

Weekly

DISTED

COLLEGE

Discourse

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Penang Future Forward

At the recently concluded Penang Future Forward Summit 2023, key industry players discussed plans for shaping Penang's sustainable future and identified and evaluated key challenges, strategic issues and new opportunities in Penang. Many pertinent matters were discussed concerning the gap

between the industry needs and the lack of qualified workforce in many sectors in Penang, namely manufacturing, electrical and electronics (E&E), hospitality, and others. There are challenges regarding skill gaps, rapid technological advancements, limited industry engagement, brain drain, and other economic factors. More focus is required to promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education, strengthen English communication, and enhance industry-academia partnerships.

Every individual and corporation's mindset need to change as the world is moving into a digital knowledge-based era. Value-added thinking is the way forward, as Tan Sri Andrew Sheng, Chairman of George Town Institute of Open and Advanced Studies, Wawasan Open University (WOU), advocated at the Summit. To prosper, he added that Penang must focus on the "3T Strategy" – Tourism, Technology and Talent.

The E&E industry has tremendous potential to grow further if Penang has a robust start-up ecosystem supported by local talents with the correct skill set. STEM education must be promoted in schools to encourage this vocation in the related E&E industry. With the emergence of AI technologies like ChatGPT, graduates today must learn how to use technology to achieve the intended outcome with higher value. The Chief Minister of Penang, Chow Kon Yeow, then highlighted the agenda of the Penang 2030 plan that focussed on a family-focused green and smart state that inspired the nation.

DISTED College offers programmes that can fill the gaps in the digital industry today, namely the Foundation in Science, Diploma in Computer Science, Diploma in Business IT, and Diploma in Creative Multimedia Production.

Prof. Dr. Vikneswaran Nair
President

This Week Highlights

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↑ The Chief Minister of Penang, giving his luncheon address at The Summit.

From Mental Health to Social Issues and Beyond



Psychology is the study of the mind and behaviour, and its impact on society is far-reaching. From improving mental health to addressing social issues and promoting sustainable development, psychology plays a crucial role in society. One of the most significant impacts of psychology on society is in the area of mental health. With the rise of mental health disorders globally, psychology has played a critical role in developing effective therapies and treatments. Psychology achieves SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, by promoting mental health and well-being.

Additionally, psychology also contributes to the improvement of education and learning outcomes. Educational psychologists have been instrumental in understanding how individuals learn and develop cognitive and social-emotional skills. Through this research, psychologists have developed effective teaching methods and interventions that promote student learning and achievement, thus contributing to SDG 4: Quality Education.

Psychology addresses social issues through

research applications—for example, ageing. As populations worldwide continue to age, psychology is critical in promoting healthy ageing and addressing older adults' unique challenges. Psychology research has helped develop healthy ageing interventions, including physical exercise, cognitive training, and social engagement. Besides, the research collaboration is not limited to academicians; it is also involved with industrial, primarily clinical trials. Through collaboration, psychology academicians are connected with society closely.

In conclusion, the field of psychology continues to have a significant impact on society, and its contribution is invaluable. Here at DISTED College, the psychology programme collaborates with HELP University. The programme covers various courses, such as abnormal psychology, social psychology, and developmental psychology. This curriculum will equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to make a difference in society and contribute to achieving the SDG.

Khor Khai Ling
Head of School of Psychology

Growing the STEM Education

STEM education, which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, is crucial to Malaysia's goal of being a fully developed nation. As a developing country, Malaysia needs a strong workforce with skills and knowledge in science and technology to drive innovation, research and development and to compete globally. STEM fields offer graduates a wide range of job opportunities. By promoting STEM education, Malaysia can help produce a highly skilled and competitive workforce that can meet the job market demands.

Further, STEM education can help address some of Malaysia's healthcare, infrastructure, and environmental

sustainability challenges. By promoting STEM education in healthcare, Malaysia can produce more doctors, nurses, and scientists to improve the quality of healthcare services in the country. STEM education is critical for developing the Electronics and Engineering sector, which is currently in dire need of a qualified workforce. Further, STEM education can also contribute to the social development of Malaysia by promoting critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. These skills are crucial in STEM fields and other areas of life, such as decision-making and communication.

DISTED's School of Pre-University Studies offers a pathway for STEM education via

three programmes: Cambridge A-Level, South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE International) and Foundation in Science.

Geong Chooi Peng
Head of School of Pre-University Studies



Conversation with DISTED's SRC Advisor

Kelvin Lim Kah Hin is the advisor of DISTED's Student Representative Council (SRC). According to Kelvin, he had the pleasure of working with some of the College's most motivated and passionate students. Over the past fifteen years, he has seen SRC evolve and grow into a dynamic organisation representing the student body and working tirelessly to enhance its college experience.

According to Kelvin, "One thing that has impressed me the most about the SRC is their dedication to student advocacy. SRC is always looking for ways to address students' concerns and issues, from academic challenges to social and cultural barriers. Through their various initiatives and events, the SRC has created a sense of community and belonging among students, contributing greatly to their overall well-being and success."

Another strength of the SRC is its commitment to leadership development. As an advisor, Kelvin has seen first-hand the transformation of many students who have become more confident, proactive, and influential leaders through their involvement in the Council. By taking on leadership roles in various committees and projects, SRC members have learned to manage

complex tasks, collaborate effectively, and communicate with diverse stakeholders. These skills will serve them well in their future endeavours.

Further, Kelvin was also impressed by SRC's innovative spirit and willingness to take risks. Whether experimenting with new event formats or leveraging technology to enhance student engagement, SRC always looks for ways to push the envelope and explore new possibilities. This mindset of continuous improvement and innovation has helped SRC stay relevant and responsive to students' changing needs and expectations.

Overall, Kelvin is proud to be a part of the DISTED's SRC and to have the opportunity to work with such dedicated and talented students. He is confident that SRC will continue to impact the College and its students positively, and he looks forward to supporting them in their future endeavours.



Kelvin Lim Kah Hin

DISTED Discover Open Day & Earth Hour Celebration

DISTED College welcomes all to our Macalister Road campus for our Open Day on 25 and 26 March, from 10 am to 5 pm. Get on the right track! Meet our Course Counsellors and take a tour of our Campus. Please find out more about our bursaries and scholarships. DISTED will also observe Earth Hour on 25th March, from 8.30-9.30 pm. Join us for a series of fun and engaging activities that promote sustainability and environmental awareness. Lights will be switched off on the Campus and in our hostel, Space Residences. Earth Hour is a global movement that encourages everyone to switch off non-essential lights for one hour to show support for the planet and be aware of climate change. Come and join us to learn, have fun, and positively impact the environment. DISTED is also supporting Penang Green Council (PGC) for this Earth Hour. Collectively, we are stronger and can

create a bigger impact for Mother Earth by being part of PGC's movement to spread awareness for these 60 minutes

Economics is for EVERYONE!

Economics is a social science that studies how scarce resources should be allocated to unlimited wants. Does it mean that economics is always only for economists, academicians, and politicians? The answer is NO. We are making economic decisions daily without us realising. Most of us want to lead an exciting and full life but need more resources to fulfil our needs and wants. Therefore, our daily life involves economic decisions where we have to resolve how to allocate our scarce resources efficiently to maximise the utility we gain. Terms like subsidies, taxation, government aid inflation, exchange rates and import-export, are not alien to us. These areas of study are related to the concepts and principles of economics. For instance, deciding to further study in Foundation or Diploma involves economic decision too.

We must consider which programme suits us and is most beneficial to our career path.

In DISTED College, economics is one of the subjects mandatory in foundation and diploma programmes. A body of economic principles and concepts are introduced in the programme. The knowledge will provide insights into how individuals, households, firms, governments, and global organisations use the resources most efficiently and produce a wide range of decisions to improve social welfare.

Dr Jesselin Ong
Programme Lead, School of Business and Hospitality

Recipe for Good Internship Placement

“The importance of internship placement is about finding direction and passion”

Internships are opportunities for students to get first-hand exposure to the workplace. It is the start of many successful and rewarding careers. DISTED's students from diploma and degree programmes are required to undergo a 16-week internship. Students will apply to positions in their fields of passion and interest. Throughout their internship, students will be guided by their workplace supervisor and evaluated by both workplace and academic supervisors.

Before going for their placement, students will be guided through a series of workshops such as personal grooming, CV

writing, preparing a portfolio, video resume and many more. Industry partners also join in the career fair and in-class recruitment. DISTED works with partners like WeConnect, Grant Thornton, Plenitude Group, Keysight, DELL, Teleperformance and many more. The partnership is a win-win collaboration where the companies gain talents straight from campus, and students can explore their passion and talent.

The design of the internship placement at the end of the student's academic journey makes it an attractive choice for employers. Students were generally absorbed into the companies upon completing their internship. We wish our students all the best in their internship journey, and may they find passion in their fields.

Dr. Lum Li Sean
Head, Academic Affairs/School of Business & Hospitality

Student Internship Experience

“I gained insights into the complexities of the semiconductor industry, but also learned about the power of community and the importance of never giving up on your dreams through my internship experience.”

My internship at Bosch Semiconductors was a truly transformative experience that will stay with me for a lifetime. As a team member responsible for setting up the new Robert Bosch Semiconductor Manufacturing Penang plant, I was struck by the incredible sense of family and unity permeating the entire team.

Despite facing countless challenges and obstacles, we remained committed to our goal and always kept sight of our purpose. Every milestone we achieved was a testament to our

perseverance and determination, and we celebrated each one with a deep sense of pride and joy.

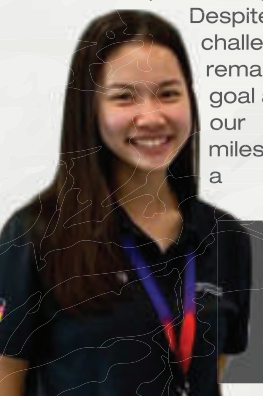
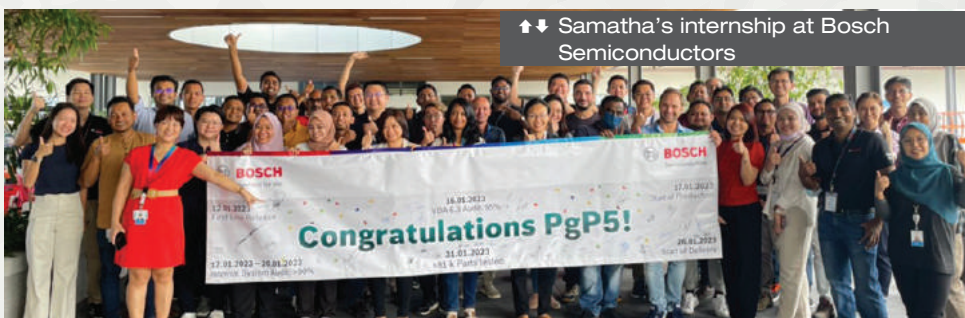
The grit and resilience of my colleagues inspired me deeply, and I felt honoured to be a part of such a remarkable team. The bonds we forged and the sense of unity we shared will stay with me for the rest of my life, and I will always be grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such a remarkable journey.

Overall, my internship at Bosch Semiconductors was an experience that changed me in profound ways. It taught me the importance of resilience, unity, and

purpose and gave me the tools to pursue my dreams with renewed vigour and determination. Thanks to DISTED College, I gained this opportunity to intern at a world-class company.



↑↓ Samatha's internship at Bosch Semiconductors



Samantha Teoh Wei Yi
Bachelor of Science (Hons)
International Business
Management in collaboration
with Staffordshire University

DISTED Staff Visit to Bonanza Venture Holdings Green Headquarters

Eleven senior management staff of DISTED visited the green headquarters of Bonanza Venture Holdings (BVH) in Jalan Lamas, Ipoh. The trip was hosted by Chairman of BVH, Dato' Lim Si Boon. BVH is a holding company, driven by their core value 'care' and with their believe, we are #BetterTogether. With property development (Kinta Properties) being the foundation of the

group, there are three core market pillars: hospitality and leisure (Meru Valley Resort), automotive distribution (Ban Hoe Seng Auto) and education (under Bonanza Educare). The unique 'V' structure building of BVH, focuses on quality workmanship and natural materials for an extraordinarily comfortable, energy efficient and durable building design making it the

first Green Building Index (GBI) platinum building in the state of Perak. The GBI platinum rating means the building has green features such as materials, water and energy that have been integrated into the design to reduce the building's impact on human health and the environment. DISTED College will apply their learnings from this visit to make the College Green and more sustainable.



↑ Senior management staff of DISTED with chairman of BVH.

DISTED's National Judo Champion

DISTED Psychology student, Delwina Cheah Kay Yan, is currently with the National Team in Judo. She had represented Penang in the 70 kilogrammes individual category and had won Bronze Medal in the last SUKMA Games on September 2022. She had to compete with ten other top state judo participants to take away the bronze medal. In the recent March 2023 Perak Senior and Junior Open Competition, she represented Penang in the 57 kilogrammes individual category, where she came out as a Silver Medallist from nine finalist participants.



Strengthening Industry Partnership

At DISTED College, strong industry partnerships are recognised as imperative to provide students with the best possible learning experiences. Mr J Philip Vincent, Director of GSH Precision Technology Sdn Bhd, visited DISTED on the 8th of March 2023. Five key initiatives that were discussed for adoption include: (1) Work-Based Learning: Learning does not only happen in the classroom. DISTED is exploring the possibility of work-based learning for the students, whereby they can apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings; (2) Curriculum Review: Industry experts will be used to review the curriculum to keep it updated and relevant and comply with the requirement of the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA); (3) Internship Placements: This collaboration will allow DISTED to work closely with industry partners to provide the students with high-quality

internship placements; (4) Industrial Visits: Industrial visits will be organised to various companies to give students a better understanding of the industry they will be working in the future; (5) Expert Talks: Learning should not be limited to the classroom. Therefore, industry experts will be invited to share their experiences with the students. These initiatives will help DISTED students acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their future careers.



↑ Mr. J Philip Vincent with DISTED team.