GRADUATING MUFY WITH I’M STILL LEARNING

In a celebration of hard work, commitment and resilience, close to 600 students graduated from the Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) with relief, pride and excitement. Ready to begin the next stage of their world class university education, Lee Thye Cheong, Director of MUFY at Sunway College Kuala Lumpur asked the graduates to seize every opportunity to learn not only from textbooks, lectures, tutorials, friends, experiences and challenging situations but also to learn from mistakes made as mistakes often propel new heights of achievement.

Highlights for the year’s graduating class included the impressive Wall Street investment savvy Tan Shao Qian and Chai Lit Kean whose team emerged champion, winning the Grand Prize at the Monash Business Investment Challenge beating 27 other teams. Another group of students took part in a meaningful experience by journeying into a life without sight in support of Dialogue in the Dark, a global social enterprise which raises awareness and understanding of people without sight. The annual fund-raising MUFY ‘SHARITY’ Day this year featured a remarkable variety of food, games and the ‘Class of Horror’, a haunted maze which had horror seekers paying a handsome fee to be scared out of their wits.

Academically, MUFY continues to shine as Sunway College KL clinched the MUFY Excellence Award for achieving the Highest Total Score in eight subjects among global MUFY providers in Australia, China, Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. MUFY students at Sunway College KL came out tops and swept 16 out of 22 MUFY Subject Awards. Thirty nine students scored an average 89% to become eligible for a Monash University Malaysia Scholarship.

On behalf of the graduating class, valedictorian and leader of the MUFY Student Council Daniel Chandy Samuel thanked his peers, parents and lecturers for their support throughout the year. Comparing MUFY lecturers to the Waze application programme, Daniel said the lecturers guided and helped them to get to where they had to be. “Often they are traffic lights that stop us when we are running wild, out of control. At times, they are like mechanics, fixing up the students, making sure we are in tip-top shape,” added Daniel.

In his message to his fellow graduates, Daniel asked them to fight for what they believe in, to never settle for any less and to make their lives count for something for the preciousness of life lies in the fact it does not last forever.
A THESIS IS NEVER DONE

From the Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) programme at Sunway College in 2010 to Monash University Malaysia in 2011 till now, Alex Lee Kae Lun has been busy exploring the world of education from a research perspective. Now waiting for his PhD application, Alex has started teaching undergraduates in Finance and working as the treasurer for the Monash University Postgraduate Association, the student council for postgraduates.

His PhD thesis is within the area of banking regulations but differs from his Honours thesis of Housing Bubble, Affordability and Credit Risk: A Malaysian Perspective. His Honours thesis was presented recently in October last year at the 11th Asian Academy of Management International Conference 2015.

To Alex, his work-life as a PhD student is not much different from that of an Honours student. There is time for afternoon tea breaks to discuss all sorts of stuff, not just research; time to go for short food-trips and then back to work. Some, like Alex have teaching to conduct.

As a first-time research student during his Honours year, Alex was tasked with preparing six literature reviews of about two-thousand five hundred words each, three qualitative studies assignments including his first research poster and interview of his research life and three quantitative studies task, with one exam. Alex worked seven days a week on a nine-hour schedule in the Honours Room, with his head buried in piles of research journals. The biggest challenge for him was the twenty-thousand word thesis which got more creative with flavour as feedback came from supervisors and research peers. The need to be updated with the latest development in the housing market, new lending guidelines from Bank Negara and new government policies for affordable housing had his thesis evolving to the point where he was trying to squeeze words within the word count limit.

Although it was a tough journey, Alex’s biggest take-away from the Honours program is the importance of very strict time management to enable quality task completion within the time frame.

For future students of Sunway, Alex gives this advice, “There is a lot to learn outside of books. Tertiary education is the time to discover who you are and work to become who you want to be.”