



A GIANT AMONG MEN

Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu 1919 - 2010

WOU pays tribute to the University's first Chancellor, a remarkable statesman who transformed Penang's economic landscape and set Malaysia on the path to industrialisation. Doctor, war hero, politician, chief minister - the life of Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu defied the ordinary and the expected.



Vice Chancellor's voice
Pg 2



In the limelight
Pg 2 - 3



In the know
Pg 4 - 9



In the schools
Pg 10 - 11



In the lives of the people
Pg 12

WOU pays tribute to the University's first Chancellor, a remarkable statesman who transformed Penang's economic landscape and set Malaysia on the path to industrialisation. Doctor, war hero, politician, chief minister - the life of Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu defied the ordinary and the expected.

Tun Lim was born in 1919 in Penang and attended Penang Free School before he won the Queen's Scholarship in 1937 to study medicine at the University of Edinburgh. He graduated with a degree in Medicine and Surgery (MBC) in 1944 and served in China during the final days of the Second World War.

He began active public service when he was appointed to the Penang Legislative Council in 1949. He then worked his way up the political ranks, eventually serving as president for two of Malaysia's major political parties, MCA and Gerakan. When Gerakan won the general election in Penang in 1969, Tun Lim was appointed the state's second chief minister - a post he held for 21 years until 1990; during this period he also held the post of chairman of Penang Development Corporation.

Under his leadership, Penang underwent a major economic transformation by attracting electronic manufacturing companies to the island. The new Free Trade Zone (FTZ) at Bayan Lepas was the country's first and provided thousands of Malaysians with new job opportunities; Penang's dynamic FTZ was also the impetus for Malaysia's dramatic growth during the 1980s and 1990s.

After Tun Lim retired from active politics, he shifted his focus to business concerns and held the posts of

chairman and/or advisor in several corporations. He also found the energy to involve himself in higher education and served as pro-chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) from 1994 to 1999. Given his many contributions to the state and nation it was only fitting that he was installed as Wawasan Open University's first Chancellor in a glittering ceremony on 29 November 2008 at the University's main campus.

According to WOU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Wong Tat Meng, "Tun Lim was very up to date with technology and he regularly surf the Internet for knowledge and information. He was a keen lifelong learner and continued to challenge us with his knowledge and searching questions well past his 90th birthday. His passing is a great loss and we will miss him dearly at WOU. Our heartfelt condolences to Toh Puan Goh Sing Yeng and other family members of the late Tun Lim."



cont. page 2

cont. from page 1

This sentiment was shared by Dr Seah Soo Aun, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Operations), "Tun Lim was an avid learner himself and he understood that working adults need to upgrade their knowledge and skills in order to compete in the knowledge economy. We are grateful for his wise counsel, dedication and immense commitment during his tenure as Chancellor of WOU."

Prof Wong observed that the former Penang Chief Minister was a very down to earth and approachable man who regularly visited the university to mingle and interact with the staff. "Tun enjoyed sharing his experiences with us over a cup of teh tarik or a simple lunch. I'm sure they will remember those moments."

Tun Lim's many domestic and international honours and awards included an Honorary Doctorate of Laws by USM and the Honorary Doctorate from his alma mater the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

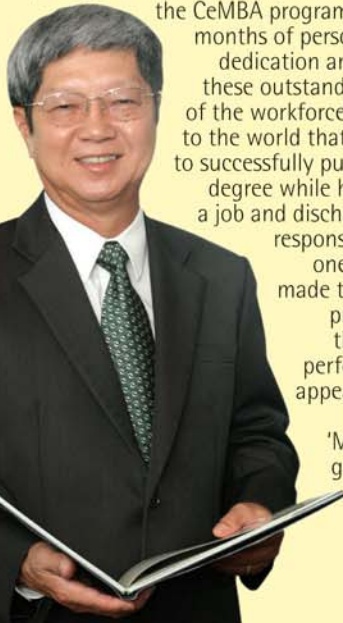


Vice Chancellor's VOICE

Let me begin by wishing everyone a Happy and Prosperous New Year! May 2011 bring you and your loved ones Good Health, Success and Happiness.

The last quarter of 2010 has been a real emotional roller coaster for me and my colleagues. The exhilaration, pride and joy experienced during the Inaugural Convocation Ceremony held on Saturday 23 October to confer WOU's own degrees to 38 proud graduates of the Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration (CeMBA) programme and the success of our University at the Annual General Meeting and Conference of the Association of Asian Open Universities (AAOU) held in Hanoi a week later where I was elected President of AAOU and my academic colleagues took three out of the six awards given out in the Best Paper and Young Innovators Award competitions were first dampened by news that our beloved Chancellor Tun Dato' Seri Utama Dr Lim Chong Eu had suffered a stroke and subsequently the sadness and grief that the news of his demise brought. The University has indeed lost a great leader and a friend who has been a constant source of inspiration to us and many others whose life he had touched. His deeds and legacies to the people of Penang shall forever be remembered. We extend our heartfelt condolences to Toh Puan Goh Sing Yeng and other members of the family.

My congratulations to the proud graduates of the CeMBA programme. After 30 months of personal sacrifice, dedication and hard work, these outstanding members of the workforce have proven to the world that it is possible to successfully pursue a higher degree while holding down a job and discharging family responsibilities. Each one of them has made the University proud through their excellent performance. The appearance of the first batch of 'Made in WOU' graduates also signals our



University's arrival as a serious provider of quality graduates. Many of the CeMBA graduates have since received promotion to positions of higher responsibilities. In fact, some were promoted during the course of their study when the employers noted their enhanced work performance.

It is a personal pleasure for me to congratulate our honorary graduates Dato' Seri Goh Eng Toon and Dr Abdul Waheed Khan on their conferment of the Honorary Doctor of Laws and Honorary Doctor of Letters respectively at the same ceremony. The achievements and contributions of these two fine gentlemen have brought benefits to the lives of many in their respective communities.

Besides the live audience at the Main Campus, the Convocation Ceremony was also watched by more than 350 staff and students of WOU from the comfort of their homes and offices located throughout Malaysia via WOU's i-Radio webcasts that they accessed through the Internet. Friends of WOU in Singapore, India, Sri Lanka, UK and Ireland also followed the ceremony live and reported that the picture and sound quality was very good. This may be the first time in Malaysia that our students, their families, relatives and friends can feel that they are part of a live Convocation Ceremony without having to travel great distances. I congratulate the Registrar and all members of our staff who have contributed to this highly successful event.

The election to head the AAOU is a proud achievement for WOU as we are a young institution and a relatively new member of the

Association. To be given the honour to head this 24-year-old Asian wide organisation whose membership of 62 Open Universities include 17 mega universities with total student enrolments exceeding 12 million is testament to the high standing we enjoy among the Asian ODL fraternity as a provider of high quality education. As president of the AAOU, our University will also host the Association's Secretariat.

The current Council of WOU also conducted the last full meeting of its term on 4 December 2010. On behalf of the Wawasan Learning Community, I wish to record our sincere thanks to each and every one of our Council members who have contributed so much of their time and effort to provide the management with invaluable guidance throughout the past three years. We have certainly benefited from their wisdom and counsel.

I congratulate Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye on his recent promotion to Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic). Prof Ho has a distinguished academic track record and extensive leadership experience in both conventional and ODL systems as well as the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. I am confident that the academic development of the University will be well served under his capable leadership.

I wish to end this piece by congratulating those continuing students who have performed well in their examinations and also extend a very warm welcome to those learners who have joined the WOU learning community in the January 2011 semester. I wish you all an enjoyable and fruitful learning experience in this University.

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FIRST to Graduate!

WOU comes of age with inaugural convocation ceremony

Jubilation was written all over the faces of the pioneer batch of 38 Commonwealth Executive MBA (CeMBA) graduates who received their scrolls from WOU Council Chairman Tun Dr Lim Keng Yaik during the inaugural convocation ceremony at the main campus on 23 October.

The CeMBA graduates, who completed their studies in five semesters after enrolling in January 2008, ranged in age from 26 to 60 years. Among them are brothers Phoon Chee Nouk and Phoon Chee Wai, sisters Ang Chen Ling and Ang

May Fong, Indian national Deepti Manuja, and the oldest, Harry Ho Chee Wan. WOU graduand Yeoh Swee Hoon received the Chancellor's Medal for obtaining top results.

WOU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Wong Tat Meng, in his official address, noted that "the appearance of the first batch of 'Made in WOU' graduates" signals the arrival of the University as a serious provider of quality postgraduates. He added that "their presence will offer industry the opportunity to measure the performance of our graduates against those from other sources".

Ho, in recollecting his learning experience, when delivering his address as the graduates' representative, remarked, "We swam with difficulty at first but once we got the hang of it, it was not too bad - considering many, if not all of us, were fulltime working adults, as well as housewives."

Among the 400 people who attended the convocation ceremony were Wawasan Education Foundation (WEF) Chairman Dato' Seri Stephen Yeap and wife Datin Seri Irene, Penang Gerakan Chairman Dato' Dr Teng Hock Nan, WOU Council members, Consul-Generals from Indonesia and Japan, Vice Chancellors and representatives from universities and colleges, WOU staff, and not forgetting the family members of the CeMBA graduates and honorary degree recipients.

Honorary degrees

The ceremony also saw Tun Dr Lim Keng Yaik bestowing the Honorary Doctor of Laws on Penang banker Dato' Seri Goh Eng Toon and the Honorary Doctor of Letters on Dr Abdul Waheed Khan, the former Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information at UNESCO, Paris.

Dato' Seri Goh was honoured for his outstanding contributions in the banking and financial sectors and for his spirit of philanthropy reflected through his donations to numerous charitable organisations. During his 27 years with Ban Hin Lee Bank (BHLB), he steered the growth of the institution from a 2-branch Bank in 1973 to one with a network of 49 branches distributed throughout the country by the year 2000.

Dr Khan was awarded the honorary degree in recognition for his outstanding contributions in the field of communications, information and education over the past 35 years.



WOU Vice Chancellor elected President of Asian ODL Body

Wawasan Open University's standing as one of Asia's leading ODL institutions was boosted at the recently concluded 24th Annual General Meeting of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) held in Hanoi on 26 October 2010 when WOU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Wong Tat Meng was unanimously elected as President of the Association for a three-year term from 1 Jan 2011 to 31 Dec 2013. He takes over from Prof Dr Tian Belawati, Rector of Universitas Terbuka Indonesia, as the 8th President of AAOU in January 2011.

Prof Wong remarked: "As a relatively new member as well as a small open university, it is a great honour for us to be elected into the leadership position of this well established and globally respected 24-year-old organisation whose membership includes 17 'mega' universities (>100,000 students) and with three of these actually having more than 2 million

students each." Prof Wong has been involved in AAOU activities since 1993 when he was attached to the Open University of Hong Kong. He had previously served as the Association's Secretary-General from 1999-2002.

Formed in 1987, the AAOU is the umbrella organisation for Open Universities in Asia. It is a 62-institutional member organisation, with member institutions spread across the Asian continent. Apart from the 46 Full Members, there are also 16 Associate Members comprising ODL institutions from Europe, Africa, Oceania and America. The total student enrolment of AAOU member institutions in 2010 exceeded 12 million.

Six other member institutions were also elected to serve on the Executive Board (EB) during Prof Wong's term of office. These are: Open University of Japan, Open University of China, Korea National Open University, Open University

of Hong Kong, Open University Malaysia and Hanoi Open University. In addition, Payame Nur University of Iran and the Symbiosis Centre for Distance Learning of India were co-opted into the EB to ensure representation from the South Asia and West Asia geographic regions.

As President of the Association, WOU will also be hosting the AAOU Secretariat and managing its website as well as handling the editorship and publication of the AAOU Journal. The AAOU Secretariat will be physically located in the Homestead Building of WOU's Penang Campus.

The symbolic change of the leadership of AAOU was executed through the 'handing over of the AAOU flag' by outgoing AAOU President Prof Tian Belawati to president-elect Prof Wong at the closing ceremony of the 24th AAOU Annual Conference hosted by Hanoi Open University at the Melia Hotel, Hanoi.



WOU grabs 3 awards at the 24th AAOU Annual Conference

The 24th Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) was hosted by Hanoi Open University at the Melia Hotel, Hanoi, Vietnam from 27-28 October 2010. The Conference with the theme *Open Distance Learning Towards Building Sustainable Global Learning Communities* was attended by over 500 participants from 22 countries. The conference covered five sub-themes: ideology and philosophy; partnership and communication; methodology and technology; sustainability, accessibility, equity and quality; and opportunities and challenges that were delivered through several parallel sessions.



WOU was well represented through a large contingent of 18 delegates led by Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Wong Tat Meng. Tan Sri Emeritus Prof Dr Gajaraj Dhanarajan, (Hon) Director of WOU's Institute for Research and Innovation, delivered a keynote address entitled *Thoughts on Open Distance Education: Has It Outlived Its Course?* while 11 others delivered oral presentations based on their submitted papers. In addition, Prof Dhanarajan along with School of Science and Technology (SST) senior lecturer Ishan Abeywardena conducted a pre-conference workshop on *Open Education Resources*.

WOU dominated the award winners at this year's AAOU Conference by taking 50% of the awards offered. The paper by Ishan and Assistant Vice Chancellor (Academic Support) Prof Ho Sinn

Chye entitled *Development of a Computer aided ODL Course Development Tracking System (CDTS)* was awarded the silver medal for the Best Paper Award competition. In the Young Innovators Award category, the joint paper by SST's Vincent Chung and Karen Khor entitled *Mobile Agents (Replication Agent, Snapshot Agent) Approach for Transaction Processing in Mobile Database System - Mobile Learning Environment* took the Gold Medal while the Silver was won by School of Business and Administration deputy dean Dr Teoh Ai Ping and co-authors via their paper entitled *Student Interaction in the Online Learning Management System: A Comparative Study of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Courses*. Dr Teoh had previously won a silver medal in the 2008 AAOU Conference. Overall, the WOU staff grabbed three of the 6 awards

on offer. This reflected well on the quality of the research conducted by WOU staff despite the institutions relatively young age. The WOU learning community is elated over the successes of our colleagues. Congratulations! We are proud of you and your excellent achievements.

The 25th AAOU Annual Conference will be held at the WOU Campus from 28-30 September 2011 with the theme on *Transforming Asia through Open Distance Learning (ODL)* to focus on the role of ODL in transforming the life of Asian communities. The five sub-themes of the conference are: cultural and social change; quality; business model and the role of partnership in ODL; technology; and future trends.

Prof Ho appointed Deputy Vice Chancellor

Veteran academician and seasoned researcher Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye has been appointed the new Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) of WOU effective from 1 December 2010; previously he was Assistant Vice Chancellor (Academic Support), Dean of the School of Science and Technology (SST) and Director of the Centre for Graduate Studies (CGS).

Down-to-earth and approachable, Prof Ho is determined for WOU to reach out to people from all walks of life as he firmly believes that "education is the great equaliser" in society. "I'll continue to do my utmost, working closely with colleagues and other members of the WOU community as well as the University's strategic partners, to propel the University forward towards fulfilling WOU's vision and mission as a trusted provider of quality tertiary education in Malaysia," he said.

Prior to joining WOU in 2007, Prof Ho had served as the founding Director of the National Oceanography Directorate, Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) from 2000 to 2006. He was a faculty member at Universiti Sains Malaysia for 29 years from 1973 to 2002,

and a former Dean of USM's School of Biological Sciences.

He obtained his PhD from the University of Kiel, Germany in 1979, and conducted his doctorate research in the field of limnology at the Max-Planck Institute for Limnology in Ploen.

At various stages of his professional career, Prof Ho has represented Malaysia in the Executive Council of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UNESCO, Paris. He represented the east Asia region in the Scientific and Technical Review Panel of Ramsar Wetlands Convention, Switzerland. He has served as National Vice-President of the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS); Council member of the Malaysian Society of Marine Science (MSMS); and a member of the Board of Directors of Wetland International Malaysia. He was bestowed the Darjah Setia Pangkuan Negeri award, which carries the title of Dato', by the Penang State Government in 2006.

During his free time, Prof Ho plays the acoustic guitar and keeps fit by taking weekend walks. He is viewed by colleagues as a 'techie' who constantly surfs the Internet to keep track of IT and multimedia development and new tools.



Tan Sri Raj appointed to UNU Council



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

Tan Sri Emeritus Prof Gajaraj Dhanarajan, Honorary Director, Institute for Research and Innovation at WOU was recently appointed to the governing Council of the United Nations University (UN University Council), for a term of six years from 2010 to 2016.

He is the only Malaysian among the 14 new appointees to the UN University Council, jointly appointed by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova.

The main functions of the Council are "to

formulate the principles and policies of the University, govern its operations, and consider and approve its biennial budget and work programme".

The UN University was established in 1973 by the United Nations General Assembly and commenced operations in 1975. The UN University today comprises a core system of research and training institutes and programmes located in 12 countries around the world, coordinated by the UN University Centre in Tokyo.

For further information, visit <http://unu.edu>

Historic day for WOU grads!

It was a historic day for the University as 38 CeMBA students graduated after two and a half years of effort and determination. Here is a selection of their stories and experiences:

Tengku Sharifuddin Tengku Shah Buddin

"It took me a while to decide to pursue an MBA because of the time required. WOU's CeMBA programme was perfect because it offered me the flexibility I needed to divide my time between my family (I have a five-year old son), work and my studies."

"I found the 2½ years challenging but very interesting. I could definitely relate what I learnt to real-life working situations."



No matter which field you work in, management is important. I found that the CeMBA programme gave me plenty of practical knowledge that could be applied to my job.

Judy Kueh *Civil engineer*

Judy Kueh

The civil engineer who is only 28 years old, did plenty of research on universities offering MBAs before deciding to enrol in WOU's CeMBA programme. The major factor for Judy was flexibility. "As I have a full-time job, time was an important factor for me and I needed a programme that allowed me to balance my career and studies."

According to Judy, pursuing the CeMBA was a worthwhile experience as "no matter which field you work in, management is important. I found that the CeMBA programme gave me plenty of practical knowledge that could be applied to my job".



WOU's CeMBA programme was perfect because it offered me the flexibility I needed to divide my time between my family, work and my studies.

**Tengku Sharifuddin
Tengku Shah Buddin**
Administration officer



I especially enjoyed the project work when I'd get together with my course mates. As we are all from different industries and walks of life I felt that I had learnt a lot from their experiences.

Sim May Jin *Accountant*

Sim May Jin

"My dad was the one who persuaded me to improve my career prospects by enrolling in the CeMBA programme at WOU. After successfully completing the programme this is something I'd definitely recommend to others!"

"I especially enjoyed the project work when I'd get together with my course mates. As we are all from different industries and walks of life I felt that I had learnt a lot from their experiences."



CeMBA helped me to apply the management skills that I observed in my office in my own working life.

Chan Chee Yien
Electrical engineer

Chan Chee Yien

Chan from Johor Bahru admitted he didn't have a particular target when he signed up for WOU's CeMBA programme, "The only thing I thought about then was, just do it!" Before joining WOU, Chan had actually begun an MBA with another tertiary institution but found studying at WOU more convenient. It's a decision that has paid off for the electrical engineer with three kids.

"CeMBA helped me to apply the management skills that I observed in my office in my own working life. I hope that this will help my career prospects. I believe that working adults should seriously consider an MBA, not only for themselves but for their children's future as well."



I have four daughters and I believe in leading by example. If dad can study, there's no reason for them not to excel in their studies!

S. Soundra Rajan
Validation manager

S. Soundra Rajan

Despite his hectic work and family life, Soundra Rajan admits he was, "very determined and ambitious to be among the first batch of CeMBA graduates. I have four daughters and I believe in leading by example. If dad can study, there's no reason for them not to excel in their studies!"

The secret to his success? "Good time management was essential, and I spent many late nights studying and completing my project work. The enjoyable part of the programme was

Dr Deepti Manuja

Deepti is a dental surgeon from India living in Penang as her husband is attached to a private hospital. As she couldn't practise in Malaysia she decided to put her time to good use by enrolling in the CeMBA programme.

"I was of course disappointed at not being able to continue my dentistry work in Penang, but I thought that rather than sitting around I would take up CeMBA to enhance my career in hospital administration. Hospital administration is all



Hospital administration is all about understanding and managing the needs of doctors, nurses and patients, and CeMBA has given me the necessary management skills.

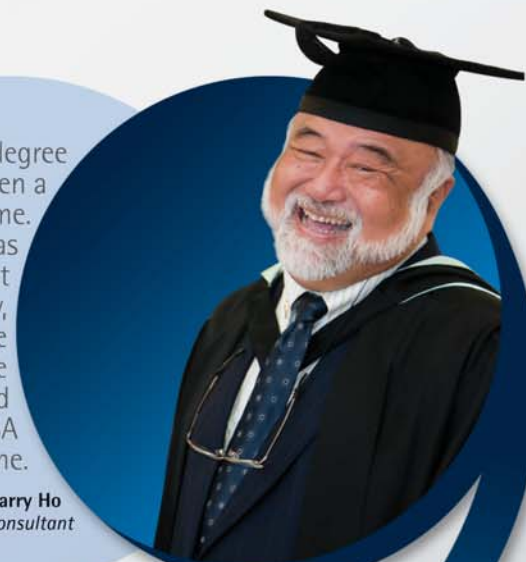
Dr Deepti Manuja
Dentist

about understanding and managing the needs of doctors, nurses and patients, and CeMBA has given me the necessary management skills."

"I initially found the programme difficult as I'm a science student learning about business and management for the first time. WOU academics were always there for me and were very encouraging, just like my two sons who would prepare breakfast for me during exam periods!"

Gaining a degree has always been a dream for me. When I was younger I couldn't afford to study, so when the opportunity came along, I enrolled in the CeMBA programme.

Harry Ho
Consultant



Harry Ho

Harry was the oldest CeMBA student and had the honour of addressing the guests at the convocation ceremony.

"Gaining a degree has always been a dream for me. When I was younger I couldn't afford to study, so when the opportunity came along, I enrolled in the CeMBA programme. As an open entry student the hardest part of the programme was actually getting down to study."

"I enjoyed all the lively discussions I had with my course mates. We came from so many diverse industries and jobs; there were housewives and engineers. I think that this mix gave us many different perspectives on life and our work."

sharing personal experiences with course mates, I'll definitely be keeping in touch with many of them."

Looking ahead, Soundra Rajan is planning on a new career in academia, encouraged by his positive learning experiences at WOU. "I'm already 45 and I would like to become a part-time lecturer when I retire and pass on the knowledge that I've gained, as well as my own management experience."



CeMBA was a major eye-opener and I began to see everyday workplace occurrences in a completely new light.

Lum Siew Cheong
Banking professional

Lum Siew Cheong

For Lum, not having a degree was a 'void' in his life and despite his 17-year career in banking, he still felt that something was missing. Before joining WOU, Lum's highest educational certification was the MCE and he thought that no university would accept him for a Masters programme without a degree. "I knew I was capable and I felt that if I was just given the opportunity, I could do it," he reminisced. When he found out that WOU's CeMBA programme allowed open entry, he jumped at the opportunity.

"CeMBA was a major eye-opener and I began to see everyday workplace occurrences in a completely new light and understand concepts that I had previously taken for granted from different perspectives. It also trained me to develop different thought processes in order to grasp the bigger picture. I found the programme very enriching from a personal perspective."

"The programme challenged us to think outside the box and to interact with our course mates. The Open Distance Learning (ODL) concept wasn't a problem as our tutors were always there for us whenever we needed any guidance."



Ang Chen Ling
Manager



Ang May Fong
Manager

Ang May Fong & Ang Chen Ling

Sisters May Fong and Chen Ling were the second pair of siblings to successfully graduate from WOU's inaugural CeMBA programme. May Fong took the initial plunge, encouraged by her parents who recommended WOU as the CeMBA programme was flexible and affordable.

According to May Fong, "the programme really encouraged me to improve my communication and leadership skills. I think this must have paid off as I was promoted to customer service manager half way through the programme! CeMBA was a real stepping stone for my career and I'm actually thinking of becoming a tutor at WOU."

Chen Ling was initially reluctant to sign up for CeMBA, "My sister had to drag me along to register!" she recalled. "On hindsight, I'm so glad she did. She told me that because of the global economic crisis we should equip ourselves with an MBA to enhance our career prospects. I agreed with what she said and signed up."

Just like her sister, Chen Ling is also considering joining WOU as a part-time tutor. Now that would be another story!

Dr Teoh See Wie

Dr Teoh from Ipoh explained that the reasons for enrolling in the CeMBA programme were to broaden his horizons. "As a doctor I feel I have a 'confined' job – we medics really exist in our own bubble. The outside world is so different from hospital life. I think in a way we are quite naïve to the workings of the real world."

"Management is important in my work and I need good organisational skills to manage my patients and my team – from diagnosing patients, prescribing medicine and follow-up treatments, running tests. All these processes require effective management."

"CeMBA tested me intellectually and I also gained plenty of practical know-how especially during tutorial discussions. My course mates, tutors and I would share our working experiences and this is something you can't learn from textbooks."

Since completing his CeMBA, Dr Teoh has already embarked on his next project – a second Masters in Family Medicine.



Completing the CeMBA has made me think about another degree – later perhaps!

Mohan Nadarajan
Planning analyst

Mohan Nadarajan

"I enrolled in the CeMBA programme to improve my knowledge and skills in the workplace – and so far I feel that it's paid off."

Management is important in my work and I need good organisational skills to manage my patients and my team.

Dr Teoh See Wie
Doctor



"My favourite part of the programme was the projects as these allowed me to go deeper into each subject. Completing the CeMBA has made me think about another degree – later perhaps!"



Congratulations to the graduating class of 2010

Ang Chen Ling
Mohanadas a/l Nadarajan

Ang May Fong
Ooi Yeap Lin

Baljit Singh Khaira
Pang Yoon Leong

Brian John Lariche
Phoon Chee Nouk

Chai Boon Mei
Phoon Chee Wai

Chan Chee Yien
S Soundra Rajan a/l Suppayya

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Chong Tzy Kien
Tan Heng Khee

Christina Chan Mei Ling

Tan Siok Lian
Deepti Manuja

Tee Pin Guan
Ho Chee Wan

Teh Choon Leong
Hoe Hong Seng

Tengku Sharifuddin Tengku Shah Buddin

Judy Kueh Joo Kheng

Teoh See Wie

Lee Bong Peng

Tey Chin Hui

Lee Sam Yan

Wong Kin Hoong

Lim Seong Hin

Yap Soon Beng

Lim Teck Hun

Yeoh Swee Hoon

Lum Siew Cheong

Zui Boon Chiang





Bloggers unite @ WOU

Some 250 bloggers from Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, China, Philippines, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand, converged on WOU's main campus during the BlogFest.Asia 2010 conference from 1-3 October.

A myriad of interesting issues on information privacy and management, new communication technologies in blogging, freedom of information and responsibility in the Internet, and use of new media in education were covered in the numerous breakout sessions spread over two days.

One of the highlights included the 2010 Mybloggercon Award, a gala event held on 2 October that celebrated Malaysian Chinese-language bloggers from different categories.

The conference culminated with a prize-giving ceremony for the *Let's Blog Penang* contest organised by Tourism Malaysia to encourage bloggers to submit their entries of their Penang experience. Cambodian blogger Kounila Keo who submitted her entry on *Asia's 'European' State*, emerged the winner, taking home a cash prize of RM1,500.

Taiwanese blogger, Tzu-Che Huang, a first-time visitor to Penang bagged the second prize worth RM1,000 with his blog entry on *Pearl of the Orient, City of the Pirates - My Penang Story*. Penangite John Khor, who submitted his entry entitled *Rediscovering Penang with BlogFest Asia 2010* was surprised with his win of RM500.

BlogFest.Asia 2010 was organised by Malaysian Chinese blog community Mybloggercon, Hong Kong-based DotAsia, with the support of WOU which provided venue facilities for the conference.

Facilitators included representatives from the Shantou University, Centre for Independent Journalism Malaysia, Southeast Asia Media Legal Defence Network, JobStreet, Exabytes, as well as Tactical Technology Collective - an international NGO championing rights advocacy through information management and technology - and other media specialists.



wawasan
open UNIVERSITY

the people's university

JobStreet

hold first joint public lecture

At the WOU public talk on *What can I do with my IT qualification in the current market?* at the main campus on 23 September, School of Science and Technology senior lecturer Ishan Abeywardena explained that, "In the current market, evolution is everything. If you can't make new technology, you are left behind." He observed that the IT professional is an integral part of the intellectual team as the company must know the latest technological trends in the market.

Quoting reports, Ishan said that Malaysia's IT sector is expected to generate more than 98,000 new jobs with the creation of more than 800 new IT companies from 2007 to 2011. He said that new markets are opening up because even small and medium enterprises such as bookstores and clinics look for a solid IT to strengthen the company.

A career option for IT professionals is virtual collaboration - where the IT person works in a global team from home, and is paid in US dollars. "You work as an in-house virtual employee for a foreign company, and the company saves on high wages." IT professionals can also serve as new-age e-educators with a global student base, conducting classes and tutorials online and charging in US dollars.

Ishan also mentioned the latest technologies which an IT person should be aware of including mobile application development platforms, free and open source software (FOSS), e-commerce technologies, social networking (e.g. Twitter, Facebook) cloud computing, and system design and simulation.

"The plight of IT professionals is that they have to continuously upgrade themselves and keep abreast of the latest technologies and trends or they'll be the first to go in the current job market," he advised. About 50 people attended the talk, including Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Wong Tat Meng, students from Universiti Utara Malaysia, USM, International Islamic University, Management and Science University, OUM, and those in software development.



WOU & KMP International forge new partnership



Wawasan Open University has entered into a formal partnership with Metro Prima International College (KMP International) to promote its higher education opportunities to working adults in the Klang Valley.

The two educational institutions sealed their collaboration with the signing of a memorandum of agreement (MoA) at the College premises in Kepong on 4 October. WOU was represented by Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Wong Tat Meng while the founder of KMP International, Dato' Ooi Saw Choo, signed on behalf of the private college.

Under the MoA, WOU has appointed KMP International as a strategic academic partner to assist the Kuala Lumpur Regional Office (KLRO) to reach out to working adults in Kepong and the Klang Valley. The College will also support the University in providing counselling and other learner support services to prospective and continuing students from amongst the adult workforce there.

During the signing ceremony, Prof Wong stated that the pursuit of tertiary qualifications are not limited to the "elite few" these days as

"the advances and empowering capabilities of information and communication technologies have enabled higher education to be delivered to the doorsteps, or rather notebooks and computer terminals, of working adults".

The MoA signing ceremony was attended by KLRO director Kuppusamy Chellappan, BURSO assistant manager Janet Khaw, Corporate Communications manager Lim Yao-han, and 30 staff and students of KMP International.

Apart from KMP International, KLRO is also supported by East West College, Seremban to help promote WOU's current and future programmes to the population in Negeri Sembilan and Melaka. The MoA between the two parties was signed earlier this year in June.



ICTs help to build knowledge societies

Speaking at the WOU public talk on *E-Learning: The Future of Universities in the 21st Century* at the main campus on 21 October, Dr Abdul Waheed Khan talked about the link between economic divide, digital divide and knowledge divide. He explained how access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) is growing steadily but the "knowledge divide" persists leading to poverty, marginalisation and exclusion.

"We are now entering a knowledge society where the application of ICTs multiplies brain power, just like the industrial society when machines multiplied muscle power," he said.

He expected the digital and knowledge divide between the economically poor and the more advanced countries to get worse in the future unless there is policy intervention to bridge the gap, noting the remarkable progress of South Korea. He observed that South Korea was on par with Zimbabwe and Zambia 20 years ago, but was able to undergo a dynamic economic transformation because of policy intervention.

Dr Khan shared that the four crucial elements to building a knowledge society are knowledge creation (e.g. R&D); knowledge preservation (through archives, libraries, etc); knowledge sharing (through media and other mode); and knowledge utilisation. "If you look at developed countries and the percentage of investment in R&D and the economic progress... Korea and

Finland have the highest GDP per capita in R&D. If you have not invested in R&D, you can't expect society to benefit from the research and innovation," he quipped.

Dr Khan also spoke on the dominance of the English Language in higher education and its role in the ranking of universities internationally. He said that many providers of higher education have gone abroad or globally to recruit students due to the economic opportunities. He said the knowledge-economy requires k-workers, so more and more people want access to higher education and embrace lifelong learning to upgrade skills and knowledge.

According to Dr Khan, an estimated 70 Asian institutions currently offer open distance learning (ODL) programmes to over 6 million students, adding however that "ODL is still in its infancy in newly-transitioned economies like Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, and Vietnam".

Assistant Vice Chancellor (Academic Support) Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye chaired the session attended by about 30 people, including Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Wong Tat Meng and Tan Sri Emeritus Prof Gajaraj Dhanarajan.

Dr Khan is currently the President of Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Business University and a member of WOU's International Advisory Board. He was formerly the Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information at UNESCO, Paris.



A night to remember

WOU's first convocation dinner

WOU hosted its first convocation celebration dinner on the evening of 23 October for the inaugural batch of Commonwealth Executive MBA (CeMBA) graduates at The Gurney Hotel in Penang, which was attended by about 180 people.

WOU Council Chairman Tun Dr Lim Keng Yaik was in his element as he regaled the crowd with his witty remarks and observations. He recollected his bygone days as a medical student in Northern Ireland, braving the cold, damp wintry mornings to wake up and go to college, unlike today's ODLE experience where students can pursue their education at the click of the mouse. He observed that back then, many smart students could not pursue higher education due to limited places in the local universities and because they could not afford to go overseas.

On a more serious note, he urged WOU's new graduates "to build up the WOU brand and the WOU Alumni. You are the ambassadors since you are out there in the workplace." Tun Dr Lim also hoped that "in 40 years, WOU can be the number one university in Malaysia. It is something that is possible since OUUK (The Open University UK) is now the #5 university in the UK."

Dato' Seri Goh Eng Toon, who received the Honorary Doctor of Laws at the convocation ceremony, told the graduates, "You should constantly hold in mind that learning doesn't

end in university and what you learned must be used and applied in your workplace." He advised, "Work hard and have integrity in whatever you do. Be honest, upright and honourable. This allows you to hold your head high and sleep well every night with a clear conscience."

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Wong Tat Meng later toasted the CeMBA graduates and took group photos with graduates and directors from the different Regional Offices.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Access, Equity and the Use of Open Educational Resources in Higher Education

Date : 27 - 29 April 2011 (Wed-Fri)

Venue : WOU main campus

WOU, in association with local and international partners, is organising this three-day conference which will consider and focus on issues related to the access, equity and use of OERs in higher education, such as policies needed, technology available, good practice and quality.

STUDENT INFO

Student Orientation Day

Date : 16 January 2011 (Sun)

Venue: WOU main campus and Regional Offices/ Learning Centres nationwide

* The KBRO Orientation Day will be on 15 January 2011 (Sat)

Re-enrolment and Deadline for Adding Courses

For students continuing their studies, the last day to re-enrol and add courses is one week after the commencement of semester, that is, 23 January 2011.

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For more details, visit wou.edu.my

Call Toll-free Careline **1-300-888-968 (WOU)**

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