

# Quality education from fund

MANY might have noticed that there were only a small number of contributors to the The Star Education Fund this year, but there was a good reason for it.

Star Publications (M) Bhd marketing services (Promotions and Star Education Fund) manager Susanna Kuan said all the 29 partners-in-education were carefully selected to ensure that those who obtained financial aid would receive quality education.

"We want parents and students to understand that the Star Education Fund is a prestigious award," she said at the opening of the Star Education Fair 2011.

Thanking the institutions which had pledged scholarships, Star Publications (M) Bhd executive director and chief operating officer Ho Kay Tat expressed his wish for the fund to continue to expand.

This year, the fund is offering 215 scholarships from 29 partners-in-education, worth a total amount of RM8.65mil. Also present at the ceremony was Star Publications (M) Bhd group managing director and CEO Datin Linda Ngiam.

KDU University College deputy vice-chancellor (strategic development & enterprise) Dr Chia Chee Fen said the cost of education had been going up and there was a dire need for many students to be able to obtain financial aid for their studies.

"By being a partner of the Star Education Fund, we are able to reach out to many students," she said.

INTI International University associate vice-president (student services division) Dr Sia Ah Hiok said the institution did not even think twice when they were invited to be the fund's partner-in-education.

"I suggest perhaps an online application system can be set up for students to apply to the fund as many teenagers are very IT-savvy nowadays," she said.

Sunway University executive director Elizabeth Lee said she hoped Malaysia could be recognised as an excellent education hub in the region.

"We have so much more to offer in terms of higher education. Our quality should be recognised with the setting up of the Rating System for Malaysian Higher Education Institutions (Setara) and the Malaysian Qualifications Agency," she said.

UCSI University Foundation chief operating officer Margaret Soo said the stringent selection by the fund committee had helped them select the most deserving candidates.

"When we interview the applicants, we look at whether they have the right academic potential and personal attributes like strong leadership qualities," she said.

The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus vice-provost (teaching & learning) Prof Stephen W Doughty said the institution was happy to be a contributor to the fund.

When students look for a programme, they should think of the skills that they would acquire during the course of the programme and not just employability alone.

The top five contributors are The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, INTI International University & Colleges, UCSI University Foundation, Sunway University and Singapore Institute of Management.

Other contributors are Brickfields Asia College; Equator Academy of Art, Penang; GIST-GEM Global College; HELP University College; IACT College; KDU College, Penang; KDU University College; Kolej Tunku Abdul Rahman; Kuala Lumpur Infrastructure University College; Limkokwing University of Creative Technology; Methodist College Kuala Lumpur; Multimedia University; PJ College of Art & Design; Raffles International College; Saito College; SEGi University College, SEGi College Kuala Lumpur; SEGi College Subang Jaya; Sentral Technology College Penang; Singapore Institute of Management; Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus; Taylor's University, The One Academy; The Otomotif College (TOC) and Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.