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Building Strong Alumni Connections

On May 19, 2023, I had the privilege of attending the Governor's Day and Hari Raya celebration at my former school, Bukit Mertajam High School (HSBM), as an alumnus representing my school's National Executive Council (NEC). It was a momentous occasion, considering the school will celebrate its centenary in 2027. I was delighted to join the current Penang Governor, Yang di-Pertua Tun Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak, who is also an alumnus, along with other alums, teachers, and students, in commemorating this event. Witnessing the alums's support for our beloved alma mater was heart-warming.

As for DISTED College, with a history spanning 36 years, it has amassed a remarkable community of over 15,000 alumni. Maintaining a strong bond with these alumni is of utmost importance. They can be invaluable networking resources for current students, faculty, and the college community. Drawing from their experiences, they can open doors for these students to potential job opportunities, internships, and collaborations across various industries. Moreover, alums' wealth of knowledge and expertise in their respective fields can greatly benefit students' professional development. Access to workshops, seminars, guest lectures, and career guidance can help students navigate their chosen paths.

In addition, College alumni can provide access to resources that may not be readily available elsewhere. Exclusive job boards, research materials, and specialised facilities can significantly enhance the learning and growth of both students and staff at the College.

To further strengthen its alumni networks and associations, DISTED College is actively working towards its reestablishment. The College strongly encourages all alumni to remain connected and contribute to the institution's ongoing growth and development. By doing so, alumni can positively impact future generations of students, fostering a sense of community and shared success..

Prof. Dr. Vikneswaran Nair
President

建立巩固的校友联系

2023年5月19日，我有幸代表母校全国执行委员会的校友参加了大山脚中学 (HSBM) 举办的州长日及开斋节庆典。这个重要的节目是为了配合该校将在2027年庆祝百年华诞。我很欣喜与槟州现任州长兼校友 Yang di-Pertua Tun Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak 以及其他校友、老师和学生们一起庆祝、纪念这次的活动。能见证校友们对深爱的母校的支持，真是令人心潮澎湃。

至于拥有36年历史的立达学院，已经集聚了15000多名校友。与这些校友保持坚固的关系是极其重要。他们可以成为当前学生、教师和学院社区的宝贵联网资源。借鉴他们的经验，可以为这些学生打开通往潜在工作机会、实习和跨行业合作的大门。此外，校友在各自领域的知识和专长也极大有利于学生的专业发展。参与工作坊、研讨会、客座演讲和职业指导可以帮助学生寻找他们的出路。

不仅如此，学院校友也可以提供其他不易获得的资源。独家就业专栏、研究材料和专业设施显然可以提高学生和教职员在学院的学习和成长。

立达学院正积极重建为进一步加强校友的联网和交际。本院强烈鼓励所有的校友保持联系，为本院持续成长和发展做出贡献。这样，校友可以正面地影响下一代学生，培养社区意识和共享成功。

Prof. Dr. Vikneswaran Nair
院长

(Mandarin Translator, Dr. Tan Sze Huey, Sr. Lecturer, School of Pre University)



↑ DISTED President and members of the National Executive Council of High School Bukit Mertajam with the Governor.

Enhancing Arts and Language Learning



The rapid advancement of technology presents both opportunities and challenges in the field of education. One noteworthy development is ChatGPT, a cutting-edge AI system that has the potential to revolutionise learning, particularly in arts and language disciplines. ChatGPT is a valuable tool for language learners, facilitating realistic conversations with the AI model. By engaging in interactive dialogue, students receive instant feedback, corrections, and suggestions, thereby improving their speaking and writing skills.

For Arts students, ChatGPT assumes the role of a virtual companion, providing inspiration, feedback, and critique. It offers a platform for discussing creative ideas, seeking suggestions, and receiving constructive criticism in real time, even when access to lecturers or peers is limited. However, DISTED students must acknowledge the limitations of ChatGPT. It should be used as a guiding tool, as it may not

fully replicate human interaction, empathy, or creativity. It is also important to note that ChatGPT may generate inaccurate or misleading information.

As educators at DISTED, lecturers need to be aware of the impact of chat-based AI models like GPT on student assessments. Attending AI-related training and workshops is highly recommended. The workshops enable lecturers to address concerns regarding plagiarism, communicate academic integrity policies effectively, and provide guidelines for the ethical usage of AI models.

Lecturers should prioritise the design of authentic and individualised assessments that encourage higher-order thinking skills. Students are encouraged to engage in original thinking, critical analysis, and active participation by incorporating process-oriented assessment methods. These strategies diminish reliance on AI-generated content and ensure a fair and academically rigorous assessment process.

As technology continues to advance, it becomes increasingly important to embrace and adapt to these changes. By harnessing the potential of ChatGPT while remaining mindful of its limitations, one can enhance the learning experience and equip students with the essential skills needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

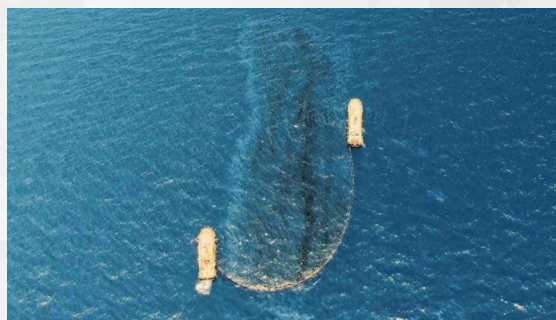
Nadia Jefri
Senior Lecturer, Pre-University Studies

An Ally in Tackling Environmental Challenges

Chemistry is vital in combating environmental problems, particularly oil spills that occur when oil is accidentally released from tankers at sea. With the global oil trade expanding, the frequency of oil spills has increased, posing a significant threat to marine ecosystems. These spills have immediate and long-term effects on bird and fish populations, as well as on local tourism and fishing industries. In addressing this issue, various techniques and materials are being developed.

One promising approach is the use of sorbent materials and gelling agents. Sorbent materials, some of which can swell by over fifty percent, can absorb oil. The spread of oil slicks can be prevented by creating porous fibreglass sorbent booms that repel water but allow oil absorption. These booms act as floating barriers, confining the oil and reducing its impact. Gelling agents are chemicals that solidify spilt oil, transforming it into a rubbery substance that can be easily collected using nets, skimmers, or suction devices. This method simplifies the cleanup process by facilitating oil removal from the sea.

However, the costs associated with these cleanup activities are high. Therefore, the most effective strategy is to focus on preventing oil spills in the first place by implementing stringent regulations and monitoring systems to minimise the occurrence of spills during transportation and storage. Additionally, ongoing research and development efforts are crucial to improving cleanup operations and finding environmentally friendly and cost-effective methods. By investing in innovative solutions, we can enhance our ability to mitigate the impact of oil spills and protect fragile



↑ Two tugs deploy booms at the suspected site of the sunken Princess Empress tanker which has caused an extensive oil spill in the Philippines. (Source: Philippine Coast Guard, 16 Mar 2023)

ecosystems.

In short, Chemistry, as a powerful tool, enables us to tackle environmental challenges and ensure the preservation of ecosystems and the livelihoods of communities that depend on them. We can work towards a more sustainable future by emphasising prevention, developing advanced cleanup technologies, and promoting responsible practices. At DISTED College, Chemistry is taught in the Pre-University programmes, namely Cambridge-A-Level, South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) International (SACEi) and Foundation in Science, where students are exposed to the fundamentals and application of Chemistry in our daily living.

Dr Loo Ai Yin
Senior Lecturer, School of Pre-University Studies

STEM Workshop Empowers Students with IoT Coding and AI Skills

The School of Computing and Engineering at DISTED recently organised an enlightening workshop on IoT coding and AI skills. Led by Miro KostECKi, the Chief Technology Office (CTO) of Stemsel Foundation, the workshop specifically targeted students pursuing their Diploma in Computer Science and Diploma in Business Information Technology.

A standout moment of the workshop was the presence of high school student Alex Farmer, who showcased his impressive innovation—an animal tracker called Livetrac GPS with a Health Index. Alex, a recipient of the prestigious DOUBLE GOLD award at ITEX23 KLCC, captivated the computing students by explaining the intricacies of his creation. His creation not only tracks animals but also monitors crucial environmental factors such as humidity and temperature.

The workshop, conducted by Miro and Alex, served as a prelude to the upcoming Penang STEM Grand STEM Challenge in August 2023. This highly anticipated event, supported by Penang's Chief Minister, aims to foster innovation and inspire students to explore science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The

workshop utilised runlinc Easy Coding E32W controller boards, providing a user-friendly platform for IoT development.

During the workshop, CTO Miro KostECKi amazed participants by showcasing an IoT-controlled drone and demonstrating how to create an alarm webpage with buttons to toggle buzzers and lights—an ingenious solution for deterring intruders. The workshop equipped participants with valuable coding skills and fostered creativity and problem-solving abilities. It served as a catalyst, inspiring young minds to explore the vast possibilities of IoT and AI in shaping the future. Alex Farmer's success story inspired the students, and they eagerly absorbed the knowledge shared by Miro KostECKi.

DISTED College is grateful to Miro KostECKi, Alex Farmer, Stemsel Foundation, Penang STEM, IEM, and STEMSEL Australia for their unwavering commitment to nurturing and inspiring the next generation of innovators. Their collaborative efforts continue to push the boundaries of technological advancements and ignite curiosity within young minds.

Seethai Subramaniam
Head, School of Computing & Engineering



↑ DISTED staff and students at the STEM workshop with Miro and Alex.

An Unforgettable and Valuable Internship Journey at Dell Technologies

Securing an intern placement at Dell Technologies was a dream come true. Despite the challenging economic climate, I am grateful for the opportunity to work in a supportive role. Throughout my internship, I immersed myself in the corporate working culture with a team of colleagues and mentors who guided and assisted me.

I underwent comprehensive training during the initial two months and learned to handle tasks independently. Dell's investment in system functionality ensured I could carry out my responsibilities effectively. I learned about inventory management through data analysis, enabling me to devise solutions for shortage risks. Daily communication with my team allowed me to establish connections. As the internship progressed, I deepened my understanding of the procurement process.

Regular town hall meetings fostered open communication. Dell's workplace culture emphasizes flexibility, transparency, and collaboration. Unique events like the "workout for rewards" initiative motivated the team. Despite challenges

with the work-from-home culture and occasional confusion with systems, on-site team-building events fostered collaboration. Building good relationships with colleagues and seeking their guidance proved invaluable. My supportive manager set clear goals and encouraged the expression of ideas. I felt involved and valued, and I developed new skills.

In conclusion, my corporate experience at Dell Technologies was exciting and occasionally challenging. Maintaining a positive mindset and work-life balance was crucial. I am grateful for the opportunity and the valuable lessons learned.

Yew Sze Heoy
Bachelor of International Business
Management (Hons)



Ignite Your Passion with a Growth Mindset!

Join us at DISTED School of Psychology's Empowering Minds: Igniting Passion with a Growth Mindset event, led by student Nicholas Tan June Way. This highly anticipated programme is designed to introduce the captivating world of psychology to the community and ignite a passion for this fascinating field. Mark your calendars for June 10, 2023 (Saturday) as we gather at DISTED College to explore the diverse realms of psychology and uncover the myriad of career pathways available to aspiring students.

We believe that unlocking your full potential starts with adopting a growth mindset. It's about embracing challenges, stretching our abilities, and opening our minds to the endless possibilities that psychology has to offer. This event will serve as a catalyst for personal and professional growth, encouraging attendees to delve into the depths of psychology and discover their true passions.

Be prepared to embark on a journey of self-discovery as we delve into the various branches of psychology, including cognitive psychology, social psychology, clinical psychology, and more. Through engaging workshops, inspiring talks, and interactive sessions, participants will gain valuable insights into the field and understand how psychology impacts various aspects of our lives.

Our experienced speakers and educators with industry

professionals will share their expertise and personal stories, providing a glimpse into the vast opportunities that psychology offers. Whether you aspire to become a psychologist, therapist, counsellor, researcher, or work in fields like human resources, marketing, or education, this event will offer invaluable guidance and inspiration.

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to ignite your passion for psychology and cultivate a growth mindset. Join us on June 10th at DISTED College and embark on a transformative journey that will empower your mind and shape your future. Together, let's embrace the endless possibilities that psychology has to offer and unlock our full potential.

Nurul Hidayah Mohamad Farok
Lecturer, School of Psychology



Empowering Communication Skills "Speak with Impact" Workshop

DISTED proudly served as the venue sponsor for the District 51 Toastmasters International Speak with Impact Communication Workshop, which took place on May 20, 2023. The first Northern Region workshop was held at Disted Heritage Hall. This event was attended by 25 participants which included staffs, students and alumni.

Club Growth Director, Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) Ching Lee Hwa shared valuable insights on Public Speaking. In the interactive session, participants crafted their speeches, presented them within 3-minutes, and received constructive feedback from their respective facilitators. Each facilitator was responsible for guiding up to 4 participants.

The Workshop Organising Committee sincerely thanks DISTED for generously providing the hall. In turn, the Committee allowed the entire DISTED Community to participate in the workshop free of charge. DISTED is committed to developing communication skills among its staffs, students and alumni. with another Speak with Impact Workshop on 29 June 2023. Registration or queries with the Communication workshop can be made via email to sao@disted.edu.my

Jessica Ang Gim Mei
Head, Student Affairs



↑ Participants of the workshop.

Invitation to TAR College's Odyssey Night Performance

I was invited to perform for Tunku Abdul Rahman College's (TARC/TAR UMT) orchestra on March 13th. It all began when a high school friend asked me to be a guest performer for their school's concert, and I gladly accepted, along with a few other friends.



The concert showcased a variety of performances, including singing, dancing, and a captivating orchestra performance by the school's orchestra club. As the violin section leader during rehearsals, I collaborated with the other section leaders to ensure a seamless and harmonious arrangement.

Despite numerous rehearsals, we managed to deliver a flawless performance, thanks to the exceptional skills of the musicians, many of whom were part of the award-winning gold team in an international competition in 2019. The repertoire included enchanting melodies such as "Beauty and the Beast," "Top of the World," "Viva La Vida," and "The Pirates of the Caribbean."

The event was a resounding success, allowing us to promote classical music and instruments to the younger generation in this modern era. It was a fantastic opportunity for me to represent DISTED Student Representative Council (SRC) and showcase my musical talent and passion, inspiring others to appreciate and embrace the timeless beauty of classical music.

Overall, this experience was truly unforgettable, and I am grateful for the chance to collaborate and perform alongside other talented musicians. I am determined to continue pursuing my music passion and inspire others to do the same.

Teoh Tien Ern
Cambridge A-Level