



## Onwards 06 and Beyond

**UniSIM 2017 Calendar  
EZ-Link Sticker**

Peel off backing paper and paste the UniSIM 2017 Calendar sticker on your EZ-Link card

### Highlights

**04** Convocation Celebration

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# Let's Celebrate & Rejoice!

The news this year that UniSIM has been earmarked to become Singapore's sixth autonomous university is to be celebrated. This move will further boost the University's stature and the recognition of its degrees.

As the new year dawns, it will be a good time for us to consider upgrading our skills to meet new demands; this, especially in light of the economic slowdown. Yes, it is easier said than done. I am sure that many of us are not like the ever logical and rational Spock from Star Trek – a person who can ask the difficult questions, and articulate the logic and reason behind the decisions to be taken. Whatever it is, create the momentum to swing the pendulum to our advantage, even in desperate times. Think positive and work towards a better future!

Finally, let us rejoice, count our blessings and look ahead to the night sky where stars shine brightly and moon hangs low!

Wishing everyone a fruitful 2017.

*There are far,  
far better things  
ahead than any we  
leave behind.*

- C.S. Lewis

**Gregory Athastaraj Francis**  
Editor (Alumni Volunteer)  
Newsletter Editorial Group



# SST Alumni Event

The School of Science and Technology (SST) hosted a Convocation Dinner for its graduates on Oct 21 at UniSIM's Performing Arts Theatre's foyer to celebrate their success, and to also reward them for their years of diligence and commitment to their studies. Around 80 graduates, associate faculty and staff attended the dinner, where they were treated to a sumptuous buffet spread complete with delectable dessert treats. A photo booth filled with amusing props was also set up for the graduates to take pictures with their classmates, favourite SST faculty and staff.

SST's Dean, Associate Professor Samir Attallah, opened the event with a short speech where he congratulated his School's graduates on their academic achievement. A video montage, which captured many significant moments of the graduates, was also screened. Many graduates shared their learning journey at UniSIM and their plans for the future, as they spent time catching up with one another over dinner. It was an amazing Friday evening where conversations flowed freely, and smiles and laughter were plentiful.



(Front row, from left) Mathematics graduate, Mr Loganathan Ramachandra, with SST's Assistant Manager, Mr Mohammad Firdaus bin Wahid, and Dean, Assoc Prof Samir Attallah.



Graduates and faculty having fun at the photo booth.

# SASS Alumni Event

There's no place like home – and indeed this was so on Oct 27, when staff and alumni of the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS) gathered at UniSIM's Performing Arts Theatre for an evening of delicious food and lively conversations.

SASS's annual Alumni Dinner was held, for the first time ever, on campus, and it was a sweet homecoming for the more than 100 participants who relished the opportunity to re-visit the enjoyable times they had shared, back where they had first met. Faculty and associate faculty mingled with their past students from the various programmes, and were pleased to hear about how their learning and experiences at the School have helped to propel them towards success both in their professional and personal lives. It was a memorable night, once again celebrating the depth and breadth of the connections made at UniSIM.



Numerous group pictures as mementos of the wonderful evening.



# Convocation Celebration

This year's Convocation saw the adoption of the theme Role Modelling the Future to encourage our graduates to be role models at their workplace, home and community as they find their niche with their newly-acquired knowledge and skills.

Nearly 80 per cent of the 2,133-strong graduating cohort attended the five Convocation ceremonies held from Oct 12 to 14. The ceremonies

## Convocation Celebration



began with a Ceremonial Procession, followed by the Guest-of-Honour's address. Our Chancellor, Professor Aline Wong, then presented the graduands their degrees and awards as their loved ones watched on proudly. The graduates' excitement and joy continued to overflow as they enjoyed a reception after the ceremony and took many photos with fellow graduates, their family and friends at photo hotspots around our campus. They were also gifted a special Convocation bear to mark this special moment in their lives.

For the first time, the names of all our graduates were listed in our Convocation mobile app. The graduates and guests were also able to view the Convocation programme, announcements and photos conveniently through their smartphones.

Our heartiest congratulations to our Class of 2016!



# Onwards and Beyond!

By Lim Qiu Ping

**U**niSIM scores another high!

During the opening Convocation session on Oct 12 where he was the Guest-of-Honour, the Acting Education Minister (Higher Education and Skills) Mr Ong Ye Kung announced the Government's proposal to make UniSIM Singapore's sixth autonomous university (AU). This proposal was presented at an extraordinary general meeting of SIM members in November, where they voted in support. The next steps will include legal and legislative amendments to effect changes to UniSIM's governance structure and rebranding, as well as the passing of a Bill in Parliament to confer the AU status on UniSIM. The target completion of these are within 2017.

Imagine that. UniSIM as Singapore's newest AU! What a long way it has come!

The seeds for UniSIM were first sown in 1992 when the Ministry of Education invited SIM to upgrade the qualifications of non-graduate teachers through a partnership with the Open University of the United Kingdom which resulted in SIM running an Open University Degree Programme. Building on this, SIM proposed the setting up of a private Singapore university dedicated to adult learners, which was approved by the Government. On 14 April 2005, UniSIM was officially established. What further differentiated UniSIM from the rest of the Singapore universities is the strong applied element embedded in all its courses; not surprising given UniSIM's motto to ensure that the knowledge and skills its students learn today can be applied tomorrow.

## UniSIM set to be sixth autonomous university

With full funding from MOE, it will have more resources to support its students

**Sandra Davie**  
Senior Education  
Correspondent

With a focus on applied learning and an eye on SkillsFuture, the privately run SIM University (UniSIM) is set to become Singapore's sixth autonomous university, if a government proposal is accepted.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) then in 2005, the uni-

needs of those who juggle work and study commitments. "In this era of SkillsFuture, it is timely to consider putting in the concrete and making this a permanent and recognised path in our education and training landscape," he said.

UniSIM, which has been led by Clementi, has been a pioneer in

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An implicit recognition of UniSIM as a university in its own right, playing a role in national manpower training with the quality expected of the AUs, came in 2008 when the Government announced that Singaporean students enrolled in UniSIM's part-time undergraduate programmes would be eligible for a 40% subsidy of their tuition fees. This amount was increased to 55% in 2010. In 2012, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced that UniSIM will provide publicly-funded full-time places to help meet the nation's university cohort participation rate of 40% by 2020.

Last year, the Government launched the SkillsFuture initiative – a national movement to harness the aspirations and talents of the population, and encourage Singaporeans to keep on learning and upgrading their knowledge and skills. Given its vision to be the university of choice for lifelong learning, UniSIM has been at the forefront of this effort, and was able to immediately offer a multitude of courses that complements SkillsFuture from the start.

The current AUs are the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Management University, Singapore University of Technology and Design, and Singapore Institute of Technology. Even with UniSIM joining this fold, it will remain unique as it will continue to focus on applied education, targeted at both fresh school leavers and adult learners. It will further focus on social sciences, thus preparing students for socially-related careers, including social work, human resources, psychology, early childhood education, and law (with an emphasis on family and criminal law), while retain limited offerings in other areas such as accountancy, business and engineering.



Minister Ong Ye Kung delivering his speech at Convocation 2016.

### Students Past, Present and Future Respond

UniSIM's autonomous status-in-the-making is of national importance. How much more intimate is the news to those who have filled and is filling its lecture halls and tutorial rooms as learners.

#### **Ms Liew Hwee Hong, Class of 2011's Bachelor of English Language and Literature:**

*"Currently, my children are still young, so I need not think so far ahead. But I do think that it is a great idea to let Singaporeans have an additional local university to consider."*

#### **Ms Low Lai Choon, Class of 2016's Bachelor of Marketing:**

*"It was a pleasing piece of news. I thought it was long overdue. The autonomous status will add more value to the degree that we hold. UniSIM graduates like us will find it easier to compete with graduates from the other local universities for employment and career advancement. I found UniSIM's practical and application-based approach very useful and beneficial. As working adults studying part-time, we could apply the very next morning the skills and knowledge we had gained the evening before."*

#### **Ms Ng Pui Ling, Bachelor of Marketing student:**

*"Well, it's about time! I believe that this would give the university a boost in expanding and fulfilling its role as a tertiary education provider. I hope to gain access to a wider range of opportunities such as scholarships for skills-enhancement programmes like overseas service-learning. With a focus on social sciences, I feel that it would be important for students to be exposed to learning experiences that are outside of the classroom. Furthermore, by embracing the idea of lifelong learning, it could give the university an even more holistic and positive image."*

#### **Ms Christian Jasmine, Bachelor of Marketing student:**

*"I felt a sense of joy and pride when I heard the news. Gaining the additional recognition as one of the autonomous universities will definitely boost the advancement of UniSIM students in the workforce. I hope that UniSIM will continue to provide a variety of courses that is ever able to meet the needs of the workforce."*

Truly, UniSIM's past and future are to be celebrated.



# Celebrations and Cheers

October is always a very busy month for my office as we put in the final touches to our Convocation planning that had been going on for months, from conceptualising the theme to the actual ceremonies on "D-day"! This year's convocation was held over five sessions from 12 to 14 October 2016. Amidst the hectic schedule, there is also a sense of happiness. It is that feeling of wanting to make it a memorable day for each of our graduates who have worked so hard for their degree. It is their day of celebration and cheers with their loved ones. Their happy faces make all the hard work of the team worthwhile.

Convocation 2016 was especially significant with the milestone announcement by the Acting Minister for Education, Mr Ong Ye Kung, on the Government's proposal to make UniSIM the 6th autonomous university (AU), bringing us into the community of AUs

- NUS, NTU, SMU, SUTD and SIT. Plans are underway to bring the proposal to fruition in the up-coming year.

Many of our alumni are excited about the news as it is a stamp of recognition of our good progress to-date. But how will this change of status impact you, our UniSIM alumni? Firstly, you will automatically continue as a member of the autonomous university alumni community. Similar benefits and privileges will continue to be enjoyed. We hope that as the University develops and strengthens its presence, we will be able to provide even more value-added services and initiatives to deepen our alumni engagement.

As a new AU, our success in creating awareness of the new identity and what the University stands for cannot be achieved in isolation. We will have to depend on you in many ways to be our

"brand advocates" among those you come into contact with in your circle of influence. With the collective efforts of our staff, students, alumni, industry and institutional partners, we will be a formidable posse of brand ambassadors. Exciting times are ahead.

We are glad that this 4th quarter issue of Connecting UniSIM brings the year to a close on a high note. We look forward to your continued support of the University. Although we will have a new identity soon, the essence of the UniSIM SPIRIT will remain. Partner us, as we bring the University to greater heights... Onwards and Beyond!

Thank you.

**Evelyn Chong**

Director, Office of Student and Alumni Relations

## Graduation Lunch for the Class of 2016

By Li Shi Wei

On Oct 22, the Class of 2016 convened at AquaMarine, Marina Mandarin Hotel, to celebrate their recent graduation. This year's event also commemorated the 10th anniversary of UniSIM's Alumni Group.

Present among the new alumni, their friends and guests, was Professor Cheong Hee Kiat, President of UniSIM, who took the opportunity to share the latest University updates, including the proposal for UniSIM to be Singapore's sixth autonomous university.

The event encouraged alumni of diverse academic disciplines to network with one another over a delicious buffet lunch and some light-hearted games.

To these newly-minted alumni, the lunch, which took place just a fortnight after this year's graduation ceremonies, was also an opportunity to reflect on what they have been through over the past few years, and more importantly, to ponder their next step.

For some, the lessons that they had encountered during their learning journey at UniSIM, has augmented their current career path. Ms Mo Juan, a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education graduate, intends to apply her knowledge in her various responsibilities as a teacher at My First Skool, from planning her lessons to interacting with her pupils.



Celebrating the 10th anniversary of UniSIM's Alumni Group.



Our graduates with their bingo game prizes.



Our happy graduates!

# Networking your way to Success

By Wu Yan Ping

**M**s Audrey Quek, an image consultant and winner of the 1999 Miss Singapore World title, shared how one can turn a contact into a contract during an Art of Networking workshop. According to her, high-level personnel in the United States do not have the habit of giving their name cards while Japanese executives view their cards as an extension of their “face”. Hence, it would be inappropriate to put away

name cards in the presence of the latter. She also recommended using “How may I address you?”, rather than “What is your name?”, when getting to know a new person.

Ms Yeo Jingxian, a 2013 Bachelor of Communication graduate, learnt how to join an ongoing group conversation diplomatically. She said: “Some of the networkers are also likely to be low in

confidence, so someone has to take the lead and the ‘Aha’ moment will happen.” Ms Tan Bee Yong, from the Class of 2012’s Bachelor of Arts in Translation and Interpretation, shared that she has become more “confident in her communications skills” following the workshop, and is grateful as her work requires her to network frequently.



Ms Audrey Quek (centre, in blue jacket) with our alumni who are ready to network their way to success.

# Industry Networking Night

By Jocelyn Huang



Mr Han Kian Kwang sharing his insights of the labour market.



Ms Patricia Polizzi addressing the audience.



Our alumni before the start of the event.

**I**t was an exclusive evening for about 50 top graduates from the School of Business as they mingled with 22 industry partners during the inaugural Industry Networking Session hosted by the School and Alumni Relations Department.

The event, held on Nov 1 at Star Loft @ The Star Performing Arts Centre, provided the attendees with an opportunity to network with like-

minded individuals, from the finance, accountancy, media to logistic sectors.

Associate Professor Lee Pui Mun, Dean, School of Business, gave a welcome speech before inviting two guest speakers, Mr Han Kian Kwang, Chief Executive Officer, Gurusoft Pte Ltd; and Ms Patricia Polizzi, Senior General Manager, Daimler South East Asia Pte Ltd, to talk about ‘New Era,

New Mindset’ by providing insights and greater awareness of the labour market.

All attendees then enjoyed an awesome buffet spread and mingled freely after the School’s Heads of Programmes introduced the graduates to the industry partners.

Among them was Mr Patrick Tan, Group Programme and IT Director, Pacific Integrated Logistic Pte Ltd, who took this opportunity to get inspiration from other logisticians on how to do things differently.

Assoc Prof Lee envisages creating more opportunities for talented students to benefit from his School’s unique curriculum to bring business reality into the classroom, and the students into the business world.

# Chaperoning for a Good Cause

By Wu Yan Ping

On Nov 5, a group of UniSIM alumni brought the elderly from SilverACE Telok Blangah Centre on an excursion to the National Museum of Singapore. Our alumni relished the experience even though some of them were paired with individuals who spoke different languages.

On reflection, Ms Cheong Nan Er, a Class of 2015's Bachelor of Early Childhood Education graduate, is contemplating learning another language before she volunteers again for events that includes interacting with the elderly. She shared: "The elderly I was attending to was a Malay lady and she was quite reserved. We had some difficulty communicating as I know very little Malay. However, we managed to get by and enjoyed the outing."

Ms Jessica Heng, a Class of 2005's Bachelor of Computer Science with Economics

graduate, did not experience any language barrier. "I spoke to the elderly in dialect, and could let my hair down." She chaperoned three elderly – a gentleman and two ladies.

Despite the small hiccup, both the elderly and alumni enjoyed themselves thoroughly. In fact, the 90 minutes set aside for the trip was clearly too short, with the collective feedback from all attendees that they wished they had more time to explore the museum.

The trip ended back at the SilverACE Centre where the elderly had lunch and were entertained with a game of bingo. Although it was a simple activity with the alumni helping the elderly match their bingo sheets when the numbers were called, it enabled the alumni to forge deeper friendships with their charges.



(Standing, from left) Alumni Mr Kwa Kee Lang and Ms Law Siok Kwan, with an elderly.



Alumnus Mr Dexter Yeo (left) and alumna Ms Ho Siang Mui (right) with the elderly.

# A Candid Discussion

By Tan Seow Heang

To get a better idea of our alumni's preferred activities for engagement and how they would like to stay connected, UniSIM decided to conduct a focus group discussion with them to obtain their feedback. This session, held on Nov 8 on campus, saw 12 alumni from four of our Schools indicate their preferred channels to remain connected, and deliberate on other issues such as continuing education, advocacy and industry networking.

Many indicated that they prefer being kept in the loop through social media platforms such as UniSIM's Facebook and Instagram accounts for sharing of corporate-level information. Alumni gatherings was another platform that they would be happy to be engaged through. The group also showed interest in articles and information on bite-size courses – preferably shorter than six months – and in continuing or upgrading courses such as Master programmes.

When asked at which stage of their career that they would pursue further education, many shared that they would do so in the

middle of their career to take a break from work and to achieve their life goal of possibly attaining another degree qualification. They shared that UniSIM was their preferred university due to its course flexibility, excellent facilities and infrastructure, and the attractive 55% tuition fee subsidy provided by the Government on the first undergraduate degree achieved.

On the other hand, recognition of the qualification and the duration of courses were some of the reasons a few of them did not consider UniSIM as their first choice. For continuing education, many opined that courses of interest or relevance, and distance of the campus from their place of work would need to be taken into consideration.

On UniSIM becoming Singapore's sixth autonomous university, majority of them expressed excitement, and would not hesitate to encourage others to take up courses with us. Besides affordability and flexibility, they felt that our courses are well structured and have substance, and that attending the courses have helped broaden their horizons, especially with classmates



Alumni participants in a candid discussion.

from different walks of life sharing their experiences. Many also felt autonomy would lead to more recognition. However, some opined that as they have already graduated, any change of status would not have much impact on them.

Regarding industry networking, most of the participants would attend informal or round table events as they were optimistic that these would lead to more business, job and learning opportunities. Concerns such as divulging company trading secrets unknowingly and the negative sharing of information were also discussed.

The effervescent focus group ended with the participants giving their final, but still candid feedback.

# Flash your Alumni Card to Enjoy these Special Deals



15% off all exterior coating packages

Valid till 31 Dec 2016



30% off all services for hair, nails, facial and body indulgence

Valid till 31 Dec 2017



30% off haircut services  
20% off beard/moustache trimming/shaving services  
20% off treatment services

Valid till 31 Jan 2017



20% off hair and aesthetic services  
S\$58 for fashion hair cut and scalp hair spa (U.P. S\$188)  
S\$88 for Revolutionary Olaplex Treatment (U.P. S\$168 - S\$200)  
S\$99 for 3D - 6D semi-permanent eyebrow/eyeliner/lips/hairline embroidery (U.P. S\$299 - S\$1,999)

Redeem a free gift with any service

Valid till 30 Nov 2017

SPH magazines

Two free digital editions of SPH magazines (Her World/Female/Nuyou/Simply Her/Shape) for three months

Valid till 31 Jan 2017



ALLIANCE COFFEE

10% off the package price

Valid till 31 Dec 2016



10% off all whole cakes pre-ordered or purchased in store  
Pre-order a 5.5 inch Round Chocolate Torte Cake for S\$38

Valid till 31 Jan 2017

FIL

SKIN, BODY & SPA INTELLIGENCE

S\$35 for Face Therapy with free Neck Reviver (worth S\$320)

Valid till 31 Oct 2017

THE LIVSSTIL

35% off all Aries Gold watches with free local shipping  
10% off store-wide with free local shipping

Valid till 31 Dec 2016



10% off purchases above S\$15 excluding beverages, cakes and afternoon tea

Valid till 31 Jan 2017



S\$38 3-in-1 Purifying Hair Treatment (U.P. S\$424)

Valid till 31 Dec 2017

UniSIM shall not be held responsible for any changes in the promotion or quality of the products/services offered. Merchants' terms and conditions apply. Refer to the [www.unisim.edu.sg/AlumniSpecialDeals](http://www.unisim.edu.sg/AlumniSpecialDeals) for more information.

# Upcoming Events



## Request for your red packets now!

Each alumnus can request for two complimentary sets of red packets (eight packets per set).

Request via the Alumni Portal > University Premium section ([www.unisim.edu.sg/alumniportal](http://www.unisim.edu.sg/alumniportal))

While stocks last.

*Terms & Conditions: Alumnus must have attended UniSIM Alumni Relations' event at least once in 2016.*



## CNY Spring Cleaning

Help create a clean and safe environment for the elderly at NTUC SilverACE Centre (Henderson) this upcoming Chinese New Year!



## Bake & Date

This Valentine's Day, let's bake scones, enjoy a Devonshire tea and meet your potential date!



## Korea 101

Annyeong-haseyo! Learn about the Korean culture and some basic conversational phrases!



## Unwind Saturday Movie: Kong

and have a "Kong" of a time with us!

FROM THE PRODUCERS OF GODZILLA  
**KONG**  
SKULL ISLAND  
ALL HAIL THE KING

*Credit: Concept Arts*



## After-work Chill Out

After a long day of work, let your hair down and unwind with a much needed ICE COLD BEER.

For detailed information and registration, visit [www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni\\_events](http://www.unisim.edu.sg/alumni_events) or [www.unisim.edu.sg/alumniportal](http://www.unisim.edu.sg/alumniportal).

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