

UCSI to play big role in state's industrial growth

By Marylyn Ten

KUCHING: University College Sedaya International (UCSI) Kuching campus is offering diploma courses in bio-technology which can contribute to the industrial growth of the state.

"With projects such as the Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy (SCORE) being implemented, UCSI will be able to contribute in terms of human resource through its bio-technology courses," said UCSI Group president Peter Ng in an exclusive interview with The Borneo Post here yesterday.

"We are also the only private institution to provide bio-technology diploma courses here and the graduates can further their studies to degree level at our campus in Kuala Lumpur," he added.

Ng also said that Kuching could also be the regional hub for education excellence in East Malaysia as it was the most natural and logical jump-off point for international students.

"International students from regional Kalimantan and Brunei can opt to study in Kuching first where the cost of living here is lower before proceeding to further their studies elsewhere. This in turn generates foreign exchange," he said.

"UCSI campuses in Kuala Lumpur and Terengganu enables students to undergo exchange programmes to study at the Kuching campus to which may lead to the student opting to work in Kuching after they graduate. This results in the migration of talents to the state."

Ng, who is also Vice-Chancellor, said though its new Kuching campus located along Jalan Tun Jugah, currently offers diploma and A-level courses, the university college would soon introduce a spectrum of courses including bachelor degrees at the campus here in the near future.

"For instance, students undergoing diploma in business administration here will soon be able to take up the full degree programme," he said, adding that the impending programmes included mass communication, environmental engineering and architectural studies.

When asked what sets UCSI apart from other education institutes in Malaysia, Ng said that the university college believes in co-opt education.

"Co-opt education, a term



NG: UCSI only private institution to provide bio-technology diploma courses.

commonly used in Canada, means to co-opt working experience into academic environment. Here in Malaysia, we usually term this as internship or industrial placement," said Ng, a graduate of Lakehead University in Thunderbay, Ontario, Canada.

"Upon finishing their term in October, students will then be placed in an internship for two months in November and December every year throughout their course."

According to Ng, the student's year level and job placement were selected professionally through the university college's My Co-op Portal, a system that ensures that the students were "well-matched" with the prospective employers.

"The portal also works as a database of resumes for students who have graduated. I can assure that 99 per cent of our students are employed almost immediately as most of them are hired by employers who took them in during their industrial placement," he said.

Established since 1986, UCSI is currently the top four private university colleges in the country offering a wide range of academic studies comprising engineering, information technology and business, applied sciences, pharmacy, medicine, social science and music.

It began as the Canadian Institute of Computer Studies, a computer-based training centre located in SS2, Petaling Jaya, before it became known as Sedaya College when it was accorded the college status in 1990.

In 2002, it evolved into Sedaya International College, reflecting its increasing international focus and was subsequently accorded the university college status the year after.