

WOU honours three distinguished Malaysians

In an historic Special Convocation on 16 June 2012, WOU paid tribute to three distinguished individuals for their long-standing service to the nation across a range of sectors.

The University conferred the Honorary Doctor of Business on the CIMB Group CEO/Managing Director Dato' Sri Nazir Razak. The Chairman of the East Asian Institute and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, Emeritus Prof Wang Gungwu, received the Honorary Doctor of Laws, while WOU's founding Registrar Mr R Padmanathan the Honorary Master of Administration.

In his convocation address, Chancellor of Wawasan Open University, Tun Dr Lim Keng Yaik described Dato' Sri Nazir as a "regionally acknowledged successful banker", Prof Wang "a globally recognised and celebrated scholar of the Chinese Diaspora" and Padmanathan as "a faithful university administrator of long-standing".

Tun Lim diverted from his formal speech to offer some personal

insights on each recipient. "I went to Tun Razak's house, and saw this young boy running about without knowing he's going to be a successful banker from whom I may have to borrow some money one day," he said in jest, to the laughter of the crowd.

He recollected that Prof Wang was "a founding member of Parti Gerakan of which I became president for 27 years". He has known Padmanathan for the last 7-8 years when they decided to set up WOU - "A consummate administrator, good for the university."

Returning to his formal address, Tun Lim stated that lifelong learning is a people's movement, and that the government should facilitate its development through supportive policies, guidelines and much needed resources. "But it should keep its hands off in managing and controlling its provisions; let institutions such as schools, colleges

and universities, like WOU undertake that task," he stressed.

Dato' Sri Nazir, in his acceptance speech on behalf of the honorary graduates, revealed that if he "had to identify a single key to our (CIMB) success I would say that it has been our ability to not just manage, but also leverage the diversity of our people".

He continued, "All of us know that diversity is not easy to manage, let alone harness. Differing ethnic backgrounds, religions and beliefs have been the source of all kinds of tensions, divisions, conflicts and wars around the world...Yet, diversity can be a tremendous source of strength.

"Diversity in thinking and ideas combined with a healthy culture of openness and debate brings about creativity in products and solutions."

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From left to right: Prof Dhanarajan, Mr Padmanathan, Prof Wang, Tun Lim, Dato' Sri Nazir and wife Dato' Azlina Aziz.



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A glimpse of a Malaysian hero

The achievements and legacy of Dr Wu Lien-teh are perhaps better known outside Malaysia where he is highly regarded as the 'plague fighter' and father of modern Chinese medicine.

The crowd at WOU's main campus got a peek into his life and work during a public talk on *Plague Fighter Dr Wu Lien-teh: A Penang Hero who modernised medicine in China* on 19 May 2012. The talk by Ong Lay Hong, Managing Director of Singapore Media Academy, a MediaCorp Enterprise, was part of the Penang Story Lecture series.

Dr Wu studied at Penang Free School and was awarded the Queen's Scholarship of the Straits Settlement at the tender age of 17 (1896). He enrolled at Emmanuel College, Cambridge becoming the University's first Chinese medical science student.

When the plague struck in 1910, the Chinese government was ill-equipped

to handle the crisis, and appointed Dr Wu as Chief Medical Director. He discovered that contrary to widely held medical beliefs that plague could only be spread by rat or flea bites, China's provinces were being ravaged by pneumonic plague, which was transmitted by human breath or sputum.

Dr Wu and his team took measures to prevent further outbreak, including the restriction of travel in and out of the affected provinces, quarantine of the plague areas, cremating all corpses, and building hospitals to house the patients. Within four months, he had the crisis under control.

Among the attendees at the talk - jointly organised by Think City, Penang Heritage Trust, Old Frees' Association and WOU - were Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, WOU Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye and Think City chairman Dato' Anwar Fazal.



Dato' Anwar Fazal (right) accompanies the Chief Minister.



The speaker, Ong Lay Hong, shares about Dr Wu Lien-teh.



A huge crowd turned up for all the sessions.



Trainer Adrian Foong engages with the participants.

E-commerce workshop @ WOU

by Deebhanjli Lakshmayya

Over 200 participants piled into WOU's main campus for the first ever free Lelong.com.my training session on e-Commerce for Penang. The workshop, *Class 101 - Now Everybody Can Sell Online* was conducted by Adrian Foong, Business Development Manager of Interbase Resources Sdn Bhd, the company responsible for Malaysia's pioneer auction website with more than 10,000 registered members.

As host and part sponsor WOU sent out e-invitations to all students to provide them the opportunity to learn more about conducting a business online. Many of the WOU students who attended found the workshop helpful, especially since electronic commerce is a core major course for the Bachelor of Technology (Hons) in Electronic Commerce programme and offered as an elective for the Commonwealth Executive MBA (CeMBA) programme.

Overall, the participants were exposed to basic and step-by-step instructions on how they could use the auction site to the maximum, and also gained a better understanding of e-Commerce. Many of them had yet to venture officially into the arena of e-Commerce but had tried buying and selling online as consumers and were now considering taking it further. The participants ranged in ages and came from diverse backgrounds, with retirees, housewives and MNC manager in attendance among others.

Lelong.com.my was initially based on Consumer-to-Consumer transactions when it began in 1998. It has evolved into a portal for Business-to-Consumer relationships as distributors realise the potential of the online auction system and now use the site to trade and develop their existing business.



Having fun - The WOU team lead the children in games and exercise.



Touching young lives WOU visits Shan Children's Home

WOU's Staff Recreational Club (SRC) brought cheer to some 20 residents of the Shan Children's Home in Prai, a residential shelter for neglected children and those from dysfunctional families.

The 10-member delegation led by Club president Dr Andy Liew handed over computer and study tables, wardrobes, bed sheets, pillows, beverages and two pairs of spectacles purchased with donations collected through an in-house charity drive and from the monthly membership subscription.

During the visit, the SRC representatives spent time interacting and getting to know the children, organising motivational games to equip them with skills to face life challenges. The visit culminated with a lunch treat for the children and staff of the Home.

"WOU wants to share its blessings and seeks to brighten up the lives of the less fortunate in society in its own small way. We wish to reduce their burden and do our part for charity as best as we can," explained Dr Liew.

WOU lends a helping hand

In the spirit of community service, WOU organised a blood donation drive with Loh Guan Lye Specialists Centre at the Main Campus on 22 May 2012. Over 30 staff gamely turned up to donate blood and enjoy the free basic health screening provided (including a blood sugar test, BMI and blood pressure monitoring).

WOU's Staff Recreation Club (SRC) president Dr Andy Liew thanked all the staff who took time away from their work schedule and stepped up to do their part, including brave first-time donors - Lee Siew Teng (GSA) and Cindy Tan (Chancellery).



A hospital staff takes the blood pressure.



Blood donation drive at the main campus.

WOU team at Relay for Life 2012

Led by Human Resources director Shirley Khoo and Deputy Registrar Sovindar Kaur, the WOU team joined thousands of people for the Relay for Life event at the Youth Park, Penang to support those fighting the battle against cancer and to celebrate cancer survivors who have triumphed over the disease.

Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng officiated at the opening and joined the cancer survivors in the walkabout around the relay track. WOU has been participating and supporting the event for the past five years.

According to Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye, "WOU has watched this event grow over the years, sending out messages to more and more people, especially those of the younger age group. If young people understand and begin to internalise the important messages of the Relay, and start adopting a healthy lifestyle from a young age, then the better our chances of success as a society in fighting back against cancer."

The WOU team shows that they care.

Walking in support of the fight against cancer.



'Building up' construction skills

Thirty-year-old Chang Yeou Shin had his interest piqued when he spotted a newspaper ad listing the Bachelor of Technology (Hons) in Construction Management programme offered by WOU.

He wanted a qualification related to his current field of employment that would support his professional dreams of moving up in his career in construction. Chang has worked as a supervisor with Arah Semangat Sdn Bhd, Alor Setar for the last five years and felt his construction industry

experience together with a degree in construction management would spruce up his professional resume. However, he added that to succeed in the industry, "It very much depends on your attitude to your work".

He balances his work, study and family commitments, thanks to good time management skills, "Studying via ODL gives me flexibility, I have access to the study materials and course coordinator anytime and anywhere, via the Internet. This flexibility is comfortable and makes me feel more relaxed when I study."

On his motivation, Chang stated "Family support is very important. I am lucky that my company also supports me to take this course. If you think you can, then you can do it!"



Keeping ahead with a banking degree

For Wahid Isibu, the 40-year-old bank executive and father to three daughters, his goal was "To lead by example and be a mentor for my kids to follow in my footsteps in realising their dreams".

He left school with an SPM qualification some two decades ago and has worked with the CIMB Group in Penang. He felt that the time was ripe to further enhance his knowledge in banking with a Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Banking and Finance programme at WOU.

With his motivated personality he was named on the Dean's List for his excellent results in both semesters last year. He finds

that the courses he has taken so far offer him practical knowledge that he can easily apply to his workplace i.e. *Business Accounting, Human Resource Management, Money and Banking, Banking and Financial Systems in Malaysia, and Microeconomics.*

"I normally spend two hours a night on assignments, and I rest on Sundays. I also discuss with my study group members the matters concerning course papers. With the guidance from CCs and tutors I find learning in WOU very interesting and challenging at the same time," he shared.

Wahid wishes to encourage members of the workforce to never give up on their tertiary qualifications, declaring, "You never know how far you can go unless you give it a try."

The motto that directs his professional path and life: "What we do today is what we are tomorrow."



UPCOMING EVENTS

WOU Convocation Ceremony

This third graduation ceremony will be a two-day event. A few hundred undergraduate and postgraduate students who have completed their studies with WOU will be receiving their scrolls.

Date : 24-25 November 2012 (Sat & Sun)

Venue : WOU main campus

STUDENT INFO

Commencement of Enrolment

Interested students can register for the January 2013 intake beginning from 24 September 2012 to pursue their higher education dreams.

Final Examinations

Final Examinations for the July 2012 semester shall run for two (2) weeks from 26 November (Mon) to 9 December (Sun) 2012.

WawasanLink is now available!

You can now be in touch with the latest happenings at WOU - the people's university, the electronic way!

WOU's WawasanLink is an extension of the university's ongoing Green Living @ WOU campaign. Let's care together for the environment, the WOU way.

Green Living @ WOU

WawasanLink
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In the minds of
our readers

The University would like to hear from you. Whether it's a view, a comment or even a question, don't hesitate to drop us a mail at mediainfo@wou.edu.my

For more details, visit wou.edu.my

Call Toll-free Careline **1-300-888-968 (WOU)**

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Petaling Jaya Regional Centre
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Subang Regional Centre
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Johor Bahru Regional Centre
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Tel: 07-556 4323 / 556 6323 | Fax: 07-554 9323
Email: ro_jb@wou.edu.my

Kota Bharu Regional Centre
3956 Tingkat Bawah, Wisma Gerakan, Jalan Temenggong, 15000 Kota Bharu, Kelantan.
Tel: 09-748 7323 | Fax: 09-748 9323
Email: ro_kb@wou.edu.my
*Open Monday-Saturday from 10.00am-7.00pm

Kuching Regional Centre
14 Westin Avenue, Jalan Tun Jugah, 93350 Kuching, Sarawak.
Tel: 082-578 923 | Fax: 082-576 923
Email: ro_kc@wou.edu.my

During a historic Special Convocation held in June this year, WOU conferred honorary degrees on three accomplished individuals who in their own right have impacted their professional sphere of influence. The recipients at this special convocation are a successful banker, a celebrated scholar and author, and a long-standing, respected university administrator.

Wawasan Open University is truly proud to be associated with these three well-known figures from the banking and educational sector. I want to applaud CIMB Group CEO/Managing Director Dato' Sri Nazir Razak who is widely credited with transforming CIMB into a regional banking power. I also extend my congratulatory wishes to Emeritus Prof Wang Gungwu who is recognised as a model scholar, leading historian and respected university professor. Then there is Mr R Padmanathan who has made significant contributions in the area of university administration and organisation, first in Universiti Sains Malaysia, then at Wawasan Open University.

As a 'people's university', WOU always strives to improve its facilities and services by establishing support centres to reach out to the communities throughout the country. The opening of two new Regional Centres this year underlines WOU's commitment to better serve the learning community and our student population. The Klang Regional Centre (Klang RC) was launched on June 4th, followed by the Subang Regional Centre (Subang RC) which was officially opened on July 1st. At present, the University has a total of nine (9) Regional Centres throughout Malaysia.

The new semester got underway in July as some 700 new students attended the Orientation Day held simultaneously at five Regional Centres - Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Johor Bahru and Kuching.

The freshmen were given an enthusiastic welcome by the WOU staff from the Regional Centres. They were briefed on WOU's Open Distance Learning (ODL) model, its rules and regulations, its learning support system and services including *WawasanLearn*, the online assignment submission process, use of *Turnitin* and the library facilities.

In September, WOU played host to another major international event, stamping its mark in the global education platform and projecting its image as a higher education provider of quality. Leading international educators, policy makers, institutional administrators, OER advocates and practitioners, educational researchers, and ODL practitioners converged at the main campus to participate in the Regional Symposium on *Open Educational Resources (OER): An Asian perspective on Policies and Practices*.

This WOU initiative, spearheaded by Tan Sri Emeritus Prof Gajaraj Dhanarajan, the Convenor of the Symposium as well as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the University, working in association with local and international partners - DISTED College, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE), Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU), Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and UNESCO - provided a platform for more than 80 delegates from about 20 countries, such as Australia, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Japan, India, Indonesia, Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand and Malaysia, to discuss issues in relation to access, equity and use of OER in higher education.

I am happy to note that this inaugural symposium focusing on the five sub-themes of policy, technology, practice, sustainability and quality, was a great success with many of the participants requesting that it be made an annual event.



“In September, WOU played host to another major international event, stamping its mark in the global education platform and projecting its image as a higher education provider of quality.”

Professor Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye
Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer

cont. from cover page

He found that government policies nowadays "tend to remind us of our differences rather than our combined strengths", adding, "1Malaysia is a powerful clarion call for us to see strength in our diversity and celebrate our multi-culturalism."

Among those at the ceremony held at Menara PGRM, Kuala Lumpur were Wawasan Education Foundation (WEF) Chairman Dato' Seri Stephen Yeap, WOU Board of Governors Chairman Tan Sri Emeritus Prof Gajaraj Dhanarajan, WEF directors Dato' Lim Kheng Guan and Loo Choo Teng, Dato' Tan Chew Piau from CP Group, and Dato' Seri Goh Eng Toon from Heng Lee Group of Companies.

Leading the politicians in attendance were Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia president and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, Deputy Foreign Minister Senator A Kohilan Pillay, Parti Gerakan deputy president Dato' Chang Ko Youn and its Central Committee members Dato' Seri Chia Kwang Chye, Datuk Ng Chiang Chin, Tan Sri Dr Chin Fook Weng and Tan Sri Soong Siew Hoong.

The other dignitaries included Singapore High Commissioner Mr Ong Keng Yong, UNIRAZAK Vice Chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Md Zabid Hj Abdul Rashid, Sunway University Vice Chancellor Prof Robert Bignall, CIMB's top management, and the family of the honorary graduates.



Dato' Sri Nazir
delivers his
acceptance speech.

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New Regional Centres open for enhanced student support services



As part of WOU's commitment to continuously improving the level of service to its diverse and spread-out student population, WOU recently launched two new Regional Centres in Klang and Subang.

The Klang Regional Centre (Klang RC) opened its doors to students and the public on 4 June 2012, immediately getting down to business to promote WOU and recruit students for the July 2012 intake. A month later, the Subang Regional Centre (Subang RC) was officially opened.

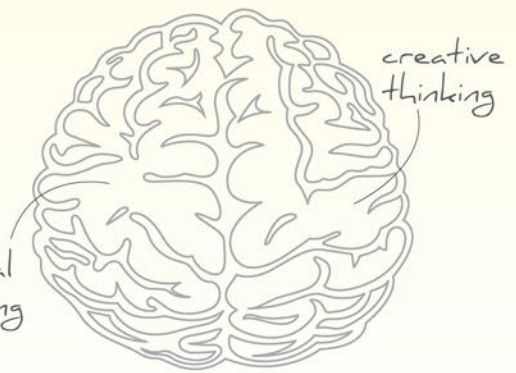
According to Director of Regional Operations and Marcom, K H Chong, "Both centres are needed in view of the large catchment of students within the central region. With these centres, potential students from Klang, Subang and the surrounding areas do not need to travel far for any enquiries or studies with WOU."



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Fax no: 03-3325 2313
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Subang Regional Centre
No. 34-1 Ground Floor, Jalan PJS 8/2,
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46150 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.
Tel. no: 03- 5635 5323/ 5632 5323
Fax no: 03-5635 1323
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WOU promotes critical and creative thinking skills to educators



In line with the thrust of the National Philosophy of Education (NPE) to produce physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially balanced individuals, WOU's School of Education, Languages and Communications (SELC) together with the Kuala Lumpur Regional Centre (KLRC) organised a talk on Critical and Creative Thinking Skills (CCTS) and EQ in Classroom Management.

The event held at WOU's premises in Kuala Lumpur attracted educators from the private and public sectors (including teacher training colleges). In his talk, then SELC Associate Prof Dr Haji Ghazali Mustapha outlined how CCTS and emotional intelligence (EQ) must be emphasised in classroom management, instructional activities and assessment

procedures, to produce well-rounded students. Citing Bloom's Taxonomy, he observed that the majority of classroom instructions, teaching activities and questions in academic examinations in Malaysia are of the low-order types. "Low-order instruction does not promote critical and creative thinking skills, while low-order questions do not test or assess students' thinking skills but just their 'memory,'" he said.

Dr Ghazali stressed that classroom instructions must serve to develop the EQ of students. "We do not want to produce individuals who are mentally smart but morally corrupt, intellectual but spiritually derailed, and intelligent but socially inept," he added. He suggested educators infuse EQ elements in questions, teaching activities, books and examinations, to develop

problem-solving, critical thinking, creative thinking and decision-making skills in students.

As the session came to a close, he called on all stakeholders involved in running any academic institution to realise the importance of EQ and CCTS to school management and classroom instructions. "Unless EQ and CCTS are stressed in school and classroom management, the NPE will not attain its noble aims of producing wholesome personalities," he said.

He also outlined WOU's current range of education programmes and how these were developed to bolster job proficiency towards producing all-rounded students.

Tan Sri Raj awarded Honorary Doctorate by USM

Wawasan Open University extends its warmest congratulations to Tan Sri Emeritus Prof Gajaraj Dhanarajan on being conferred the Honorary Doctorate of Education during the 45th convocation of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) on 21 April 2012.

Tan Sri Raj, Chairman of WOU's Board of Governors, received the honorary doctorate from USM Chancellor, Raja Perlis Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail, during the convocation ceremony at Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra, USM. The event saw a total 941 graduates receiving their scrolls.

Tan Sri Raj was honoured for his pioneering work in open and distance learning (ODL). His long list of credentials, international recognition and acclaim, as well as his calm, smiling and humble demeanour were highlighted in the citation read out by Associate Prof Dr Habibah Hj Lateh, Dean of USM's School of Distance Education.

She described Tan Sri Raj, 73, as a renowned local and international academician, who has over 30

years of experience in the development of ODL. His wife of 43 years, Sue Yee, was mentioned as Tan Sri's pillar of support and inspiration.

He holds a BSc and MSc degree from the University of Madras, Diploma of the Imperial College and MSc from Imperial College, University of London, and a PhD in Biology from the University of Ashton, Birmingham.

He started his career as a Research Officer at the Forestry Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) before joining USM in 1970 as a biology lecturer in the School of Biological Sciences. He was instrumental in starting the off-campus studies at USM in 1971 that eventually evolved to become USM's School of Distance Education.

Tan Sri Raj was behind the establishment of WOU in September 2006 and became its founding Vice Chancellor, retiring from the position in December 2009.



Academic-Industry Linkages

Driving professional enhancement

More companies join WOU's VPP

WOU's Valued Partnership Programme (VPP) was developed to encourage employees from SMEs and MNCs in Malaysia to improve their skills and knowledge with WOU's higher education programmes.

Under the VPP, employees receive tuition fee rebates of up to RM550, and are also eligible for tuition fee rebate in subsequent semesters upon re-enrolment, up to a period of three years.

Since the scheme kicked off in October 2011, it has rapidly grown to currently register 46 partners, including 22 from Penang, 10 from Kuching and seven from Johor Bahru.

WOU's newest education partners feature some well-known names - Jabil Circuit, Agilent Technology, OSRAM Opto Semiconductors, Plexus Manufacturing, AMD, Maybank Academy, Dell Global Business Centre, Royal Selangor Marketing, and the State Education Department in Penang; the Zurich Insurance and Muda Pasifik in Johor; and the Sarawak Bank Employees Union.

This education partnership with the corporate and public sectors is a win-win situation for Malaysian workers and employers as it promotes a continual upgrading of professional skills, contributing to better job performance and a higher rate of staff retention.



Agilent Technologies



Orientation day

A day of joy for WOU freshmen!

Hundreds of new students attended the Orientation Day held simultaneously by Wawasan Open University (WOU) at its five regional centres – Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Johor Bahru and Kuching – on 15 July 2012.

The freshmen were given an enthusiastic welcome by the WOU staff from the Regional Centres and briefed on WOU's Open Distance Learning (ODL) model, its rules and regulations, as well as its learning support and services including WawasanLearn, online assignment submission, Turnitin and the library facilities.

Penang campus

New students were welcomed by student representative Jonas Ooi Yong Shen, the Chairman of the Penang Student Committee, who is in his 4th semester of a Bachelor of Technology (Hons) in Electronics programme.

☞ Share your knowledge and skills with your course mates. Plan ahead, become active learners and be punctual for tutorial classes. This is our golden opportunity to find new friends. This is not just a place of study – we can improve ourselves mentally as well as socially. Those who are interested to be members of the Student Committee are welcome to join us. ☞☞

Ipoh Regional Centre

At the Ipoh Regional Centre, students were officially welcomed by Ipoh RC Director Ching Huey Ling and student representative Leow Voon Haw.

Leow Voon Haw, a Dean's list recipient entering the 8th semester of his Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Sales and Marketing programme, shared some useful pointers.

"It is important to have self-discipline and motivation if you are to succeed in your studies. Always recapture that motivation, it could be love for knowledge, love for higher income. Hold onto it and use it to drive your study along your journey at WOU. Have a positive mindset, and not give excuses for missing deadlines as this will only drag you down."



Jonas Ooi Yong Shen welcomes the freshmen at the main campus.



New students listen to a briefing on WOU.



Leow Voon Haw welcomes the students during the orientation in Johor Bahru.



Taking the students pledge.



WOU Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye presents the Dean's List certificate to Johor student Tew Chin Boon.



Teacher Lim Shan Lue leads in the oath-taking ceremony in Penang.

A tribute to WOU's outgoing Vice Chancellor

Wawasan Open University (WOU) bade a fond farewell to outgoing Vice Chancellor Prof Dato' Dr Wong Tat Meng during a simple luncheon on 12 September 2012, attended by staff from the Main Campus and the Regional Centres.



Prof Wong gives his farewell speech



Prof Wong congratulates Prof Ho (left) as Dato' Seri Stephen Yeap (seated left) looks on.



Shaking hands with the Penang Chief Minister prior to the official launch of Relay for Life (2009).



Sharing the Chinese New Year joy with colleagues (2008)



Witnessing the unveiling of the Year Chor Ee statue (2007).

Wawasan Education Foundation chairman Dato' Seri Stephen Yeap expressed his appreciation to Prof Wong, "Your six years of outstanding service will be remembered and recorded as a period of extraordinary growth and achievement in diverse ways. You presided over the period of the University's foundation and development which culminated in three graduation ceremonies. During your wise stewardship, the curriculum has been extended and enriched, and standards have been continuously raised."

On behalf of WOU, Dato' Seri Stephen then presented a pewter plaque symbolising wealth and prosperity to Prof Wong.

Prof Wong meanwhile said that he would miss "the campus on the beach, the camaraderie among the WOU learning community, the friendly work environment, interesting discussions among colleagues, and the social gatherings" following his retirement.

"I am privileged to be associated with WOU since 2002, while serving as Dean of School of Science and Technology at the Open University of Hong Kong. I accepted the invitation to be

part of the working group of experts to draw up concept paper for an open university," he remarked.

Prof Wong officially joined WOU in October 2006 as the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) and was appointed the second Vice Chancellor in December 2009. "There were lots of challenges as not many then knew much about open distance learning. Today after six years of operations, WOU is recognised locally and regionally as an ODL institution of high repute."

On his successor, Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye, he quipped, "As the university progresses through the next stage of development, where we transform ourselves both in the face-to-face teaching and the online delivery of education, he will be the perfect person to provide leadership."

Among the guests at the gathering were Prof Wong's wife Datin Dr Annie Foo and their son Wong Wai Loong, and members of the Board of Governors, Ooi Teng Chew and Loo Choo Teng.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Penang Regional Centre director K Manoharan delivered a poem penned by School of Business and Administration lecturer Deehbanji Lakshmayya thanking Prof Wong for taking the University through its "toddler years".

"How you always kept us on our toes; Every meeting could cause palpitations; But whoever you faced, be they friends or foes; Ultimately, lost to your determinations."

Chief building warden Sandana Dass (GSA) – who has known Prof Wong for 40 years – offered a few insights during their time together at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), when Prof Wong had a penchant for zooming around the campus in his white Alpha Romeo sports car, and could often be spotted at the tennis courts.

Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye had worked with Prof Wong at USM for over 20 years. He noted that they actually first met while still in school on the badminton court in 1964 during the inter-zone competitions, and among their league was Punch Gunalan.

"Because of his 20-year experience in affairs dealing with ODL education, he has helped me integrate myself into the world of ODL much quicker than I might have otherwise managed on my own. As VC, he has been such a pillar of strength over the past years.

"His thoroughness and attention to detail have helped shine a bright light of success on our University. His constant emphasis on QA in all that we

do, his management skills and personal attention paid to important events like Convocations, AAOU conference, WOU anniversary get-togethers and Family Days are events that come to mind readily.

"As President of AAOU, Prof Wong has helped place WOU on the world map through his reputation, dedication and long-standing contributions in AAOU. Indeed, Prof Wong now leaves a great void that any successor will find difficult to fill.

"Tat Meng, you have actually set some standards for all of us. It will be an honour for your successor to take up the baton from you. We will always take inspiration from the shining leadership and sense of professionalism you have displayed throughout your working career and as our Vice Chancellor in WOU."

Deputy Registrar Sovindar Kaur: "Thank you for your guidance and support to Registry, and to me. With Prof Wong, there are no free gifts, straight to the point. At meetings, you put us all in tenterhooks, everybody."

Quality Assurance manager Dr Andy Liew: "With great power, comes great responsibilities. Now the power has been inherited by Prof Ho... Prof Wong sets very high limits, and he expects you to measure up not just to national but international standards. He expects high quality work. When there's a party, that's the time when the young child residing inside him resurfaces!"

Accompanying Tun Dr Lim Keng Yaik to inspect the construction of the main campus (2007).



Prof Wong welcomes the then Menteri Besar of Perak to the launch of the Ipoh RC (2007).



Chairing the press conference to announce WOU's inaugural CeMBA graduation (2010).



Chatting with Gerakan President Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon before launch of the Dr Sun Yat Sen Symposium (2010).



'Happy to be Green!' at the Installation of WOU's first Chancellor (2008).



Building OER capacity within WOU

Finding, customising and developing open educational resources (OER) is key to WOU's continued growth and ability to create innovative, industry-driven academic programmes efficiently.

In the first in a highly interactive series of workshops – on *Open Educational Resources (OER) Capacity Building* – designed to enhance the capabilities of academic and academic support staff, Zaid Ali Alsagoff from the International Medical University stated that conventional universities cannot cope with the increasing global demand for tertiary education to meet each nation's needs.

Zaid shared his experiences with 20 of WOU's staff on how to find, reuse, remix, and create OER, and shared on OpenCourseWare (OCW), open textbooks, learning repositories, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC)/open teaching, Creative Commons and copyright, and how to move forward with OER at WOU.

The OER web resource links for the workshop can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/7f43zbw>



Zaid shares his insights.

OER – improving educational resources, lowering the costs

Wikipedia defines OER as “teaching, learning and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property licence that permits their free use and/or re-purposing by others”.

According to Zaid Ali Alsagoff, “OER is not just about courseware but content, tools and capacity. The user (students) should not pay for content.”

Some of the advantages of OER include – freedom of access; encourages pedagogical innovations; shared development costs of learning resources among institutions; saves time and effort through the reusing and remixing of resources; potentially beneficial to developing nations; all which can be passed on in lower costs to students.

WOU academics focus on developing effective ODL course materials



Dr. Murphy conducts the ODL training workshop.

The flexible, technology-driven nature of open distance learning (ODL) means that academics now have powerful tools to design, create and modify course materials across a range of platforms beyond traditional printed materials; including, video, multimedia and online materials.

To ensure that WOU's academics and academic support staff are in touch with new developments in ODL delivery and design, regular in-house training workshops are held. The latest workshop conducted by Dr David Murphy, focused on *Designing ODL Materials, ODL Instructional Design, and on Use and Integration of Media*, as part of the WOU Certificate Course on Open and Distance Learning (these modules are part of the seven modules of training developed by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL)).

The 18 participants were divided into small groups to get first-hand practical knowledge on how to write specific instructions for specific student 'types'. They also looked at what questions to reflect upon when reviewing course materials, so that the final product is reader-friendly, engaging, and accomplishes its learning objectives. The groups also presented a topic each, which enabled the more experienced colleagues to work with newer staff members in developing necessary skills.

The sessions were kept highly interactive as Dr Murphy led the participants to connect with related distance education experts via Skype. In particular, Prof Jim Taylor from Australia spoke about OER University, Prof Terry Anderson from Canada answered questions about the three generations of distance learning, and Prof Martin Waller from the United Kingdom shared his enthusiasm for educational technology and OER in particular.

Intellectual Property rights Understanding the implications

As universities are the main source of Intellectual Property (IP) in Malaysia, understanding IP rights is of paramount importance to WOU academics and support staff. A recent talk delivered by Lok Choon Hong, founding partner of Pintas IP Group for WOU staff focused on *Intellectual Property Commercialisation – Strategies for Universities and Research Institutions*.

According to Lok, about 60% of patents filed each year in Malaysia are based on university research; as WOU's own research output starts to increase, patents will need to be filed to protect new inventions, innovative processes, etc.

Over 2 million patents are filed every year, with the highest in Japan, US, China, Republic of Korea, Germany, Canada and the Russian Federation. In 2006, Malaysia only filed 531 patents compared to 360,000 patents filed by the Japan and 150,000 by Korea.

This number will need to increase substantially for Malaysia to become a truly innovation-driven nation. It is worth noting, that Japan only became a net exporter of technology as recently as 2000.

Lok pointed out that IP grants monopoly to the patentee to undertake commercial activities. Also, all IPs are country-based and have a lifespan. “If I register my patent in Malaysia, I own it only for that country.” A patent is valid for 20 years from the date of filing; trademark for 10 years from filing date but renewable; the industrial design for 15 years; and the copyright for 50 years after the death of the authors.

During the Q&A, Lok highlighted that it takes 3-4 years for patent to be granted in Malaysia and each patent filed may cost RM10,000 but it's still worth the investment.



Lok explains about IP rights.

Sharing WOU's vision

Delegates from Asian Women's Learning University (AWLU) visit WOU



A delegation from the Asian Women's Learning University (AWLU) project, in partnership with Smith College, recently visited WOU for a briefing by senior University officials. On hand to welcome the delegation were Wawasan Education Foundation chairman Dato' Seri Stephen Yeap, Chairman of WOU's Board of Governors Tan Sri Emeritus Prof Gajaraj Dhanarajan, and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye.

After Prof Ho's brief introduction to WOU, Prof Dhanarajan related the history, procedures, and the vision behind the setting-up of the University. Team members from AWLU and Smith College then used the opportunity to discover more about WOU's operations, tuition fees, age of students, and the challenge of delivering education in English to the younger generation of Malaysians.

According to Khoo Hoon Eng, founding Board Member and Director of AWLU Project, plans to start an international liberal arts women's university in Malaysia are underway with a suitable site found in Penang. Currently, the AWLU project is in the process of obtaining funding.

"The model for the university is fully residential, face-to-face, four-year curriculum. When I say liberal arts, this also means sciences and possibly engineering. The students will take classes for courses in their major and then anything that they like," she stated, adding that AWLU project has a partnership agreement with Smith College for three years.

The initial batch in 2015 will include only 100 and the intake is to be increased to 500 students a year from across Asia, with a maximum of 2,000 students living on campus.

Carol T Christ, the President of Smith College, explained that the College has some 3,000 students ranging from 27-55 years enrolled in the arts and engineering. "We are very excited with our partnership with AWLU to create a women's university in Asia to bring ideals of liberal arts education to this part of Asia."



Wawasan Education Foundation Chairman Dato' Seri Stephen Yeap along with senior academics from WOU meet up with the visitors.



Meeting between WOU and KNUST.

Sharing ODL experience with KNUST

A delegation from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) Ghana recently visited WOU to explore the possibilities of curriculum development for KNUST Diploma and Certificate courses for working adults, staff exchange programmes, and assistance in building up their e-library resources.

Acting Provost of KNUST's College of Arts and Social Sciences, Prof Samuel Kofi Afrane, was accompanied by the Dean of the Business School, Prof Joseph Magnus Frimpong. They met with WOU Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye, Assistant Vice Chancellor Prof Mohandas Menon, and other senior academics.

According to Prof Afrane, the main purpose of KNUST's visit was to explore possible collaboration with WOU to develop their Business School which was established six years ago. WOU's track record of creating industry-driven ODL business programmes for working adults was of particular interest to KNUST, as the University is aiming to increase its enrolment of distance learning students.



Prof Ho welcomes Prof Afrane to WOU.