Lessons in leadership

BUILDING a strong portfolio with relevant experience is crucial for university students to stay competitive in today's job market.

At Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology (TAR UMT), students are required to manage practical projects, events or campaigns to gain important experiences that prepare them for their careers.

This was the case for 48 students pursuing the Bachelor of Communication (Hons) in Advertising, who were tasked with organising the soft launch of TAR UMT's very own docudrama, *The Story of TARCians (TSOT)*.

It is the first film produced by a university in Malaysia, depicting the establishment of the then TAR College and telling the story of the early TARCians who studied there.

The soft launch marked an important milestone, generating excitement and anticipation for the film's release while also unveiling its official soundtrack.

Soo Yuh Wen and Tee Wan Fei led the organising team behind the university-level event.

"As project coordinator, I led the planning and execution of the soft launch, collaborating with the relevant departments in the university to ensure smooth operations," Soo explained.

"My role involved problem-solving, conducting meetings, tracking the team's progress, and being the bridge of communication between our adviser and team members.

"I also had to ensure the team was motivated and inspired to give their best for the event."

The event was more than just an academic assignment.

Working in a large group brought together diverse ideas and perspectives, and while this seems like an advantage, it can also be challenging at times.

"Collaboration is about openness and trust. Working with so many people, I learnt to embrace different ideas and viewpoints, which often led to stronger outcomes. Problem-solving requires quick thinking, a broader vision, and knowing when to seek help.

"Ultimately, this event was not a one-person effort but a testament to the power of teamwork," Soo added.

Tee added: "Many times, we encountered challenges, like last-minute changes to the programme or technical issues with sound and performances.

"However, we were receptive to our team's ideas and adapted quickly to ensure the best possible outcome."

To keep things structured and goal-oriented, the duo assigned team members to committees based on their individual strengths and preferences, such as business, planning, creative, logistics and public relations.

Each committee had distinct responsibilities, which improved coordination and efficiency. Still, managing a large team came with its challenges, with communication being the most significant.

Throughout the process, Tee and Soo encountered unexpected hurdles, including miscommunication during the planning of the social media schedule for promoting the event.

Soo (left) and Tee addressing the audience during the soft launch of *The Story of TARCians*.

Plans to engage influencers had to be dropped due to time constraints. But, through persistence, adaptability and teamwork, the team came up with better ideas, ensuring strong online publicity through their social media pages.

Reflecting on the experience, both leaders recognised the importance of clear communication and organised planning.

"In the future, when I work in advertising and handle multiple projects, from brainstorming campaigns to event planning, I will prioritise communication from the start.

"In an advertising agency where teamwork is essential, I may have a larger team to coordinate hence, establishing clear guidelines and more efficient ways to streamline updates will be crucial for smooth execution and minimising miscommunication," Soo concluded.

■ For more details on TAR UMT's advertising programmes, call 011-1067 8256 or visit *www.tarc.edu.my* to apply online. Various financial aid and merit scholarships are available for qualified students.

Students at MSU College gain the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the field of accounting.

A bright future in accounting

CAREERS in accounting and finance are in high demand across all industries and spectrums.

They are in charge of budgeting and financial advice, as well as preparing annual financial statements and auditing the company's accounts efficiently.

Recognising the importance of knowledgeable and competent accounting personnel, Management and Science University (MSU) College offers the Diploma in Accounting through its School of Hospitality, Education and Business Studies (SHB) to those who enjoy working with numbers and calculations.

Beyond bookkeeping

Accounting principles and auditing will be taught to students, as well as the most recent developments in economics, management, marketing, finance and insurance.

The curriculum ensures that students are not only capable of performing accounting transactions but also of making tough business decisions.

This programme provides students with a solid foundation for mastering theory and techniques in order to understand financial and accounting activities.

Topics of study include economics, information technology and accounting law.

Students with three credits in mathematics, science and any other subject in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia or recognised certificates can expect a conducive learning environment and high-calibre academics with years of practice and experience in the field.

Accessible and supportive learning

Various character-building programmes, including those linked to UN Sustainable Development Goals initiatives, community engagements and entrepreneurial embedded ecosystems will be embedded into students' learning experience to help them become more competitive and well-rounded.

Credit transfer allows MSU College graduates to pursue a second-year bachelor's degree at MSU through its Faculty of Business Management and Professional Studies.

Students are also encouraged to pursue additional accounting certifications such as ACCA or CAT in order to increase their earning power.

Other programmes offered by SHB include Early Childhood Education, Management and English Language Teaching.

Professional certification options

MSU College is also MSU APEL Centre for potential candidates to take the APEL Aptitude Test as the non-conventional pre-qualification for entry into higher studies, in which MSU currently offers APEL A and APEL C at T-3 (certificate), T-4 (diploma), T-6 (bachelor's degree) and T-7 (master's degree) levels.

■ For more information on programmes, visit the website *www.msucollege.edu.my* or e-mail enquiry@msucollege.my. Alternatively, you may call 03 5521 6868.

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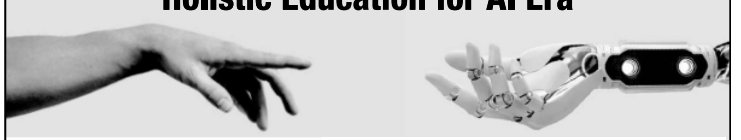

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Of grit and growth

FOR Doris Evelyn Jong Yah Hui, pursuing a Master in Molecular Medicine at IMU University has been an incredibly rewarding experience.

The area of study has not only deepened her understanding of diseases at the molecular level but also challenged her resilience, discipline and adaptability.

She shares how balancing her professional responsibilities, academic commitments and family life has been a demanding, yet immensely fulfilling journey.

The drive to understand and innovate

One of my greatest sources of inspiration was my father, who earned his Master's in Business Administration at the age of 85.

His persistent pursuit of knowledge taught me that learning has no age limit, and that perseverance is essential to success.

Another major influence has been my patients, particularly those fighting cancer. As a surgeon, I often encounter cases where the underlying cause of illnesses remains unclear.

This has stimulated my interest in understanding the origins of diseases, especially through the lens of genetics, precision medicine, and innovative therapies such as stem cell and gene therapy.

Test of endurance

Embarking on this master's programme marked the beginning of an intellectually demanding journey. The coursework, which covered subjects like molecular genetics, immunology and research methodologies, required adaptability and a commitment to constant learning.

However, the rapid pace of development in this field posed a challenge, requiring me to stay current with vast amounts of evolving information, demanding both dedication and resilience.

The most significant challenge,

Jong says her Master's coursework deepened her expertise in molecular genetics, immunology and precision medicine while also sharpening her research and critical analysis abilities.

however, has been balancing my various roles. As a surgeon, my profession demands long hours and unpredictable emergencies.

Being a wife, mother, and student has made effective time management essential.

There were times when the weight of academic deadlines and personal responsibilities seemed overwhelming. Yet, these challenges have strengthened my ability to prioritise, stay focused, and continue moving forward with determination. Throughout this journey, I have been fortunate to receive unwavering support from my family and mentors.

Beyond textbooks

Studying for a Master's in Molecular Medicine has led to significant academic achievements.

I have gained a deeper understanding of the molecular and cellular mechanisms behind diseases, particularly complex conditions like cancer and neurodegenerative disorders.

The coursework has allowed me to master advanced concepts in molecular genetics, immunology, and precision medicine, while also enhancing my research skills and ability to critically analyse scientific literature.

Above all, this journey has taught me the importance of perseverance. In science, failures are inevitable, but each setback offers valuable insights.

Looking ahead

As I continue on this academic path, I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead.

Whether in research, clinical practice, or biotechnology, I aspire to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing advancements in molecular medicine.

The knowledge and experience I have gained through this programme have not only given me the confidence to face future medical challenges but have also inspired me to continue learning and striving for innovation.

I am committed to making a lasting impact in healthcare and contributing to breakthroughs that will improve patient outcomes.

At IMU, the MSc Molecular Medicine Programme is designed for individuals passionate about understanding disease mechanisms at the molecular level and applying this knowledge in research, healthcare or industry settings.

IMU's collaboration with Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) will ensure a smooth transfer of study modules from the MSc in Molecular Medicine at IMU to the MSc in Genomic Medicine at QMUL.

The mode of learning at IMU would be via face-to-face or Open and Distance Learning (ODL) while the QMUL modules are via ODL.

The next commencement of this programme is in September 2025.

Prospective students are encouraged to submit an online application.

■ For more information, refer to *www.imu.edu.my* or e-mail start@imu.edu.my or call IMU at 03-2731 7272.

Shaping future medical leaders

THIS year marks the 25th Conferring Ceremony of RUMC, a symbolic milestone not only for the graduating class of 2025 but also for the institution's evolution as a globally connected, student-focused centre of excellence in medicine.

RUMC is the only overseas branch campus of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) and University College Dublin (UCD), and its graduates will receive a National University of Ireland (NUI) degree during their conferment, a qualification recognised globally.

Over the past two and a half decades, RUMC has produced thousands of medical professionals, many of whom now serve in the healthcare sectors of Malaysia, Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, and beyond.

"For me, RUMC offered the perfect balance," shares its valedictorian, newly conferred doctor Jarren Lu Yi Sheng.

"I sought the invaluable experience of living overseas independently, yet appreciated the structured support that meant I wasn't away for the entire five-year programme. The comfort of having family in Penang also played a significant role in my decision, creating a truly nurturing environment."

At the heart of RUMC's mission is the commitment to offering students a transformative educational pathway that not only meets international standards but also empowers them to pursue careers in medicine and healthcare.

The flagship Undergraduate Medicine programme offers a truly international journey. Students begin their pre-clinical years in Dublin, Ireland, at either RCSI or UCD, before returning to Penang, Malaysia, for their clinical training.

This best-of-both-worlds experience provides students with unique exposure to both Western and Asian healthcare systems, preparing them to practise medicine with a global perspective.

For high school leavers, the Foundation in Science (FIS) programme is an ideal stepping stone. This one-year course is designed for students coming from SPM, IGCSE, O-level, or equivalent backgrounds. Meanwhile, the Pre-Medical Foundation Year is designed for those who may not fulfil the direct entry requirements for the Undergraduate Medicine programme but remain committed to pursuing a career in medicine. Both pathways are structured to foster confidence and academic rigour, enabling students to transition seamlessly into medical or health-related degrees.

For those driven by a passion for healthcare that extends beyond conventional clinical roles, RUMC offers the Bachelor of Science in Medical Informatics – a cutting-edge programme blending medicine, data science and digital technology.

The degree was developed with direct input from healthcare leaders who understand the challenges of hiring talent with the right blend of skills.

As Industry Advisory Board member and B.Braun research and development director Dr Aik Aun Tan explains, "I tried hiring a data analyst for two years. Eventually, I gave up and started working with universities to grow our talent. That's how rare it is to find the right fit."

His experience reflects a growing industry reality: "Too many candidates are well versed in technology but lack healthcare knowledge, or vice versa. That's why this degree is so timely."

The 25th Conferring Ceremony will also include the presentation of the NUI Honorary Doctorate to RUMC founder Datuk Dr Godfrey Geh. His vision laid the foundation for what has grown into a landmark institution, bridging two nations through education and healthcare.

Furthermore, RUMC's faculty will also receive their Postgraduate Diplomas in Health Professions Education, awarded by RCSI, underscoring the university's commitment to lifelong learning, teaching excellence, and academic development.

As RUMC celebrates 25 years, it invites aspiring students to be part of its next chapter, where education meets purpose and passion drives meaningful impact.

■ Applications for the 2025 intake are still open, but seats are limited. Contact RUMC's education counsellors for more information, visit *www.rumc.edu.my*, or call 04 217 1999.

RUMC's medical students study across Ireland and Malaysia, gaining exposure to diverse healthcare systems. This unique dual-campus approach prepares them to practise medicine with a global perspective, just like the 2,500 alumni now serving across 15 countries.

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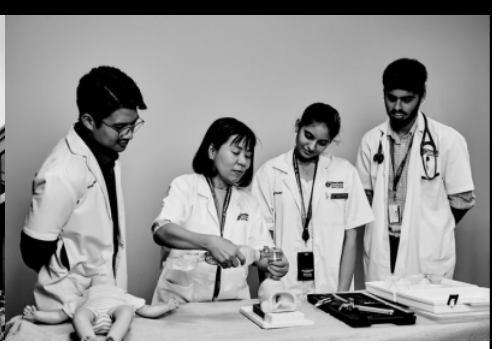

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Empowering future doctors

IN a time when it's essential for medical education to keep pace with rapidly evolving healthcare needs, institutions of higher learning must equip future doctors with the knowledge and skills to thrive.

Newcastle University Medicine Malaysia's (NUMed) Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) programme stands out for its hands-on, patient-centred approach.

Designed to go beyond textbooks and theory, the globally recognised curriculum blends scientific foundations with early clinical exposure in a systematic and structured manner.

Students are immersed in primary and secondary care settings throughout their pre-clinical and clinical years. This helps to cultivate practical and communication skills, as well as professionalism, paving the way for them to become responsible and accountable future doctors.

NUMed's MBBS students have ample opportunities to hone their practical skills.

The hands-on learning is further enriched through placements at general and district hospitals, primary care clinics and a variety of activities, including health camps, mobile clinics, audits and research projects.

These ample opportunities enable students to gain practical experience, build clinical confidence and develop a strong sense of community engagement.

NUMed's Year 4 MBBS student Adeel Malik shared that the institution has played a huge role in fostering his passion for medicine by providing real-world experiences, right from the start.

"Being able to see and interact with patients daily has been so rewarding. It's not just about applying what we've learned in class.

"Receiving encouragement from patients reminds me why I'm here – to really make a difference in people's lives," Adeel Malik said.

■ To find out more about NUMed's MBBS and its other programme offerings, visit *www.newcastle.edu.my*.

For more information, e-mail admissions@newcastle.edu.my, call 07-555 3800, or WhatsApp 011-1231 5411 or 012-784 9546.

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CFS Kampar has introduced a variety of STEM outreach activities designed to engage and inspire school students.

Knowledge meets fun in learning

WHEN it comes to pre-university education, students and parents seek more than just academic excellence. They value meaningful experiences that spark curiosity, build confidence and nurture real-world skills.

At the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS), Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Kampar campus, learning extends beyond textbooks. It is about inspiring the next generation of thinkers, innovators and changemakers. Over the years, its CFS Kampar has taken proactive steps to organise impactful educational outreach initiatives that engage school students and foster a love for learning.

A key highlight among its outreach programmes is the "NextGen Science 2025", held on April 24-25 at the UTAR Kampar campus.

Organised by CFS Kampar in collaboration with the Confucius Institute at UTAR, the two-day event drew together hundreds of curious young minds from various secondary schools to explore the wonders of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

Another notable initiative was the "Knowledge Masters Quiz Challenge 2024", which attracted more than 380 enthusiastic students from over 35 schools across Perak and Selangor.

Organised by CFS Kampar in August 2024, the event provided a lively platform for students to test their general knowledge, quick thinking, and teamwork in a competitive yet enjoyable setting.

Complementing these outreach programmes was the "Microbotics and Edukit Design Workshop", held in December 2024, and specifically designed for Tamil school students in the Kinta Selatan district. This hands-on workshop introduced participants to the basics of robotics and circuitry using beginner-friendly Edukits and micro-controller programming.

Further strengthening its connection with local schools, CFS Kampar has also collaborated with Shen Jai High School to host the annual "5cience Xplain" science fair. This fair is designed to spark scientific curiosity through interactive exhibits, live experiments, and creative presentations delivered by UTAR Foundation students.

What truly distinguishes CFS Kampar is the active participation of its Foundation students and academic staff in these outreach projects.

Every initiative is carefully planned to encourage student involvement, not only among school students but also UTAR's own Foundation students, who contribute as organisers, facilitators and mentors.

Above all, CFS Kampar's outreach initiatives highlight the centre's greater purpose, not just to produce academically capable students, but socially responsible individuals. By giving back to the community and inspiring others through education, UTAR ensures its students are equipped not just for university life, but for life itself.

UTAR offers over 140 programmes, from Foundation Studies to bachelor's, master's and PhD degrees in diverse fields such as Accounting, Business, Finance and Economics, Actuarial Science, Mathematics and Process Management, Agriculture and Food Science, Arts, Social Sciences and Education, Chinese Studies, Creative Industries, Digital Animation, Multimedia and Design, Engineering and Built Environment, Information and Communication Technology, Life and Physical Sciences, as well as Medicine and Health Sciences.

■ To learn more, visit *www.utar.edu.my* or contact 05 468 8888 (Kampar campus) or 03 9086 0288 (Sungai Long campus). Feel free to walk in or call for any enquiries on weekdays from 9am to 5pm (closed on public holidays).

Healing oceans, building futures

THE Coral Triangle (CT), also known as the Amazon of the seas, is one of the central coral reef zones in the world and is acknowledged as the global centre of marine biodiversity and a conservation priority.

Making up the triangle are the tropical waters of Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Timor Leste; each of the eco-regions encompasses, at best, 500 reef-building coral species.

Ambon, situated in the Maluku Islands (Moluccas) of Eastern Indonesia, is of paramount importance to the marine biodiversity of the Coral Triangle.

The inaugural edition of the Management and Science University (MSU) MyCoral for the international segment was held on the coast of Ambon in early May of this year.

MyCoral, an annual innovative coral restoration initiative, has been overseen by the International Medical School (IMS) at MSU since 2016.

Its objective is to preserve and regenerate coral reefs, which are among the most biologically diverse ecosystems on Earth.

As coral reefs tend to encounter unprecedented threats from climate change, pollution, overfishing, and habitat degradation, the MyCoral initiative proactively restores these vital ecosystems.

MyCoral was held internationally for the first time in Ambon, Indonesia, in May, marking the debut of MyCoral Indonesia 1.0.

For the first time in its nearly decade-long MyCoral endeavour, the International Medical School Student Association (IMSA) partnered with the Faculty of Medicine at Pattimura University (UNPATTI) to organise MyCoral Indonesia 1.0, which was held in conjunction with the 15th edition of its Meducation Tour.

Under the theme of "Preserving the Wonder of Maluku Sea: Reviving Corals, Sustaining Health", participants engaged in hands-on coral restoration activities in efforts to grow and protect coral populations in Ambon.

Ten artificial coral reefs have been installed at Desa Hative Besar as an initial measure to ensure the sustainability of marine life beneath the seabed of Ambon.

Ambon deputy mayor Ibu Elly Toisutta, was also present at the event.

In 2023, the MyCoral initiative in Terengganu marked the beginning of the partnership with UNPATTI.

Participation in the mission piqued the interest of academicians from UNPATTI in conducting coral restoration efforts in Ambon.

They endeavoured to address the developmental stressor that is contributing to the decline of corals in Ambon by acquiring the necessary techniques and importing the technology back to their region.

In addition, the MSU MyCoral team regards Ambon as an optimal location for the advancement of environmental health research.

MyCoral Indonesia 1.0 provided its participants with a comprehensive exposure, and an experiential learning experience in a global arena for environmental sustainability.

MSU's commitment to sustainability and global outreach is a reflection of its holistic approach to education – one that integrates environmental consciousness with academic excellence.

This same spirit drives the university's strides in medical education, including the establishment of its offshore MSU International Medical School (IMS) campus in Bangalore.

The campus is Malaysia's first offshore medical school to receive full five-year accreditation by the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC), with its MBBS programme also recognised by the National Medical Commission (NMC) of India, Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC) and Maldives Medical and Dental Council (MMDC).

With the establishment of the MSU Medical Centre (MSUMC), MSU has become the first private university in Malaysia to have its own private specialist hospital.

MSU's Medicine cluster made its debut in the 2025 Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings by Subject, placing within the World Top 701-850.

The university is also proudly listed among Malaysia's top 20 universities.

Blending technical vocational education and training (TVET) with traditional academic curricula, MSU enhances competencies with industry internship, community, and creative entrepreneurship, as well as global exposure; empowering MSU graduates with the well-roundedness desired and sought after by employers.

A variety of skills enhancement programmes are also available to strengthen students' competitive edge. MSU's Graduate Employability Skills (GEmS) and Personal Enrichment Competencies (PEC) programmes are designed to further develop students' soft skills.

Extensive partnerships and collaborations with over 350 institutions in more than 40 countries worldwide provide comprehensive mobility opportunities for all MSU students, enhancing their graduate employability through global exposure via overseas studies and internships.

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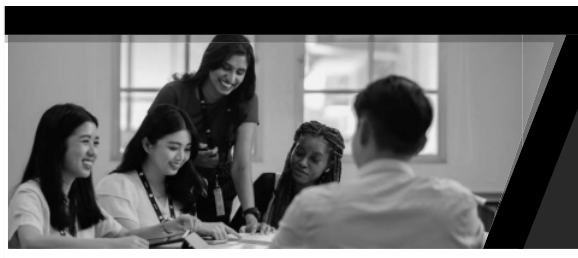

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