

Ghoulish good deeds

IT was a Halloween celebration with a difference as UCSI University's (UCSI) mass communications students brought cheer to more than 40 underprivileged children of Shelter, a welfare organisation.

Instead of screams of terror, the event themed "Spooktacular Halloween – Smiles through Spooks" provoked shrieks of joy.

The project was a part of the university's Bachelor's degree in Mass Communication course. Students were tasked with organising a charity event for which they had to collect funds, with the help of both traditional and social media. This project was managed in line with UCSI's praxis approach, which focuses on the application of theory to practice.

Instead of merely memorising theories and passing examinations, students learn current industry practices and require-

ments.

According to Yuzfaleeq Yusof, who was in charge of media relations for this project, the experience was eye-opening.

"We wanted to help Shelter in the long run. To do so, we needed to get the media to highlight their good work," he said.

He added that the team's efforts paid off when two major newspapers sent reporters to cover the event. The students also used social media sites to raise funds.

"We really understand mass communications better through having to organise real events before we enter the working world," he said.

The Halloween theme was chosen, due to its timeliness and its appeal.

The students organised a fundraising exercise at UCSI University's Kuala Lumpur campus from the Sept 22 to Oct 3.

Booths were set up selling horror-themed cards as well as various nail and body art paraphernalia.

A total of RM2,000 was raised. RM1,500 was donated to Shelter while the remaining funds were used to purchase items for the goody bags given to each child.

This hands-on approach to learning coupled with the aim of giving back to society is something that new dean, Asst Prof Dr Chan Nee Nee, foresees will be the hallmark of her tenure.

"Not many know this, but the new generation of students learn better when they are able to connect with a cause," she said.

She added that the faculty realised this and is revamping its programmes accordingly to better engage the students and subsequently empower them to fulfil their potential.



Ghostbusters: Prof Chan (front row, first from left) with the UCSI students and children from Shelter.