

UCSI holds Homestay Training Programme in Bengoh

KUCHING: UCSI University held its first homestay training programme 'Sarawak Next Paradise Homestay' on Saturday at the Bengoh Resettlement Scheme (BRS) in Padawan near here.

It was organised with participating partners Malaysia Centre for Tourism and Hospitality Education (MyCenTHE) Sarawak Region; Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia; Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth and Sports; Padawan Municipal Council; and Dayak Bidayuh National Association (DBNA).

The programme was coordinated and managed by lecturers and 40 UCSI students from the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management with the aim of shaping better-qualified homestay operators.

It was part of the faculty's corporate social responsibility initiative to contribute to the community in Sarawak.

"Homestay operators should be creative in providing interesting packages and activities to attract tourists to their respective homestays," said Puncak Borneo member of parliament Willie Mongin, who officiated at the event.

He said there are many places of interest for tourists to visit around Padawan and hopes homestay entrepreneurs will use



Willie (fourth left) is seen during a photo call with (from left) MyCenTHE Sarawak Region coordinator Bernard Stephen; DBNA cultural officer councillor Paul Akiu Bandat; MyCenTHE president and Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management dean Prof Dr Kashif Hussain; Mukvinder; and Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth and Sports assistant secretary Rafidah Ahmad Shafiee.

their imagination and original ideas to create attractive packages via social media and market their homestays and products to the international market.

UCSI University Sarawak campus chief operating officer Mukvinder Sandhu said the programme benefited homestay operators and local villagers through knowledge transfer offered by private and public institutions.

"I believe what they've learned today will directly aid them

in their sustainability toward social-cultural and economic development," she said.

Mukvinder added UCSI University and its partners are also championing the setting up of the Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) Kuching to deliver education for sustainable development and translate global initiatives such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the local context.

Over 350 participants attended the event including villagers and

students from secondary schools in Kuching.

The students were given the chance to learn how to make a mocktail, fold napkins, make fruit flambe, and also enjoyed a telematch.

There were four sharing sessions by successful industry partners, as well as four workshops - 'Guidelines of Homestay Operations', 'Activities and Attractions', 'Maintenance and Facilities', and 'Safety and Environment'.