The Apprentice Asia winner in Executive Lecture Series
Danish students on extended visit to Nilai U
Fencer bags gold medal at SUKIPT 2014 Games
Here at Nilai University, we are always talking about our philosophy – ‘Enrichment for Life’. I am constantly asked to expound on it. My answer is that education at Nilai U is not confined to textbooks and classrooms. To further illustrate this philosophy, I would like to highlight some of the recent activities on campus.

The cover story for this issue is Jonathan Yabut’s visit to Nilai University. Organised by the Faculty of Business, the first winner of The Apprentice Asia reality television show was invited to speak to our students. I was most impressed by his vitality and passion when addressing the audience and how well he connected with the audience. Judging from the applause and the unending requests for photographs, both students and staff certainly enjoyed his talk. Well done to the Faculty of Business for inviting such a dynamic speaker!

Nilai U also recently played host to a group of Danish students and their teachers. The object of their three-week stay was to expose them to the heritage and international students’ environment at Nilai U. I can safely say that the Danes certainly enjoyed themselves judging by their positive responses they gave about their learning experience at Nilai U. Our students also had the chance to learn more about how their European counterparts approach higher education as well as learn more about Danish language, culture and customs.

These events are commonplace at Nilai U and it is what gives the campus a lively atmosphere. There is always something of educational value happening and this is what ‘Enrichment for Life’ is all about. Learning is not confined to classrooms and textbooks but through interaction with other human beings and through exposure to horizon-broadening events. I hope this will entice some of you reading this to come join the Nilai U family.

Prof Datuk Dr Megat Burhainuddin
Vice-Chancellor
“Business studies will always remain popular. This is because almost everything in the market is related to business in one form or another,” says Prof Dr Sivakumar Velayutham, Dean of the Business Faculty at Nilai University (Nilai U). “Even in the spheres of healthcare and education, there are elements of business such as marketing, finance, and human resources. As long as it is geared towards generating profit, it is a business. This ensures there is healthy demand for graduates who have the right qualifications and skills set,” says the academic who has over 25 years experience teaching in Australia and New Zealand as well as in the Middle East.

Interested applicants can choose from these programmes at Nilai U:

- **BBA (Hons)**
- **BBA (Hons) in Finance**
- **BBA (Hons) in Human Resource Management**
- **BBA (Hons) in International Business**
- **BBA (Hons) in Management**
- **BBA (Hons) in Marketing**
- **BA (Hons) in Accounting and Finance**
- **Diploma in Business Administration**

SPM leavers can opt for the Diploma in Business Administration or the pre-university Foundation in Business programmes. Prof Siva is keen to point out that there is no right or wrong choice. “Many students are keen to enter the one-year Foundation programme as it is the fastest route into the degree of their choice. A pass is sufficient,” he states. “However, students who enter the Diploma in Business Administration have a distinct advantage over Foundation students when they enter into the second year of the degree programme as they will be familiar with many of the key subjects.” Hence, Prof Siva counsels that students should make the decision based on their own learning abilities.

The Accounting and Finance degree is the most popular programme and graduates will be entitled up to eight exemptions from professional accounting organisations’ examinations (e.g. Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, and Association of Chartered Certified Accountants). “Such exemptions are crucial in helping our graduates achieve their ambition of becoming professional accountants,” says Prof Siva.

Other tie ups to benefit Nilai U Business Faculty students include a MoU signed with the Malaysian Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (MAICSA). Students from Nilai U’s Diploma in Business Administration will be entitled to six exemptions from the Professional Diploma in Corporate Administration (PDCA) programme. Students who wish to obtain the PDCA will only need to complete two papers during the final semester of their Diploma in Business Administration programme in ‘Corporate Compliance and Practice’ and ‘Law and Practice of Meetings’.

Prof Siva is also keen to emphasise Nilai U’s holistic approach to studies. “Learning is not confined to text books and examinations. We believe in equipping our students with all the necessary skills for life-long development and qualifications which will make them stand out from the crowd,” he counsels. As such, Nilai U students are given opportunities to learn essential soft skills which will benefit them in the corporate environment. For instance, students can enrol for the Dale Carnegie Skills for Success programme at Nilai U which teaches them crucial communication skills. There is also a golf programme run by Mizuno Golf School and practice is held at Nilai U’s sister company - Nilai Springs Golf and Country Resort. “We recognise the importance of having great communication skills and also that the golf course is where a lot of corporate deals are concluded. It is one thing for graduates to claim on their résumés they have these skills, it is another to back the claim up with certificates from organisations such as Dale Carnegie and Mizuno,” he explains. “Having such enhanced certifications and credit exemptions from professional organisation examinations make Nilai U’s business programmes highly attractive.”
Taking Flight

There are many compelling reasons for school leavers to check out Nilai U’s Aircraft Maintenance Engineering programmes.

The B1-1 licence examination is the gateway towards becoming a fully licensed aircraft maintenance engineer who is qualified to declare an aircraft as airworthy. This is achieved after the students have acquired the relevant work experience which will take approximately five years. “I wish to make it clear to school leavers and their parents that a course of training can be undertaken at a Part-66 approved basic training school which must be followed by a minimum 2 years of practical maintenance experience. The Part-147 approved training route is better suited for mature students or for those who are already working in aviation industry,” says Vriender. With the diploma syllabus similar to that of EASA, it is readily supplied by Nilai U’s academic partner, Kingston University, UK; students avoid wasting time and effort preparing for two different sets of examinations.

“School leavers and their parents may be somewhat confused by the number of acronyms in this field, but what needs to be understood is that with some other qualifications being attained, the internationally-recognised EASA licence is pretty much the standard ladder with great opportunity to move ahead,” Vriender points out.

Completed the university’s final exam for each semester, allowing them to focus and be confident for the EASA exams, says Vriender. Students also have the option of taking just the Diploma, and not the EASA examinations. The latter examinations are open to external students as well who can register for the exams (https://www.nilai.edu.my/sites/default/files/EASA20202302/Registration%20Form_0.pdf).

Facilities

Since launching in 2008, Nilai U’s administrators have been busy upgrading the facilities for this programme. This is not an institution which merely focuses on the delivery of theoretical knowledge, leaving the practical training to industry partners. Nilai U has a purpose-built hangar housing two aircraft. The hangar and aircraft seen at the university is the perfect blend of aircraft engineering and aviation management. The facilities include a workshop, airframe, engine, safety and electrical Bay, wind tunnel, flight simulator, jet engine repair and test cell, technical library, Flight Simulation platform, electrical, mechanical and avionics laboratory.

Experienced lecturers

“I can confidently say that we have the best teaching staff in this highly technical field. Many of them have decades of experience in the aerodrome or with national airlines as well as in the private sector,” says Vriender. He is keen to stress that the teaching staff is scalable not just to cope with the large number of students but to provide comprehensive teaching in various niche areas such as avionics, aeronautics and engine systems. There are also lecturers from other fields, who teach subjects such as English, allowing students to gain a thorough and well-rounded education. “This is one of the benefits of studying in a multi-discipline university. Every student is taught by a broad side expert in his area. Also, students get to mingle and learn from students of other disciplines,” Vriender emphasises.

The Head of Department, a veteran of Air Force, says that his lecturers keep a close eye on each and every student. “Every time a student is in trouble, we will always stay in touch with him to see what is going wrong.” The University’s strategic approach of providing students with a strong foundation in subjects of need and their career goals is the highlight of the EASA course, according to Vriender.

Pathway to Higher Qualifications

Nilai U also offers an Advanced Diploma in Aircraft Engineering for BS (Hons) degree holders. Students who successfully complete the Diploma programme can opt to enter this course and top-up programmes. Kingston University, UK has recognised the modules in the Diploma and Advanced Diploma programme are akin to their degree programme and is awarding a BSc (Honours) in Aircraft Engineering to successful students. This is a unique opportunity for students looking to climb the career ladder. A degree will certainly help a candidate to manage a managerial or supervisory position,” Vriender adds. “The degree will also act as pathway to Kingston University’s Master’s degree programme.”

Affordable Cost

One key factor is cost. By enrolling in the Diploma in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering programme and sitting for the EASA exams locally there is potential for great savings. The one-year top-up programme means students can earn a UK degree for a fraction of the price of going abroad. “There are many reasons why students should join us but it would need a deep dive into their financial means. But by making it affordable, more students and their parents can find a means to pursue a career and be a part of the aviation industry,” concludes Vriender.

Nilai U has affiliations with 19 industry partners for the aircraft maintenance engineering students to be able to attend On-Job-training, including Air Asia, Air Asia X and KLM Royal Dutch Airline.
Rising to the Challenge

Inaugural Apprentice Asia winner shares his experiences with Nilai U students.

by Tommy Lee Yen Shan (BSc (Hons) in Computer Science)

“...When I was 16, I was diagnosed to have a cyst on my right breast. Though it was later found to be benign, yet that experience made me realise that the shock can cause recklessness. That started my ‘seek the moment’s mentality’, explains Jonathan Yacob, the first ever winner of TV reality programme — The Apprentice Asia. He was speaking to students and staff of Nilai University (Nilai U) as part of the Institution’s Executive Lecture Series, organized by the Faculty of Business. Jonathan spoke about the driving forces that made him a successful marketer with a pharmaceutical conglomerate in his homeland, Philippines, before aspiring to enter the reality TV series.

The series which is part of the Apprentice franchise pits young business professionals against each other in a series of tests designed to assess the contestants’ business acumen. The Asian edition of the programme has been trendy for years as the Mentor who ultimately decides who stays or is unceremoniously fired. The prize for Jonathan for outwitting and outperforming his fellow contestants was a three-year contract with US$100,000 as a top salaried apprentice with Air Asia. Although victorious, Jonathan says he would not repeat the experience as ‘it was extremely stressful’, saying that it compressed several years’ worth of business knowledge into a hectic two-month-long shoot. But he certainly does not regret his decision to enter the competition saying the experience and memories will last him a lifetime and that it was a golden opportunity to learn from a titan of the modern business world.

During his talk, Jonathan shared six guiding principles with the audience. These are:

1. Success is when preparation meets opportunity.
2. It is not about working hard but working smart.
3. Successful people are always looking for opportunities to help others.
4. Keep on developing your strengths, there’s no point correcting your weaknesses as you get older.
5. The unattainable secret to success is out there — grit.
6. Dreaming is about improving yourself. He obviously hit a chord with Nilai U students as he was bombarded with numerous questions after the talk and inundated with autograph and photo requests.

Nilai University has a long tradition of inviting noteworthy speakers to share their unique experiences and insights with students and staff. These have included public figures such as Tun Dr Abdul Aziz Tunish bin Ahmad, emeritus members of religious organisations such as Bishop Emeritus Dennis C. Ofsen and highly respected academics such as Dr Raj Pootaram.Having such distinguished individuals speak to students is very much in line with Nilai U’s enrichment for life philosophy.

“We have always maintained that learning is not merely confined to textbooks and classrooms. Here at Nilai University, we embrace a holistic approach towards education whereby extracurricular activities and other events are utilised to stimuli students’ collective intellect. Moreover, annual events such as the ‘World Culture and the Future Leaders Camp’ talks such as the one today are held regularly to allow our students to listen and learn from speakers from varied backgrounds,’ said Prof Datuk Dr Megat Bumamuni B Megat Abdul Rahman (Nilai U Vice- Chancellor) in his welcoming speech. Judging by the enthusiastic response after the talk, it certainly appeared that the students learned plenty and were excited to be in the midst of a TV celebrity.

Many students took the opportunity to grill Jonathan Yacob on his experience of winning the reality TV show.

Students and staff take the opportunity for a group shot with the first ever winner of the Apprentice Asia. Students from the Nilai International School (Front Row) also attended the event.
Nilai U Welcomes Danes

Danish students and teachers visit Nilai U for cultural exchange exercise.

An entourage comprising 30 students and two teachers from Aarhus Katedralskole (Denmark Cathedral School) recently visited Nilai U for a cultural exchange programme. Aarhus Katedralskole (AAK) administrators firmly believe there is a need to foster intercultural competencies in their students and has well-developed partnerships with high schools in Germany, Italy, Spain, USA and Singapore. They have now added Nilai U to that list and the students were comfortably housed at the Nilai Springs Golf and Country Resort Hotel during their three-week stay.

The visiting students got to sit in classes for Malaysian History and Culture, Entrepreneurship and Academic English. But perhaps more importantly, they got to experience firsthand life in a multi-cultural campus with a student population hailing from 40 different countries. Their itinerary also included visits to Taman Negara, a Homestay in Malacca and a host of events at Nilai U’s campus such as the Ponggad celebration organised by the Indian Cultural Society.

AAK is among the top three schools in Denmark based on student performance and has produced some famous alumni. These include astronomer Ole Roemer (1644-1710) who measured the speed of light and August Krogh (1874-1949), winner of the Noble Prize in Medicine.
Creating Great First Impressions
The 21st Century Way!

Wendy Lee shares some pointers on how to create the best first impressions in the digital age.

When in doubt, overdress
Not sure what the proper attire is? Put on an extra jacket. It’s always better to have people smiling and say, “My, you look great!” than to have people frowning at your too-casual look. Besides, you will always earn extra brownie points by standing out looking great.

Use their names
The most beautiful sound in the world is the sound of your own name. So repeat theirs after your initial handshake, “Nice to meet you Alan.” It makes them feel special. But don’t stop there! Learn the names of their pets, children, spouses. Mention them in a follow-up conversation - “How’s Ann doing in college?” It makes you sound you care.

Who’s that guy?
Know who you are meeting. Look them up on LinkedIn or Facebook. Knowing how they look like and what they do will make you feel more at ease on the day of your meeting. Doing your research on what the organisation does, will also allow you to appear more impressive during conversations, and avoid any unnecessary faux pas.

Before you hit ‘Send!’
Spell and grammar check everything you send out - emails, promotional materials, blog posts, etc. Be sure to check your subject lines too, as nothing makes a bad first impression like misspellings & typos. And while we are at this topic, consider this: Plain looking emails that lack your contact information, logo and branding will not do your business any favours.

Stoke them before you poke them!
One of the best ways to make you memorable is to find something nice to say to the person on your first encounter. Notice something nice about their outfit, the designs of their office or even the concept of their business, before you start asking other questions. Always focus on your prospect first. A sincere compliment is always a welcome boost to someone’s day!

Wendy Lee is the President of MABIC (Malaysian Assoc. Of Brand & Image Consultants) and a director at Brandimage International Institute (BII). She is a firm believer that with Style, there must be Substance! Email her at: wendy@chap-one.com
Going for Gold!
National fencer proud to represent Nilai University at SUK IPT 2014 Games

Nilai University (Nilai U) was among the 107 institutions of higher learning that competed at the recently concluded SUK IPT 2014 Games. Its athletes managed to bring back a total of one gold, one silver and three bronze medals, from the fencing and tennis arenas. The gold medal was won by Joshua Koh Jie, a national fencer pursuing a Diploma in Agricultural Management at Nilai U.

“It was quite fun. It was my first time competing in SUK IPT and I was actually able to meet up with other national fencers who were representing other institutions,” smiles the 24-year old. “Competing against my national team mates made it feel like a training session but I took it very seriously nonetheless. After all, I was representing Nilai U and wanted to do my best to bring home a gold medal (in the epee category).”

Joshua is a recipient of a scholarship from the Ministry of Education. The Puchong Jaya resident says it was a no-brainer for him to choose Nilai U as it is designated as a ‘Pusat Sukan Tumpuan – Fencing’ by the Ministry of Education. “It is because of this expertise that Nilai U was tasked with co-organising the fencing tournament for SUK IPT 2014. “Nilai U was the obvious choice as it has all the facilities for fencing allowing me and another national fencer (Andrew Mok Vern-Han - also studying in Nilai U) to practice while on campus,” he explains. He says that the lecturers have also been very supportive and helped him catch up with his coursework whenever he has to go off for tournaments or national training. The young lad, who won a gold medal at the 2011 SEA Games in Indonesia, is also keen to do his bit to promote the sport within the corridors of Nilai U saying that there has been quite a lot of interest from his fellow students. “It makes sense as the facilities are already in place and it’s a great opportunity to learn a new sport. Furthermore, Andrew and I can help teach students. I am very excited about making fencing more accessible,” he says excitedly. “Fencing, like many sports, helps with focus and discipline, traits which have obvious benefits for university students.”

As for his choice of programme, Joshua says he chose the Diploma in Agricultural Management because his parents own a plot of land in Bentong. “At the moment, my mum is cultivating some flowers but not much else is happening. I hope to change that with my newfound knowledge in this field,” he proclaims. Joshua is keen to promote Nilai U, not least because of the fencing facilities on campus. “Come join us and you will not just get a quality education but also an opportunity to learn the art of fencing!”

Joshua Koh Jie (Nilai U Diploma in Agricultural Management) is elated to have brought home a gold medal from the SUK IPT 2014 games to his alma mater.
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- Only applicable for the FIRST programme registered (except the entry with Foundation or Diploma into our Degrees where the entry CGPA must be maintained) every semester to continue to be eligible for the next semester
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- Only applicable for the FIRST programme registered
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- Minimum CGPA required

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- Interview required

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- Only applicable for the FIRST programme registered
- Minimum positions held in the previous academic year to be used for consideration for this award
- Interview required

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