



Kueh Wun Thiin (right) and Kingsley Chuo Meng Han bagged Gold and Silver in the WorldSkills Malaysia Sarawak 2017.

Undergraduates make UCSI proud with win at Worldskills Malaysia Sarawak 2017

KUCHING: UCSI undergraduates from the department of Hospitality and Culinary Arts bagged both the Gold and Silver medals under the Culinary Category of the WorldSkills Malaysia Sarawak 2017 held at Borneo Convention Centre Kuching from Oct 27 to 29.

After the qualifying round last month, the duo were required to prepare a full course meal consisting of an appetiser, main course and dessert during the finals.

They accomplished this feat after enduring exhausting hours of preparation and presentation of their dishes.

Gold Medalist Kueh Wun Thiin, a first year undergraduate, expressed his gratitude to the university for giving him the opportunity to take part in numerous competitions.

"I never thought of winning the competition. I told myself to just focus and do my best. Thanks to my lecturers for their guidance and ideas, I managed to win the Gold Medal. Going through a month of sleepless nights wasn't easy, but I enjoyed the process" he enthused.

Coming from a family of four, Kueh started cooking for his family's daily meal when he was in Form 2. It was his grandmother who inspired his interest in cooking. "I observed my grandmother preparing our family meals since I was five or six years old and that was where my passion for cooking started", he said.

An alumnus of SMK Bandar Kuching No.1, Kueh completed his SPM in 2013 and joined UCSI's Diploma in Culinary Arts Programme right after he got his results.

He is currently pursuing a degree in Hospitality Management at the university.

"I was not a high flyer in my academics during my secondary

school days and I was not really into studies. Thankfully, my SPM results met the minimum entry requirement and I was given a chance to continue my studies and shape my future."

He has participated in several competitions across the country since his second semester at UCSI.

He said: "My first competition was organised by Sarawak Cultural Village in 2015 with a salmon dish. I did not win but gained experience and exposure. My first award was Diploma in the Asian Main Course: Fish/Seafood Category from Penang International Halal Chef Challenge 2016, Penang."

Kueh aspires to work in Europe, focusing on French cuisine after completing his degree.

"I would like to explore Europe for two to five years before starting my own Western food restaurant in Kuching. Working as a chef would be hectic and it is never easy to stay long hours in a kitchen. But I am always ready to handle all the stress as cooking is my passion and becoming a successful Michelin Star Chef is my dream," he said.

Kingsley Chuo Meng Han, the Silver Medalist said: "Half way through the first day of competition, I thought of giving up. I had a fever with headache. It was hard for me to handle all the stress from the competition."

"However, when I thought about the preparation and months of practice that I had gone through in the kitchen, as well as the expectations and high hopes of the university and my lecturers, I told myself not to give up before I've tried my best. This is the day when all my hard work paid off."

The university has been actively sending their students to various competitions not only for exposure and to gain valuable experience, but also to display skills and knowledge learned from their studies in UCSI.