Psychologist and New York Times best-selling author Dr. Kevin Leman once shared, “Reality is a great teacher, and if you teach children to learn from reality, its lessons will continue through their whole lives.”

What Loman stresses is noteworthy. Knowledge gleaned from books can only take us so far in life’s endeavours. It’s the real-world learning that remains, the deep experiences gained from encounters and the relevant, practical knowledge acquired. At the School of Business, we believe in making the classroom real and holistic for our students. We strive to create a plethora of opportunities for our students to experience the world beyond the confines of classroom walls and lecture halls.

How do we achieve this? Through competitions that challenge, through collaborations that expand connectivity and through community engagement that allows them to meaningfully socialise and care for others. By being in sync with industry needs and expectations, we can better equip our students with the right skillsets and mindset for the work force. Competitions will hone knowledge application skills and gear them up mentally to take on various challenges. Getting involved in community projects will develop their social and empathetic skills. These will help them apply and act responsibly to shape their future.

In this issue of BizNews, we share how competition, collaboration and community engagement have enriched our students’ journey. We hope the rewarding lessons they have learnt at School of Business will nourish their lives.

Daniel Yeow
Director, School of Business
Temasek Polytechnic
When asked about the lessons learnt, Hui Qin quipped, “We had to do 40 questions in just 30 minutes. The lessons we learnt in class gave us more than food for thought.”

Competition in various forms is one of the ways in which students engage in deep learning. It instills confidence, inculcates responsibility and ingrains the idea that it is not winning that counts but the will to seize the day.

Never mind that the heat of the kitchen makes real culinarians, the heat of competition also builds poise, professionalism and presentation as the team of lecturers and students from the Diploma in Culinary and Catering Management (CCM) who won the coveted Food and Hotel Asia 2012 Dream Team Challenge learnt. In fact, CCM scored a hat trick, a rare achievement by winning the prize for three years running in 2008, 2010 and 2012.

“Learning is integrated because every single aspect of service and food production are covered,” said Section Head Jeremy Sim. Teams are judged on service excellence, teamwork and coordination, product knowledge even and the temperature and taste of the food and beverage served.

Observed Course Manager, Tan Hsien Wei. “It takes a team’s drive and inspiration to make a dream come alive, going beyond the classroom.”

Exposure, engagement and excitement—what better ingredients to help infuse passion in learning. Added to that is the possibility of entrepreneurship. Even a major project show can lead to possibilities as Diploma in Business Information Technology (BIT) students learnt, when they became the first polytechnic students to win the prestigious innovation award from the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology for their product, Life@Events. The team has even gone on to secure funding for their projects.

After all, at School of Business, the best comes after a real test, the test of competition, the whetstone for talent.

“… Time management was key... We managed to capitalise on our strengths and recovered quickly from our mistakes.”

Wong Hui Qin,
Student,
Diploma in Accounting & Finance
Hardwired to collaborate with industry heavyweights

“...it all began in 2008 with a chance meeting at a conference in Idaho, USA, and grew slowly into an opportunity to foster real learning through meaningful projects, across many diplomas, in School of Business. To promote Sentosa as an attraction par excellence was the mission. The discussion on this topic, and networking between Jimmy Wong, Events Director at Sentosa Leisure Group, and Sandra Goh, Diploma in Leisure and Resort Management (LRM) Lecturer at the conference spawned “Spooktacular”, the site-specific event which students from LRM conceived as a classroom project tied to the subject, Festivals and Events Management.

The entire experience helped forge valuable links, offer unique industry insights, form apprenticeships and add mileage to the students’ and lecturers’ learning journey. Diploma in LRM Course Manager, Desmond Lim said, “The industry-relevant learning opportunities did not stop there. Behind the scenes, the lecturers worked hard to create other opportunities for students and this engendered the Sentosa Apprenticeship Programme. Six LRM Seniors embarked on a three-month programme, executing their event plans for “Spooktacular” in 2009.” Students across the LRM diploma participated in “Spooktacular” over a two-week period, playing various exciting roles as event managers, cosmetic artists, stall managers and yes, even as actors. The “Spooktacular” project is just one example of how learning comes alive with an established industry partner at School of Business.

This year marks four fulfilling years of the LRM-Sentosa collaboration, and the industry partnership has given rise to other new real-life learning opportunities. Other diplomas have come on board in this collaboration journey. In October 2011, the Sentosa Leisure Group collaborated with the Diploma in Communications & Media Management (CMM). Students doing

“We picked something that appealed to us so that we’d be passionate about filming and producing the video. It wasn’t just a series of assignments. Even though we didn’t sleep much towards the end, it was all good!”

Kim Neubronner
Diploma in Communications & Media Management
Advanced Television Production, were commissioned to work on videos for their new Sentosa Youtube Channel to commemorate Sentosa's 40th anniversary celebration. The students’ task was to explore Sentosa, capture the island's essence and spirit and feature its attractions to first-time visitors. Despite having visited Sentosa many times before, they had to view the popular attraction afresh. Senior Lecturer Angela Chee who taught the students Advanced Television was simply blown away by the students’ creativity. Altogether 12 videos were produced, each three to five minutes long. A bonus was the cash reward for the best video produced. Sentosa also contributed an industry prize to graduates.

Just like the LRM and CMM students, those in the Diploma in Marketing came on board the Sentosa collaboration project, this time to explore social media marketing for Sentosa. As part of Sentosa’s 40th birthday bash in 2012, 100 students created a social media marketing plan. Their concept focused on how to entice Singaporeans from all walks of life to send in snapshots of old Sentosa, as part of a larger project to chart the island’s transformation into a unique one-stop leisure resort. The students’ work so impressed the client that three students were selected to be a part of the Sentosa Apprentice Programme for one month between February and March 2012.

Marketing Lecturer Dennis Toh, who guided the students for the subject Internet Marketing, said that he, too, got to hone his skills as he gave students’ feedback and guided their efforts. He quipped, "The project was a catalyst for a real-world industry perspective. Students worked with the client and got feedback, plus a taste of real time, real hurdles. Ordinarily, they would have treated this as an assessment but the industry add-on boosted their desire to go the extra mile."

Just as friction polishes diamonds, challenges polish people. For the students and diplomas, there was cross-diploma exchange, student development and the idea that the spirit of excellence and profound insight comes from real-world tasks at School of Business. The road to success is paved by strong industry network and positive relationships.
Heralding student development through scholarships and apprenticeships

Whatever good things we build, end up building us. The gateway to strong partnerships between industry and education institutions lies in various projects, initiatives and scholarships. One person who will be built up by a scholarship made possible by the collaboration between School of Business and industry partner Banyan Tree is Chua Jin En of the Diploma in Leisure and Resort Management (LRM) student. Jin En is the first recipient of the Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts Scholarship Award. She is grateful for the behind-the-scenes work done by her lecturers at School of Business to secure scholarship opportunities for deserving students. The scholarship is awarded to one student per year for up to three years and covers the cost of the tuition fees, miscellaneous fees and book allowances for one year. An added bonus is an internship programme at Banyan Tree’s world renowned hotels or resorts. The industry collaboration and special arrangement, will help provide scholarship hopefuls with opportunities for experiential learning, professional and industry guidance, and networking.

Jin En’s internship, which was for a management trainee, covered aspects of the front office and spa management, and corporate social responsibility. But most importantly, it covered guest management, something Jin En will always treasure. Because she knows that in receiving, we give back. One of her most memorable experiences of her internship was helping guests from China. “I was the only available Mandarin-speaking staff at the resort so I was the point of contact for the couple. I gave them a personalised shopping tour at Banyan Tree Gallery and as they had booked a spa massage session for them before their flight.”

Jin En also broke out her walking shoes for some real cultural learning as she took in the beautiful sights of Phuket. Through
Business in Sync

this scholarship, Banyan Tree hopes to groom potential leaders, like Jin En, for the leisure industry and help bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world application.

To groom future professionals for the logistics industry, Diploma in Logistics and Operations Management joined hands with iHub Solutions Pte Ltd, the latter providing six (LOM) scholarships in 2011 to students from the Diploma in Logistics & Operations Management and pledging six more scholarships in 2012. Each scholarship, worth $2,600 is bond-free. The awards were presented to students who shine in their studies and display leadership through their involvement in school activities.

Said Mr Koh San Joo, Director and founder of iHub Solutions, who offered LOM the scholarships, “We would like to use this scholarship to encourage young people. There are ample opportunities and exciting challenges in the logistics industry for them. It is my personal wish that the recipients realise they had received something good and can pass this on in life.”

The students, too, are full of appreciation for this scholarship lifeline that enables them to fly high. One beneficiary of this Scholarship, Mohamed Razeef bin Mohamed Yatim remarked, “I’m thankful to the sponsor, iHUB Solutions, as the scholarship has given me the encouragement to continuously strive for excellence in the academic and non-academic fields. Inevitably, the scholarship has helped me financially.”

Also in the spirit of industry collaboration and strong financial commitment, students from the Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management received intensive training in the housekeeping department of a major hotel and, at the same time, stood a chance to win a scholarship through the Housekeeping Mentoring Programme (HMP). The tie-up between the Association of Singapore Housekeepers (ASH) and TP, which began in 2008, saw 10 Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management Junior students being selected to work in hotels like The Marriott and Royal Plaza On Scotts for 40 hours from 12 to 16 December 2011. Students learnt the ins and outs of running a housekeeping department and gained a better awareness of the challenges faced by housekeepers. One definite take-back from the programme was the need for smooth co-ordination from both front and back of house operations to turn the wheels of the hotel cog.

After all, change starts only when someone sees the next step and creates new opportunities. Great ideas take fruit when industry meets the schoolroom.

“Interact constructively and being flexible were huge learning points.”

Chua Jin En
Diploma in Leisure & Resort Management
“Heartwired” to engage with community

“The event aimed at helping students put into action their retail know-how and increase their awareness of people with special needs who use their talent and hard work to sustain themselves.”

Christine Ng
Section Head
Diploma in Retail Management

At her graduation in 2012, Phyllis Chew, a beneficiary of the Temasek Polytechnic Bursary thanked the donor of funds for helping her financially through her three years of polytechnic study, without which she would not have graduated. Phyllis is just one student who has benefitted from the slew of schemes set up by the polytechnic for students with financial needs. Many students have been helped at the School of Business by the TP Bursary Fund. In fact, contributors such as Mr Koh San Joo of iHub Solution have also helped to pay students’ medical fees.

Students themselves also engage in fund-raising through the Campus Care Network Fund (CCN). Every year School of Business students get to practice the art of giving wholeheartedly on Campus Care Network Day. Students gather, bond with one another and give of themselves to raise funds for their needy schoolmates. They don’t just spend money. They “spend themselves” taking time and putting in effort to make cupcakes, source and sell flowers, busk, wash cars and yes, even provide the best “haunted house experience”—all in the name of charity.

Although charity begins at home at School of Business, it does not stop there. It goes out into the wider world in the form of outreach in local and overseas community projects. In December 2011, students from the diploma in Law (LAW) pledged cakes and boosted their “heartware” when they joined forces with law alumni to stage a mini-carnival for students with special needs at the Charity Cupcake sale and Law X’mas night. These events were carried out in partnership with Asian Women’s Welfare Association (AWWA). Of her experience, LAW Inc President and participant Arasi Nathan observed, “We don’t realise what a privileged life we live. Through the events we raised $1,200 and we are glad we did this as a team.”

In a similar vein students from the Diploma in Retail Management (RMT) worked hard to organise “Love Shopping” in August 2012, a retail event in which RMT Senior students participated in a social enterprise project, marketing merchandise from four non-profit organisations namely Asian Women’s Welfare Association (AWWA), Mouth and Foot Painting Artists (MFPA), Mother and Child Project and Action for Singapore Dogs (ASD) at Changi City Point Mall Section Head Christine Ng.

Charity can also take a different shape and form to help others build a sustainable economy. At School of Business, active, action-based charity takes the form of sharing expertise to develop others. Students use their skills to develop others around. 22 Diploma in Marketing students set off for Siem Reap to engage in marketing research for Prolit Village. Before this, there were pre-expedition tasks, logistical planning and fund-raising. Through sheer determination and teamwork, the students managed to enhance the lives of some 300 Prolit School students by cleaning and painting the school’s compound, building a volleyball court and soccer field and constructing a hopscotch playground. The market research team went on a four-day site visit to appraise the village and to subsequently present key findings to the Prolit village head for further stakeholder engagement. The event culminated in a skit, games, songs and a gift pack to every child at Prolit. In fact, there are plans for the Marketing team to return to Prolit Village next year for more work in 2013.

Students from the Diploma in Communications and Media Management (CMM) also for Siem Reap to teach English to teenagers.

Indeed at School of Business, students learn that it is not just making money and extending wealth that builds life. They learnt that it is not about making a living, but building a life.