germany.

So, what was in that 100 word limit essay? It must have been challenging to describe your passion within such constraints.

I believe my love for football knows few limits and a ghostly encounter in 1974 when I had to go past a cemetery to Orchard Road to watch a World Cup match hosted by...
West Germany then must have topped my football-crazed experiences. I remembered feeling the chills as I approached the vicinity of the cemetery and experienced a spooky presence right behind me. Whether it was my wild imagination or dreaded fear, the adrenaline probably kicked in as I carried on walking bravely to the venue.

I was just a young lad then and looking back, it was worth every ounce of drooped perspiration and bated respiration! The team I supported won that match and made the whole experience even more climactic. It was also the first telecast of the World Cup in full colour, presented via satellite to Singaporeans that year.

Apart from that eerie encounter, I also wrote about my previous working stint in Brazil and how I fell in love with this beautiful country and expressed my desire to re-visit the football-worshiping country. I also wrote about watching every single World Cup match on television religiously ever since then.

Tell us more about your trip.
The win was worth a whopping $25,000! The trip was not entirely about football. Apart from the three matches, the agency that coordinated the trip took us sightseeing in Rio De Janeiro – Brazil’s second largest and heavily populated city. In Rio, as it is affectionately known, we visited the famous statue of Christ the Redeemer, which is regarded as one of the new Seven Wonders of the World.

We also visited Sugarloaf Mountain, a famous granite-quartz peak that resembles a sugar loaf. The mountain is about 400 meters high and to reach the peak, one has to take two consecutive cable car rides. The scenery is simply breathtaking because it offers 360 degree views of Rio and looks over the Atlantic Ocean. Whoo!

Copolacaba Beach should not be missed as well. It is the official site of the FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup and is lined with hotels, restaurants and nightclubs. Just imagine the Rio Carnival along the beach – get it!

We took a two-hour flight to Brasilia where we watched the Nigeria versus France match. Located along the Brazilian Highlands in the country’s central-west region, Brasilia is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

I hope that it does not come across that I am promoting Brazil as the next must-go holiday destination hee hee hee.

What was the World Cup atmosphere like in football-crazy Brazil?
Brazil first hosted the World Cup in 1950, with Uruguay as the eventual winner. You can imagine the hunger for Brazil to win the title on home soil with this second time as host.

But only one word can explain how I felt when I was inside the Maracana Stadium in Rio. High! It was like an adrenaline-rushed tremendous high! The cacophony of sounds and colours transports you to another world – a world where football is a religion in itself.

Within the realm of South American football, the Maracana has taken on mythical proportions and represents an almost impregnable fortress. Some of Brazil’s greatest ever players – Pele, Garrincha, Zico and Romario – have graced the hallowed ground where fanatical crowds of up to 180,000 mean that only the toughest fans survive in the cramped quarters.

Around the vicinity and within the stadium, thousands of spectators wore their favourite teams’ jersey colours and everyone’s mood was upbeat. In Brazil, the culture of soccer is imbued everywhere as they breathe and live football every day. It certainly surpassed the feeling of watching matches on a television screen.

What lesson(s) can we learn from the humiliating defeat of Brazil to Germany in the semi-finals that extinguished all hopes of it winning the World Cup?
It has been some time since the World Cup has ended and I believe that Brazil has already moved on. I believe the team is presently doing some kind of post-action review to determine what had gone wrong and perhaps salvage lost pride. Brazil’s defeat is a reality and will be a part of the football history.

Another lesson is the fact that we should always reflect on our mistakes and ensure that the same mistake will not occur again.

Who knows? Perhaps, Brazil may reclaim the championship four years later in Russia where I also hope to be... albeit out of my own pocket.

“Personally, I feel that what we can draw from this loss is to not be unwittingly deluded from past successes.

The upper hand can only be gained by being adequately prepared.

This principle applies to university life too.”
Add a dose of paranoia to your life

Dear Alumni,

We are already into Q3 of 2014 with half the year behind us. I hope that the first half had been good to and for you. If it had not been the best of times, the good news is that that is behind you and you will still have the next few months to look forward to or to make a difference.

This is where we need to remind ourselves once in a while that we should not be in the frame of mind that it's always "business as usual". When we are too comfortable or complacent, we will operate on autopilot mode and in the process, may not be aware of a looming crisis or exciting opportunities ahead. And that is bad. As a young officer fresh out of university, I had the privilege of learning from some bosses, the importance of keeping on our toes, more so when things have been running smoothly for a long while. One shared that that would be the time to shake things up or turn these upside down and inside out. That would give us new views and fresh perspectives. And better that we orchestrate it than have it forced upon us by changing circumstances. Another senior leader also recommended that we add a dose of paranoia in our lives, to ensure that we remain vigilant and aware of the changing landscape.

Some may think that the above would turn us into highly stressed individuals. But it need not be so. The magic is in finding the balance between maintaining stability and knowing when to initiate changes. It's not easy, but it would be worthwhile.

So for the rest of the year, I wish you some "business NOT as usual" moments and a tiny dose of paranoia in your lives!

Best wishes,

Evelyn Chong
Director, Office of Student and Alumni Relations

On July 11, UniSIM and SIM Global Education (SIM GE) joined hands to organise the first combined Homecoming for their alumni family held at the SIM Grand Hall.

The Guest-of-Honour was our alumna Ms Denise Phua, Deputy Chairman, Government Parliamentary Committee for Education (Graduate Diploma in Personnel Management, SIM, Class of 1985) while the event host was another well-known alumna, radio celebrity Ms Vernetta Lopez (Bachelor in Business Administration, RMIT, Class of 1994). This event attracted over 250 guests who included alumni and their guests, associates and staff.

Walking into the Grand Hall triggered many memories for alumni members. After all, this was one of the venues where they had once scratched their heads, suffered from cold sweats or perhaps, for that admirable handful, breezed through their examinations. Happily, it was also here where they celebrated their achievements as they attended their convocations with their fellow classmates, tutors and loved ones.

An easygoing and festive atmosphere filled the Grand Hall that night. Warm ambient lighting transformed the space, and the enormous circular overhead lights were impressive. Excellent music and dance performances by SIM GE students accompanied a fine buffet dinner where wine flowed and coffee was brewed on the spot. The sense of homecoming enconced with the profusion of thanksgiving and regaling of happy memories over the microphone and small talk all around was invaluable. During the event, we also celebrated SIM’s 50th anniversary and toasted to its contributions to Singapore’s nation-building.

Thank you UniSIM, SIM GE and SIM, for the wonderful gathering, for all the good that you have done and will surely continue to do!
Flash Your Alumni Card To Enjoy These Special Deals:

**The Waffle**

50% off the second waffle purchased in a single receipt.

Promotion is valid till December 31, 2014.

**Legoland Malaysia**

- 12% off Legoland Theme Park Package (Two-way Coach + Park Ticket + Coach Insurance)
- 5% off Legoland Theme Park + Water Park Package (Two-way Coach + Park Tickets + Coach Insurance)

Promotion is valid till December 31, 2014.

**Foot in**

10% off for any regular priced items.

Promotion is valid till December 31, 2014.

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 five exclusive UniSIM 8GB Credit Card-sized Flash Drive. Simply SMS the answers to the three questions below to 9113 6795 in the following format:

Newsletter PI number Email address
Example: Newsletter Q1234567 alumni@unisim.edu.sg Answers for Q1 and Q2.

**QUESTIONS**

Q1 During Dennis Tan’s trip to Brazil, one of the programmes was to visit the granite-quartz mountain that resembled a sugar loaf. How tall was the mountain?

Q2 Name the special guest who graced the SIM Homecoming Dinner.

Closing Date: October 18, 2014

For advertising enquiries, call 6248 9245 or email alumni@unisim.edu.sg
### Upcoming Events

**GRADUATES’ PARTY 2014**

**18 October Saturday 2.00 p.m.**

**Hotel Re! $20 (Alumnus) / $25 (Guest)**

- Purchase your tickets via Alumni Portal E-Services > Alumni Event Registration

**Registration:** www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events

**Dressed in your best and Rock 'n' Roll with us!**

**STAY Tuned! INTERSTELLAR**

Coming soon in November

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**Health Screening by Dayspring**

**Date:** November 8, 2014

**Venue:** SIM HQ, Level 3, SR B.3.09/3.10

**Time:** 8.30 am to 11.30 am

**Fee:** $8.00 (Alumnus) / $16.00 (Guest)

**Registration:** www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events

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**Oral Health = Overall Health? by JurongHealth**

**Date:** November 8, 2014

**Venue:** SIM HQ, Level 3, LT B.3.16

**Time:** 10:00 am to 11:00 am

**Fee:** Free for both alumnus and guest. (Tea reception provided)

**Registration:** www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events

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