Well Done, UniSIM!

On 17 January 2009, the first batch of graduates from the Bachelor of Arts Tamil Language & Literature (BATL) celebrated their achievement at Raffles Hotel. Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry Mr S Iswaran graced the inaugural graduation dinner as the guest-of-honour. Dinner was also attended by SIM University (UniSIM)’s senior management, faculty members, graduates and sponsors.

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HIGHLIGHTS

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WIN!
First Bachelor of Arts Tamil Language & Literature’s Graduating Class Celebrates Completion of Programme

As part of the celebration to embrace the Tamil language, performances for the night included Indian dances, as well as an enactment on Tamil epics. To create awareness for the BATI programme, the scene enacted was taken from one of the five epics called Silapathikaram. The latter is covered under Epic Literature as part of the BATI programme.

On the process of organising the event, Mr Shahud Hameed, Chairman of the organising committee said, “It was really an uphill task and many things did not proceed as expected. Nonetheless, we emerge more strong, persevering, optimistic and resourceful. We were very touched by the support rendered by non-Indian sponsors - a gesture which identifies us Singaporeans as united regardless of race, language or religion.”

Mr S Iswaran, who addressed the audience in English and Tamil, said, “I would like to commend Unisim for bringing this programme to Singapore. It is the only institution in date to offer the full suite of MOE-approved language and literature degree programmes in all four major languages, with the Malay programme launched in end January.”

Mr Iswaran added, “I urge Unisim to continue offering such quality programmes in response to niche but important market needs, thus further augmenting its unique mission of shaping the quality of Singapore’s workforce through education and continual learning for working adults and professionals.”

Sponsors:
- GSI Publications
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Brand New Beginning
In our lives, beginnings are always the time of an exciting journey. And with every beginning, we are filled with anxiety and anticipation. Now that the year is in a spinning brand new start, we would naturally want to start anew with our lives. This is when we will place before ourselves all the dreams, prayers and wishes we would like to see come true. There is always a personal dream that we would want to achieve and going through the year, we will attain a realisation that we have indeed matured in our thoughts.

Our newsletter has also taken a new step in its life. We have breathed in new ideas and recruited new blood to be part of the Unisim Alumni Newsletter Editorial Group (NEG). The volunteers come from all walks of life. Some of our writers are sophomores who are currently pursuing their degrees at Unisim.

In this issue, as with many beginnings in our journey, we will feature all things nouveau and also a new look. The staff from the Alumni Relations Department and the volunteers from the NEG mooted the idea for a print copy of the alumni newsletter last year.

We truly hope that our very first print issue will bind us, the alumni, together with ties that are much stronger.

Enjoy the issue!

Mohammad Noor
Editor (Alumni Volunteer)
Newsletter Editorial Group
Feng Shui – UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

As we move from one year to the next, being typically Singaporean, we would like to know what the Year of the Ox augers, and many more would love to find out what the “Niú” (new) year has in “plough” for them.

In light of this, UniSIM Alumni Relations Department organised a talk on Feng Shui on 3 January 2009. Master Vincent Koh from Singapore Feng Shui Centre was invited to share with participants some tips that might help them sail through the Year of the Ox with luck and confidence. The talk was a resounding success with more than 70 alumni turning up.

There are three areas of concern in the Year of the Ox: the Annual Flying Star, the Tai Sui’s location and the Sanjiao location. The Annual Flying Star or the “Magic Square” shows the forces of Energy within the environment. The three stars that are of particular importance are Star 2, which is found in the West direction, and it represents sickness; Star 5, which is found in the North direction, signifies Total Loss or Death; and lastly, Star 8, located in the North East, which incidentally, takes the position of the Tai Sui, the Quarrelsome Star.

Like every illness or misfortune, there is always a cure or remedy. Master Koh gave good advice to counteract the three “unfavourable” Stars. For instance, if your room or front door faces the West or the North, placing anything metallic above the windowsill or in front of the main door will bring good luck. Master Koh also suggested that items such as wind chime, Chinese coins or even a gold door mat placed outside your front door can reverse or counter the negative energy displaced from the West.

In general, based on the elemental nature of the Ox being Earth, Master Koh predicted that there would be greater harmony, and a slight improvement in progress, though slow. On the whole, the Year of the Ox in 2009 has the potential to be better than that of the Rat.

More information can be obtained at Master Koh’s website - www.fengshui.com.sg.

“Huat ah!!!”
Alumni Volunteers Lo Hei Reunion Lunch

On 7 February 2009, UniSIM senior management and alumni volunteers had a fun-filled Chinese New Year (CNY) Lo Hei reunion lunch. The reunion lunch took place at the Nanyang Technological University’s Alumni Clubhouse – 8th Degree Restaurant.

Lo Hei is a CNY traditional dish. The ingredients are relatively “light-weighted” but colourful, consisting of shredded carrot, radish, salmon and other seasonings.

Three tables were set up to accommodate such a big pool of people (about 36 of us). All of us gathered around the tables using the chopsticks to toss the ingredients into the air as high as possible, and called out all sorts of auspicious greetings. In view of the recent global economic downturn, the greetings addressed to those who were affected to quickly recover from their losses, and those who did well to continue to prosper.

Followed by the Lo Hei was a scrumptious four-course set lunch. We started with a bowl of piping hot creamy soup, followed by a serving of spinach salad as appetizer. The main course was a pan-seared codfish. Finally, we had ice cream wrapped in wafer thin crepe as dessert to sweeten up every single moment in life.

The gathering ended on a joyous and harmonious note.

UniSIM alumni enjoy free access and use of most facilities at NTU’s One-North clubhouse. For details, visit www.unisim.edu.sg/alumnibenefits

Finance Talk
Finaxis advisory Pte Ltd speaks on the management of finances to our alumni and student

From the day the economic tsunami took the world by surprise in year 2008 to this very day, the global catastrophe has been the talk of the town. Many are in fact worried and concerned how long this situation would last and how it would affect them in ways they can never imagine.

On 21 February 2009, UniSIM’s Alumni Relations Department organised a talk on the management of finances. addressing the current global economic state, financial advisors from Finaxis advisory Pte Ltd were invited to share with our alumni and students what triggered the economic downward spiral and how it ended up the way it is today. The speakers also touched on retirement planning and how this remains vital to every individual despite the global recession.
One of my favourite family moments was how my mum, without fail, would spot a shy, sweet smile whenever she recalled how my dad proposed to her. His proposal idea, although clichéd and doted, rekindled warm and fond memory to my mum and her children. Now that it was my turn to propose the question, being naturally competitive, I wanted to outdo my dad, creating the same effect my dad’s proposal had and still has on my mum.

Without delay, I started my research on the perfect proposal. I surveyed my friends who have proposed. This turned out to be futile as my Singaporean counterparts were more practical rather than romantic. 90 per cent popped the question when they registered for HBO Max! Still, I did not give up. While serving my residence in Australia, my armoured vehicle broke down and we were stranded in the middle of nowhere. I took the opportunity to ask my army buddies on their proposal ideas and experiences.

I also looked back on the romantic movies that I have watched. Some are feasible while others are downright impossible.

Now – the most important part – to execute the plan:
1. Identify the venue. Marina Bay would be quite crowded, so I decided on VivoCity, Hop’s Breath Cafe at the top level should do, as it would give me privacy and a good view of the fireworks.
2. Got friends to arrange for a bouquet of flowers to be placed at the cafe.
3. I brought my girlfriend to watch a movie – it happened to be the romantic vampire movie, Twilight, ending just 30 minutes before midnight.
4. After the movie, I proceeded to meet my friends for the countdown and to celebrate the ushering of the New Year.
5. At the stroke of midnight, after the fireworks started, my friends pretended to go to the toilet and alerted one of the waitresses to bring over the flowers.
6. I was supposed to go down on my knees when the waitress arrived with the flowers, but to my surprise the waitress brought along a camera as well!

When the moment came, with a waitress and her camera, my nerves got the better of me and somehow I was too shy to go down on my knees. I finally popped the evergreen question – “Will you marry me?” The answer was obvious; otherwise, I would not be sharing this in the newsletter!

Contributed by Gary Yeo, UniSIM alumnus, Graduate Diploma in Marketing Management, 2006
The First Ever Local Part-time Logistics Degree
A collaboration with Singapore Logistics Association

UniSIM, in collaboration with Singapore Logistics Association (SLA), has developed the Bachelor of Science in Logistics and Supply Chain Management - the only dedicated logistics part-time degree programme to be offered by a local university in Singapore.

The programme targets existing logistics industry employees with diploma qualifications who are keen to upgrade their skills to assume management positions. Working professionals seeking a mid-career switch to the burgeoning logistics and supply chain management industry will also benefit from the programme.

As part of the partnership, SLA will not only provide academic and research support but also leverage its membership network to provide attachment or job opportunities, leading to scholarship awards to students who pursue the programme.

UniSIM Launches New Portal for Alumni

In a bid to bring alumni closer to the University, UniSIM has launched a portal for its alumni. With the launch of the new portal, alumni can look forward to several features. For instance, the portal allows alumni to update their personal details, look out for new job opportunities as well as to search for fellow alumni under a directory listing. New events and announcements for alumni will also be updated via the portal.

UniSIM To Launch New Scheme for Supportive Alumni

To reward alumni who have been supportive of alumni events, UniSIM will be launching the Fast Pass programme. The Fast Pass will allow alumni to enjoy priority registration for alumni related events. Fast Pass holders will find it useful as they are able to enjoy priority booking for fast selling events such as Unwind Saturday! To be eligible for the Fast Pass, an alumni has to attend at least three or more alumni events in one calendar year. Look out for more information in the next month!

New Campus, Better Facilities

A new building next to the existing site at Clementi will be built to cater to the growing needs of SIM’s students. The new building will stand at six stories high and about two-thirds the size of the existing campus. It will house additional lecture theatres, seminar rooms, an extended library, new cafeterias as well as a multi-purpose hub for students’ activities and recreation.

Piling has started in December 2008 and construction is expected to take about two years. When completed in 2011, it will provide the much needed space for current and future programmes. More importantly, we can all look forward to an extended campus that is modern and iconic in infrastructure and design, and equipped for greater learning effectiveness.
Engage Employees
Right from the Very Start

When employees are happy, it is rather rare for them to leave their jobs even when they are offered higher pay elsewhere. Most employees would choose stability over the risk of moving to a new and unknown working environment. One of the factors for employees to leave their current job and organisation is the poor relationship with their immediate superior. For most managers, this is a hard pill to swallow. But the reality is that the responsibility of creating engagement falls on the shoulders of the managers, as they are the ones who have close contacts with their staff and are in the position to make a difference.

So, the million dollar question: How can managers create engaged employees? Engagement is about creating an environment where employees love what they do and know that they are contributing to their organisations. The three key components that would engage employees are trust, opportunity and meaning.

Trust
To build trust, firstly managers need to be “visible” and assessable. Managers play a pivotal role in facilitating day-to-day operations and activities such as team building initiatives that improve work relationships and set the stage for open communication. Secondly, trust can be built when employees are given the opportunity to make decisions and try out new ideas.

Opportunity
We need challenges in our lives to stay motivated. Employees are motivated when they are given challenging roles where they can prove themselves to be competent and when they can see the opportunity to grow in their current job’s capacity.

Meaning
Survey has shown that money is not the main motivator. Managers need to take time to talk to their employees about their nature and purpose of work, and how their work contributes to the growth of the company. Managers and leaders are empowered with the ability to inspire, motivate and increase employees’ productivity and effectiveness. By creating an engaging work environment, we will not only improve staff retention but at the same time create a high performing team for your organisation.

This article is contributed by Hilnet Performance Consulting Pte Ltd.
Latest Benefits – adds on

Flash your UniSIM alumni card to enjoy the discounts!

**Shinobu Dining**
(Japanese Restaurant)

10% discount off
all-carte menu, excluding dessert and beverages, for dine-in customers only.

460, Alexandra Road, #04-01, PIA Building, Singapore 159963

For enquiries/reservations, call 6271 5586

**Les Parfum**
(a specialised perfume retail store)

7% discount off
selected perfumes brand

Discount applicable to all brands except Estee Lauder, Tommy Hilfiger, DKNY, Chanel, Christian Dior, Gucci, Issey Miyake, Armani, Clinique and D&G

101-05 Harbourfront Centre, Singapore 098053

For enquiries, call 6276 9940 • http://www.perfumesparis.com

**B-One Florist**

10% discount off
1 flower bouquet/bouquets purchase

100 Beach Road # 01-47
Shaw Tower, Singapore 189702

For enquiries/orders, call 6238 5467 • http://www.b1florist.com

**Q & M Dental Group**
(Applicable for UniSIM students only)

10% discount off
basic dental treatments – scaling, polishing, fillings and extractions only

Applicable at all Q & M Dental Group clinics

Visit http://www.qandm.com.sg/ for a full listing of Q & M’s clinics

CONTEST GIVEAWAYS!

In this issue, we are giving away one 2GB thumb drive to 10 lucky winners!

Simply tell us what are the two alumni events that will be held this year by filling in the form below, cutting it out and mailing it back to us! Please paste the cut-out coupon at the back of the envelope.

Closing Date: 1 May 2009

**Mailing address:**

SIM University
Alumni Relations Department
535A Clement Road
Singapore 599490

**Simply tell us what are the two alumni events that will be held this year.**

Name: _____________________________

IC no: _____________________________

Telephone: _________________________

Mobile: ____________________________

E-mail: ____________________________

Address: __________________________

Answers:

1) _____________________________

2) _____________________________
EVENTS COMING YOUR WAY

HATHA YOGA

Programme: Hatha Yoga for beginners
Venue: SIM HQ, Clementi Road
Date / Time: Saturdays, 16, 23, 30 May & 6, 13, 20, 27 Jun, 4, 11, 18, 25 July & 1 Aug
Time: 12.30pm
Duration per lesson: 1 Hour
Instructor: Gwendolyn from Wasabi Yoga Studio
Fee (Unisim alumni): $58.30 per head for 12 lessons (inclusive of GST)
Class Size: 20 pax
Registration: Register at www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events
Payment Method: Cheque Payment

HIPPO TOUR

Join us for an exhilarating ride on the hop-on hop-off HIPPO bus to discover the roots and history of Singapore at a special price with your fellow alumni! Discover the colourful cultures of Singapore as we bring you on a journey along a city & heritage trail. It is a fun adventure with a highlight of listening to interesting stories from the hop-on hop-off HIPPO bus.

Programme: Heritage Tour on a HIPPO Bus
Venue: SIM HQ, Clementi Road
Date / Time: 6 June, Saturday / 2-5pm
Fee (Unisim alumni): $10.00 nett per head
(Published Public Rate: $23.00)
Fee (Guests - limited to 3 guests per alumni only, inclusive of 1 toddler): $10.00 nett per head
Free for toddler (3 years and below)
(Published Public Rate: $23.00/Adult, $13/child)
Registration: Register at www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events
(Detail availability is based on first come, first served basis)
Payment Method: e-Payment

Itinerary for Hippo Tour:
2.00 pm Registration at SIM HQ, Clementi Road
3.00 pm HIPPO Pick up at SIM Campus, Clementi Road
Start of Tour:
2.30 pm Bugis > Little India > Kampong Glam > Raffles Hotel
3.00 pm Civic District > Boat Quay > Chinatown > Fullerton Hotel
4.30 pm Journey back to SIM HQ, Clementi Road
5.00 pm Drop off @ SIM HQ

* The above events will commence when the minimum class (group) size is met. Information is accurate at time of print and is subject to change without prior notice.