

Hospitality specialists in the making

JACKELYN Ng Shuk Chuen is a teenager who enjoys leisure activities such as reading and watching movies. Yet underneath her easy-going nature is a person committed to both bowling and her studies.

As a bowler, Ng represents Sarawak in both national and international bowling tournaments, including Sukan Malaysia (SUKMA). Besides this, Ng is also a student undertaking a Diploma in Hotel Management at UCSI University's Sarawak campus.

Her mix of bowling and hotel management is, as Ng points out, "Mostly because I enjoy meeting new people."

"I decided on the hotel management programme at UCSI because it presented opportunities to meet people from all over the world and learn about different cultures."

Ng has gained important skills such as communications and customer service skills from her course. She believes that the programme has taught her what a career in hospitality management will really be like once she joins the workforce.

Students under UCSI's Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management (FHTM) get to apply theoretical knowledge into practice at events such as the Korean Night 2013, which was organised by Ng and students of both the hotel management and culinary arts programmes.

In line with the Korean government's efforts to promote its cuisine and culture in Malaysia, the event was part of an assignment for the banquet and event management course.

Through the experience of running the event from its planning stage to execution, Ng learnt to manage an event with confidence. "When I first started this course, I found it challenging to speak in front of a classroom. But now, I can speak publicly with more confidence thanks to our frequent class presentations," she says.

Hands-on experience

With more than 1,200 industry partners,

UCSI's Co-op programme is undoubtedly the largest in Malaysia. The programme places students in industry-related companies for two months each year, ensuring that they receive exposure to a real working environment and learn how the industry works.

Hotel management student Lim Yun Li was placed at the Majestic Hotel and recalls her experience. "It was superb. I had never worked in a hotel before so it was an eye-opener for me. I learned so much," she says.

The first part of her training involved being a guest service assistant at the front desk followed by a stint as a customer relations officer in the second part of her training. At the hotel, Lim learned to anticipate the needs and requests of customers and to view her role as someone who creates and crafts experiences for guests. More importantly, she developed a passion for her work and a commitment to excellence, which are values advocated by UCSI.

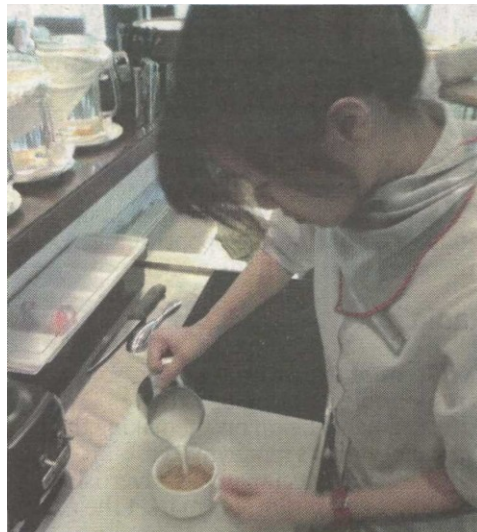
The work-based learning (WBL) approach at UCSI involves a unique, non-traditional academic plus industry experience delivery method. With the WBL model, FHTM students will be better prepared for the working world. The Co-op programme complements this approach by providing work experience opportunities.

For this purpose, the UCSI Group has established praxis centres (in-house business entities) to equip students with the right skills and practical experience prior to graduation. These include a boutique hotel (Le Quadri Hotel), a restaurant (The Quad) and a consultancy firm.

Steadfast in its commitment to produce industry-ready students like Lim and Ng, the FHTM is keen to see its students succeed in the tourism and hospitality industry and continues to take the right steps to achieve this vision.

UCSI will host its Open Day on April 12 and 13 from 9am to 6pm.

■ For more information about UCSI's Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management, call 03-9101 8882 or visit www.ucsiuniversity.edu.my/onlineenquiry



UCSI provides hospitality and tourism students the platform to put their theoretical knowledge into practice.