Connecting UniSIM

December 2014 | Issue 28 | MCI (P) 072/03/2014

Life Begins at Forty

Highlights

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The Year in Review for 2014

As we head into the final month of 2014, it is significant to note that this has been a strong year for both alumni and alma mater. We have read about how our alumni achieved great strides in their endeavor to further their lifelong education, some getting hitched along the way while others experienced soccer fever during the World Cup!

As for our university, it was a time to reflect and reposition itself as a leading private institution of higher learning, opening pathways and meeting the needs of adult learners, fresh school leavers and industry. As a member of the SIM Group, UniSIM celebrated SIM’s 50th anniversary, and took time to reminisce the past and poise itself for the future. The official opening of the SIM Campus Development Phase 2 was another milestone to its legacy as it provided UniSIM and its ever-growing student population with more and better-equipped teaching and learning facilities, as well as sporting and recreational facilities.

We look forward to 2015 to be on an even more positive note.

Wishing all of our alumni a happy and healthy Holiday Season, and prosperous New Year!

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

Alumni Family Day at the Zoo

By Janet Yong

It was the perfect setting on a cloudy Sept 6 morning to spend UniSIM’s Alumni Family Day at the Singapore Zoo. Alumni, friends and family members gathered early and eagerly at the zoo’s entrance to collect their breakfast packets and tickets.

After breakfast, many headed towards the treetop trails where visitors could have breakfast with the granddaughter of the zoo’s former poster girl Ah Meng — a tradition handed down two generations ago by the zoo’s most famous and well-loved orangutan herself. Alumni members also had the opportunity to observe Siamang — a tailless, arboreal, black-furred gibbon native to the forests of Malaysia, Thailand and Sumatra — high on the treetops.

Further down the trail, the gharial, which looks like a crocodile with a pointed snout, quietly lurked in the waters waiting for its prey. Small-clawed otters could be seen next to the flamingoes as they greeted us with their loud quacks.

Alumni, who took the tram, were also able to see baboons, white tigers and pygmy hippos swimming under water, followed by rhinos, giraffes and lions.

Our zoo adventure ended at the Frozen Tundra — the zoo’s newest exhibit built to resemble the arctic habitat. Throngs of curious visitors, including our alumni, waited patiently for the polar bears, racoon dogs and wolverines to emerge from the ice caves for their feeding.

Three of our alumni — Ms Cathy, Ms Ivana Dharma, Ms Elen Limarsono, all of whom completed their Diploma in Management Studies in 2010, shared: “we came to the zoo for the fun and for the gathering.”

Cathy added: “I enjoyed this Family Day because I like animals. It is more refreshing than shopping! Some animals like the racoon dogs, pygmy hippo and polar bears, are quite cute. The bird show is also so interesting. The zoo is a good place for a Family Day event, especially for those with children as they are curious about animals.” Cathy and her two friends were so happy and engrossed that they remained at the zoo until 5pm.

Ms Liew Mei Lin, BSc Computer Science with Management, Class of 2000, brought her eight-year old son Edom, who addressed himself as “Junior Mr Low”, with her. He said: “Kidzworld Rainforest is a water fantasy world! I enjoyed the food, as well as the animal shows featuring sea lions and elephants.” He also had the opportunity to take videos so that he could narrate his encounter with animals to his friends.

Family Day was truly enjoyable for our Alumni community. We hope to see you next year!
It is Mid-Autumn Festival! What better way to celebrate it than to volunteer our services to the residents of Aljunied Crescent for a great time of fun and games! Due to the resounding success of last year’s event, the Macpherson Aljunied Crescent Zone 2 RC, Geylang East Home for the Aged and Geylang East Neighbourhood Link, once again hosted a non-profit community event on Sept 13 that certainly brought smiles to the young and elderly residents.

This year, a total of 24 alumni and students jumped at the opportunity to experience the spirit of giving of both their time and effort. There was a great spirit of camaraderie among the volunteers as they teamed up to set up various game booths and tested each game personally that day. Laughter could be heard all around as the volunteers battled it out, for fun.

At around 8pm, the real fun started as throngs of children rushed to the different game booths with their parents in tow. Squeals of laughter could be heard when they jumped, aimed, tossed, fished, bowled or assembled at each game booth, hoping to get a stamp for each successful game play. The children were rewarded with a goodies bag when they had collected enough stamps. But our alumni volunteers received the best reward of the night, and that was the joy of seeing every child enjoying himself/herself that evening.

The event ended yet again with a resounding success this year! Even though the volunteers were exhausted, they had provided a memorable Mid-Autumn Festival celebration to the residents. “So many people were happy tonight. It’s all worth it,” said Ms Rossana Chen, an alumnus from the Master of Counselling programme, Class of 2012.

If you would like to be rewarded with an unforgettable experience as a volunteer, do look out for out next community event. It will be worth your while!

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**SASS Alumni Dinner**

It was full house at SASS’s annual Alumni Dinner at Kintamani Indonesian Restaurant, Furama Riverfront Hotel on Oct 30. There was an excellent turnout of enthusiastic alumni looking to reconnect with their old course-mates and favourite lecturers. A total of 118 alumni and staff got together for an evening of good food and great company, and there were even some representatives from the pioneer graduate batch of the Open University Degree Programme.

The atmosphere during the dinner was warm and welcoming, as friends chatted excitedly over plates of delicious Indonesian cuisine. Heads of Programme and associate faculty also got to catch up with their former students and learn how their degrees have helped them advance in their careers and lives.

It was a night to remember, as the SASS alumni proved once again how special the quality and strength of the bonds forged within UniSIM are.
Official Opening of SIM HQ Campus Development Phase 2

By SIM Corporate Communications

On Nov 28, SIM marked two important milestones: its 50th year since its founding and the official completion of Phase Two of Campus Development. To commemorate these landmarks, SIM hosted Mr Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry, and other guests from various government agencies, businesses and industry associations at a gala dinner that evening.

Guests at the new Performing Arts Theatre were treated to an introductory light show of SIM’s campuses over the years. Following this, the minister and other guests were given a tour of SIM’s new campus facilities such as the multi-purpose sports hall, financial training centre and the newly-unveiled SIM Heritage Gallery.

Speaking at the dinner, Minister Lim highlighted SIM’s contributions to local tertiary education, saying: “SIM has played a critical role throughout Singapore’s development by providing flexible and sector-relevant education and training options alongside our autonomous universities and many have benefitted from such an experience.

“Over the past 50 years, graduates of SIM’s programmes have been among the pioneers of Singapore’s industrialisation drive after independence. SIM has indeed grown with Singapore. And looking ahead, I have no doubt that the current graduates of SIM will play an important role in the next phase of Singapore’s development. I hope that SIM will continue to do a good job, and wish SIM well as it moves with Singapore into the next 50 years.”

Two buildings named after SIM’s early founders – Dr Richard Eu and Professor You Poh Seng – were also launched at the event. Mr Tan Soo Jin, Chairman of the SIM Governing Council, emphasised their contributions in his address: “SIM has risen to every occasion to support Singapore’s growth through manpower development. We have been able to do that because of the strong focus on our social mission undergirded by the pioneering and innovative spirit modelled by all our leaders.”

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Presenting our New Calling Card for 2015

Dear Alumni,

Goodbye 2014. Let’s look ahead and design our “calling card” for 2015!

2015 will be a special year for UniSIM as we celebrate our 10th anniversary. UniSIM has come very far in just a decade. Established with the mission of providing working adults with the opportunity of fulfilling their dream of a tertiary education, today UniSIM has programmes targeted at both full and part-time students as well as plans for a Law School within the University. In a space of 10 years, we have a credible alumni community of 23,000 which is ever increasing.

In 2015, the Office of Student and Alumni Relations aims to add the following to our calling card:

- Involve and invite our alumni to UniSIM’s 10th anniversary celebrations
- Partner with our Schools to broaden and deepen our alumni engagement
- Offer a wider range of activities to reach out to a diverse alumni community with varied interests
- Actively promote alumni and student integration to expand networking opportunities for all
- Embark on a Graduates’ Survey (with your active participation)

We will achieve these aims with your support and active participation. To ensure that we reach you with the latest University developments and offers, do remember to update any change in particulars or contact details online via the alumni portal. Do respond to this call-to-action!

We’ve presented our calling card for 2015. I urge you to work on yours too!

Wishing all alumni a HAPPY, HEALTHY and HARMONIOUS 2015!

Best wishes,

Evelyn Chong
Director, Office of Student and Alumni Relations
“Good afternoon and welcome!” Such warm greetings reverberated throughout the entrance to the ballroom of Hotel Re! – uniquely set in the lush outdoors and nestled at the base of Pearl’s Hill, minutes away from Chinatown – on Oct 18. Friendly and retro-styled hotel staff and volunteers lined the reception table while giving out goodie bags to over 100 graduates from the Class of 2014, alumni and guests.

The “Rock-n-Roll” party roared to a start with the famous Gangnam Style dance challenge, which saw partygoers divided into two groups to battle it out for an exciting prize. This was followed by a welcome speech by the event’s organising committee Chairperson, Mr Muhammad Farhan Bin Azahari, BA Psychology with Sociology, Class of 2014.

The crowd cheered and applauded when UniSIM President, Professor Cheong Hee Kiat took to the stage and shared: “Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean says that UniSIM is the important missing piece in the Singapore education system and economy.” Professor Cheong also urged the new graduates to prove themselves in society for the sake of fellow and future graduates. He shared that UniSIM would have more graduate programmes and short courses geared towards the economy and well into the 21st century.

After presenting tokens of appreciation to the various generous sponsors, guests were kept on their toes with hilarious games and lucky draws before being invited to feast on a good spread high tea buffet.

Besides enjoying savoury food and mingling with great companions, many ventured into other side activities such as picture-taking at the instant photo printing booth or caricature done on key chains and wire art. There was much excitement at the photo booth as many tried wacky poses with different groups of friends, all hoping to have the most memorable shots as souvenirs.

More exciting games and lucky draws awaited the group as the event’s versatile emcee took them through the afternoon. One graduate, Ms Ong Suh Hui Melody, Bachelor of Communication, Class of 2014, exclaimed: “It was a great time for meeting more people, and I particularly enjoyed the games.”

Similarly, Mr Su Chaotian, Bachelor of Accountancy, Class of 2014, who came with five of his classmates, agreed that it was a much-awaited chance to get together as they had been separated when they attended different tutorial classes during their undergraduate days. It was definitely a memorable day for Mr Su as he was one of the lucky draw winners.

Indeed, it was a well-deserved celebratory party and a jolly fun time for the new graduates of the Class of 2014!

Many thanks to the following sponsors:
This endearing cliché is often quoted as an encouragement to those reaching middle age. In our case, this is not just mere rhetoric; it literally happened to one of our recent alumni – Mdm Rubiyah Bte Mohd Ghav, BA Malay Language and Literature, Class of 2014.

Many UniSIM alumni had their second or third chance at obtaining a degree well into their adult working life. For Mdm Rubiyah, life indeed began at 40 when she embarked on an exciting journey – a journey not only culminating with a coveted degree for herself, but also the achievement of being the top student of her cohort, where she was honoured with the ILCO Pte Ltd Gold Medal.

Mdm Rubiyah will tell you that it did not come easy, and there were many sacrifices she had to make along the way. But her adept balancing act did the trick. It was all about the fine juggling of commitments with her studies, her work, and duty as a wife, mother and homemaker, she declared.

That is a tall order for anyone. Thus the support she garnered and received throughout those years will never be forgotten and she shall forever be grateful to her family, colleagues, friends and lecturers who had supported her in various ways.

Though the degree is freshly minted, she declared that she will not even think of resting on her laurels. Such is her tenacity, which resonates well with UniSIM’s culture of lifelong learning. Currently, she is an adjunct relief teacher in a secondary school and she harbours thoughts of teaching Malay language and literature in a junior college.

Surely the BA in her hand is a huge step closer to her ambition. Indeed, the degree has boosted not only her skill but her confidence; such that another loftier mission is being planned. And that is to instill greater interest in the Malay language and culture amongst the younger generation.

Mdm Rubiyah kindly shared a few gems of valuable experience that she had gained during her studies. According to her, to achieve academic success, one needs to be very focused. It is important to prioritise whatever is important at a particular point in time. In her case, she has a 15-year-old son whose adolescence she carefully nurtured and managed while pursuing her studies.

Another thoughtful gem she shared is on her strong belief that age must never be a determinant when pursuing one’s desires. It is all about starting with small baby steps and embarking on bigger strides as we go along. This is her guiding principle in life. Indeed, Mdm Rubiyah is always mindful of her favourite adage by the Chinese philosopher Lao-tzu.

Of course, life is not only about work and study. Mdm Rubiyah finds time to exercise and socialise as these are also important to her well-being. She is an aerobic enthusiast and joins her friends to work out at the Senja-Cashew Community Centre. She invites anyone who is keen to join her. I am sure that those who can, will find her very engaging and with a pleasant smiley disposition, to boot.
In her spare time, Mdm Rubiyah also indulges by reading her favourite Malay novels written by local writer Mr Anwar Osman. Perhaps those of us who are like-minded can get in touch with her to form an alumni interest group!

Mdm Rubiyah is truly a beacon for our alumni to emulate. She possesses a vibrant personality and has boundless energy to inspire others. Mdm Rubiyah revealed to us that her dream of obtaining a Masters is now finally in the works. Her application to pursue a graduate degree in Sociolinguistics at the University of Malaya has been successful. For his unstinting encouragement and sponsorship of this and during her undergraduate studies, Mdm Rubiyah is especially thankful to UniSIM’s Head of the Malay Language programme, Associate Professor Lim Beng Soon.

The Masters programme would take her two years to complete full-time and she has had to quit her current job to accommodate it. Nonetheless, Mdm Rubiyah is now busily and happily making some relocation plans, including logistical matters such as commuting and lodging. These loom large right now. We are sanguine, however, that our own alumna Mdm Rubiyah, having gone through the UniSIM rigour, and with her steadfastness, will be able to see it through successfully and achieve yet another higher accolade for herself, her family and be an inspiration to our alumni community.

We wish her and her family every happiness and success.
Health Screening by Dayspring Health Screeners

By Janet Yong

Are we at the best of our health, without any medical issues or history at any point in our lives? Do we need to take preventive measures? These were perhaps the questions our alumni were concerned with when they attended the health screening by Dayspring on Nov 8. UniSIM’s Alumni Relations Department decided to arrange this second health screening following the good response of the first. It was indeed a worthwhile programme as our alumni were given a special price for the basic package and could bring a guest along.

The basic screening package covered coronary heart disease risk assessment, body mass index, blood pressure, fasting glucose measurement, full venous fasting lipid profile, and individual health report.

Mr Kuah Say Eng Deric, BSc Information Technology and Business (ERP), Class of 2010, who found out about the event via email, opted for the most comprehensive “Fluorite Package”, which included screens for cardiac profile, chronic gastritis, gastric ulcers, and tumour marker tests for cancer. Mr Kuah, who goes for an annual health screening, came for the screening at UniSIM even though his company offered similar packages for their staff as he had missed those due to time constraints in his work schedule. He said: “I would say the items are different. This is a very comprehensive screening package, and I will definitely be back again for the third screening, given the competitive pricing.”

Ms Petrina Sharmila, Bachelor of Early Childhood Education with Management, Class of 2014, who knew of the event through this newsletter, shared that her company does not provide health screening packages. She chose the “Diamond Package” for coverage of tests on major organs, which includes hepatitis A & B, thyroid disorders and key tumour marker screens. When asked what she thought about UniSIM organising these screenings, she said: “it is very appropriate for the alumni. We are very concerned about our health and well-being, especially with our age range of twenties to early thirties.”

Don’t fret if you had missed this screening. You can visit the Dayspring Corporate Wellness Centre at Paragon, where corporate rates are extended to our alumni.

Oral Health Talk by Jurong Health

By Janet Yong

A very interesting talk about oral healthcare was conducted on Nov 8 by Adjunct Professor Adrian Yap from UniSIM’s School of Science and Technology, and Director of Dental Services at Jurong Health.

Professor Yap started by stating why teeth are important. According to him, the teeth are to help us eat, chew, speak and socialise with a smile. He added: “The mouth is the window to the rest of the body. It can show signs of a healthy body or its deficiencies and infections. Illnesses may appear first through mouth lesions or other oral problems.”

So, how can we ensure oral health? By brushing our teeth at least twice a day, flossing daily and replacing our toothbrush every three to four months, he advised.

Professor Yap shared that our mouths are full of bacteria. These bacteria, along with mucus and other particles, constantly form a sticky, colourless or yellowish plaque on the teeth. Brushing and flossing help get rid of this plaque. Plaque that is not removed can harden and form tartar, which only a dentist can remove.

Professor Yap added that those with small jawbones may snore loudly due to a condition called sleep apnea. Characterised by repetitive episodes of upper airway obstruction that occur during sleep, this condition can be corrected through surgery. Professor Yap recommended for all to go for regular dental check-ups so that early detection of mouth or teeth infections can be made, as it can help save one plenty of money later on!

Mr Foo Seh Nong, a 2002 OJUK graduate in BSc Computer Science with Management, who attended the talk, said: “I came as I wanted to find out more about oral health and ways of keeping good health. I found the talk very good as Professor Yap is very knowledgeable.”

Many of the attendees found this talk invaluable and suggested that it be brought back to benefit alumni who had missed it.
Be prepared to be spaced out if you know nothing about the Theory of Relativity or the Law of Gravity while being enthralled by the thrilling science fiction adventure movie, Interstellar, now showing in all theatres. But, then again, not to worry, as you should be able to catch up on the plot with the in-movie tutorials, which may help you uncover your zest for all things unimaginable.

On Nov 8, about 290 UniSIM alumni and their family members gathered at Orchard’s Shaw Lido Theatre, in anticipation of this special movie screening—a fantastic inter-planetary journey into the unknown through a newly-discovered wormhole in space.

It was certainly great to see so many familiar alumni faces such as Mr Lim Keng Pong, BSc Technology with Electronics, Class of 2004, present at the event. Many were there to basically chill out. Others were there to network and extend their support to the Alumni Relations Department, which organised the event.

Regardless of their reasons, all basically enjoyed catching the movie and are already looking forward to the next movie screening!

The **UniSIM MBA**

The School of Business at UniSIM has launched a Master of Business Administration programme (MBA), with the first student intake planned for July 2015.

The **UniSIM MBA** imbues aspiring managers with business knowledge and skills to function as leaders in driving and executing initiatives that meet business objectives and organisational excellence, while fulfilling requirements in sustainable development, social responsibility and ethical practice. Simply put, this programme will help groom managers with a heart, and provide the environment for a learning experience where students are exposed to key business concepts that meet the needs of today’s business environment.

The **UniSIM MBA** curriculum is based on a series of learning blocks: assimilating knowledge progressively through a Core-Function-Area approach, and honing managerial and social responsibility skills through an Experiential Project and a Management Communication course.

The programme will be conducted over three semesters spanning 18 months. In the first semester, students will learn how to manage the organisation. In the second, they learn how to run a business. Finally, in the third semester, they will learn how to grow the business in a competitive environment.

**Unique features:**

- The **UniSIM MBA** equips graduates with both the “hardware and heartware”. They will receive a holistic education that encompasses both academic excellence and business practicality. More importantly, it focuses on training leaders to make sound moral judgment while bearing in mind the needs of business profitability and sustainable development.

- The programme uses pedagogy that involves team work, interactive discussions, critical thinking, and hands-on problem solving.

- Students hone their soft skills through an Experiential Project and a Management Communication course that run across three semesters.

- An 18-month programme where students are able to complete the **UniSIM MBA** while working full-time.

Email us at mba@unisim.edu.sg or visit our website www.unisim.edu.sg/UniSIM_MBA for more information about the programme and details about completing the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT).
Established in 2005, the SIM University Education Fund is utilised to build up the capability of UniSIM including the support of scholarly initiatives. UniSIM’s bold vision and dreams can only be realised with the financial support of donors like you.

Your gift, no matter how modest, makes a difference because pooled resources have an exponential impact on UniSIM’s efforts to support the causes for which the fund was established. When you contribute to the SIM University Education Fund, you are pledging your faith and support for our students and academic-related causes. You are building a bridge for us to serve society directly by giving bright minds unparalleled opportunities to develop to their full potential.

External organisations and individuals can make contributions and donations to the SIM University Education Fund. Donations will be channelled across the following:

- Infrastructure
- Systems development
- Course development
- Library development and administration
- Research and development projects
- Scholarly initiatives (including scholarships, sponsorships and study grants)

Donors can claim 2.5 times tax deduction on their donations (subject to change as announced by the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore).

Pledge your support to our extraordinary students and faculty today.

Log on to www.unisim.edu.sg/giving for more details.
Flash Your Alumni Card To Enjoy These Special Deals:

**15% discount** will only be available from Mon – Thu to all Spizza dine-in outlets
Promotion is valid till December 31, 2015.

**10% discount** valid only for alumni card holders
Promotion is valid till November 10, 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.

CONTEST GIVEAWAYS!

We are giving away five exclusive Festive Bundle Special (UniSIM Bag, Cap, Photo Frame, Passport Holder). Simply SMS the answers to the three questions below to 9113 6795 in the following format:

*Example: Newsletter 01234567 alumni@unisim.edu.sg Answers for Q1 and Q2, and Q3.*

**QUESTIONS**

Q1 What is the launch date for the Master of Business Administration programme (MBA)?

Q2 What is the UniSIM website address for donors to make contributions and donations?

Q3 Who is Mdm Rubiyah favourite local novel writer?

Closing Date: January 31, 2015

Congratulations to the Contest Winners of Issue 27!

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For advertising enquiries, call 6248 9215 or email alumni@unisim.edu.sg
Fengshui Seminar
(conducted in mandarin by Way OnNet)

Date: January 17, 2015
Venue: SIM HQ, BLK A, LT A.4.05

Time:
1:30pm  Registration
2:00 - 3:00pm  2015 Global Outlook + 12 Zodiac Forecast
3:00 - 3:45pm  Tea Reception
3:45 - 5:00pm  Home Feng Shui Tips + Q&A
5:00pm  End

Fee: $12.00 (Alumnus) / $15.00 (Guest)
* Each alumnus is allowed to register a maximum of 2 seats only, inclusive of alumnus’ seat. Price is inclusive of 7% GST.

Registration: www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events