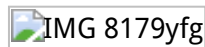


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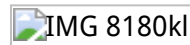
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## UCEC STRENGTHENS UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA, November 2015 – The 4th University Community Engagement Conference (UCEC) which began here yesterday has successfully attracted 150 delegates from 15 countries, including Malaysia, Australia, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Brunei, Bangladesh, Japan, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Germany, United Kingdom, South Africa, New Zealand, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Rwanda.

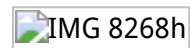
The 4<sup>th</sup> UCEC 2015, co-organised by USM and the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP), was officiated by the Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman.



Omar, who is also the President of the Asia-Pacific University Engagement Network (APUCEN) said that this conference helped to strengthen the collaboration network among the participants from all over the world in an effort to develop community through the available expertise.

Also present were the Vice-President of APUCEN from Kyoto University, Japan, Professor Dr. Takeshi Matsuda; CEO of Navitas Professional & English Programs, Lyndell Fraser; USM Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Industry and Community Network) cum the Organising Committee Chairperson, Professor Dato' Dr. Susie See Ching Mey and Co-Chair of the Organising Committee, Fiona O' Sullivan.

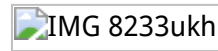
“In order to remain relevant, universities nowadays are expected not only to generate and advance new knowledge for knowledge’s sake but to also encompass the creation of applicable, meaningful, impactful and economically useful knowledge for the well being of communities,” Omar said.



He explained that many universities today are giving due emphasis on the efforts of strengthening community engagement through what is often termed as scholarly engagement.

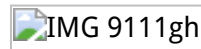
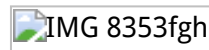
“Universities with its resources, expertise and facilities, through the availability of improved technologies and good governance of managing social, economic and environmental projects, can be transformed into entities that are able to move together holistically to bring about changes to the communities,” he said.

He added that universities are now putting in more and more emphasis on knowledge transfer to improve the quality of life of the community on a continuous basis, especially in the process of globalisation and sustainable development as well as for a better future.



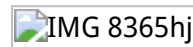
Meanwhile, Susie See said that universities must engage closely, meaningfully and effectively with the industry and community in mutually benefitting collaborations for the good of all.

"To be successful in this integration, a strong and stable relationship has to be built within the engagement of university with the industries and communities by bridging any existing gaps and in fact, integrating for sustainable development and prosperity of the entire community," she said.



The first UCEC was held in Penang in 2009 with the theme "University Community Engagement for Sustainability", followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> one jointly organised by USM and Thammasat University in 2012 at Chiangmai Thailand with the theme "University-Community Engagement for Empowerment and Knowledge Creation". The third UCEC was held in 2013 at Padang, Indonesia, jointly organised by USM and Universitas Andalas with the theme "Towards the Transformation of the Higher Education on University Community Engagement".

"UCEC is expected to become a mechanism for higher education reform at the global level for the benefit of the local community.



"Universities and community should work in tandem in a collaborative partnership approach to ensure that there is a sharing of knowledge, expertise, resources and experiences in various fields and disciplines in addressing community related issues," Susie See added.

Translation: Tan Ewe Hoe

Text: Mohamad Abdullah



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