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An Everywoman as Beauty Queen

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UCSI University student Michelle Lim (centre) makes a point during the debate against the Malaysian Bar Council

Stomp your rights

The recent Human Rights Week at UCSI University brought students and faculty together while informing and inspiring action among its community

THE horrors of human rights violations are splashed across the media globally every day. Yet anecdotal evidence suggests that few have taken the time to understand the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — ratified by the United Nations in 1948 — which is considered a milestone document in the history of human rights.

Considering that education is accepted as an instrument to address inequalities in society, learning institutions are the perfect platform for promoting equality, social justice and respect for the individual human being among

young people.

UCSI University employees and students recently celebrated Human Rights Week by making their stand.

Jointly organised by the Malaysian Bar Council, Suara Rakyat Malaysia, Amnesty International, All Women's Action Society Malaysia (AWAM) and Empower, the week was filled with activities such as debates and workshops designed to bring students and faculty together while informing and inspiring action among the university community.

At the launch of the event, UCSI University vice chancellor and

president Peter T.S. Ng said: "UCSI University is like a mini United Nations in itself, with more than 70 countries represented within the student community." He added that although each country has its own laws, basic human rights have a universal voice.

One of the highlights of the campaign was a debating competition between a team of UCSI University students, which comprised Mass Communications and English Language and Communications majors, and the Malaysian Bar Council.

The debate touched on several important issues, such as basic rights for education and equal opportunities to conduct businesses. Both teams won one round each.

Students came away from witnessing the debate with better awareness of issues pertaining to equality and basic human rights.

There were also workshops by AWAM and Empower which highlighted issues such as women and youths' participation in democratic and good governance, as well as the elimination of discrimination against women.

The week ended with a bang as the STOMP! : Make a Difference Concert, in aid of the Women's Aid

Organisation, took place at the university auditorium.

The word "Stomp" was chosen to demonstrate the stand: "Enough is enough", on violence and abuse against women.

Organised by members of the Social Sciences and Liberal Arts Association, the concert featured performances by local independent singers such as Reza Salleh, Rashdan Harith, Ronnie Tan, Lenny Lysandra, the Halfway Kings, Vertical Universal and Ahmad Nahri.

Everyone was also treated to some energetic dance numbers by the Urban Groove Dance Network and Rhythm Music Dance Studio.

The performers urged the crowd to make a difference and the world a better place for women of different races, religions or backgrounds. Matthew Marian, first-year Mass Communications student and lead singer of Vertical Universal, believed that music cuts across all barriers.

"Music has the power to bring awareness to the masses as everyone understands it. I think music should always convey an important message," he said.

Final-year Mass Communications student and also co-organiser of the Human Rights Week Nick Lim Kah Ken said that people should know their rights as human beings.

"By being aware of your rights, you would then be able to make inferences (from your knowledge) and differentiate between right and wrong," he added.



Popular singer Reza Salleh got the audience dancing during a concert