



Indian Graduates Association
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

Newsletter

(for Members only)

IGAUPM Management Committee 2007-08

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Issue 8: January 2008

Editorial – Resolutions or Actions?

Greetings and best wishes for a happy and meaningful 2008!

Across cultures, New Year's Day is often seen as a "landmark day" that is used to put the past behind and the future ahead.

I guess that's what makes New Year resolutions so popular. It's the time when people tend to focus on something they've wanted to change and confidently say, "This year, things are going to be different." It often seems like an exciting point of new beginnings and second chances.

Depending on who you ask, up to 85% percent of all New Year resolutions involved some element of life-style change, be it weight loss, more workouts, better nutrition, improved life-balance or more sleep. And, of those, nearly 50% have been broken by the end of January, while 90% bite the dust by June.

I have never been big on New Year resolutions. To me, true personal change does not happen because of a calendar. Resolutions are not crucial, but actions are.

One of my biggest disappointments has been learning how large the gap is between what people say they do and what they actually do.

To me, there are simple yet powerful actions that people could use in the New Year (for life, even!), such as:

- Don't promise anything you can't keep
- Don't expect "sorry" to wipe away thoughtless words/deeds
- Don't say you'll keep a secret and then share it
- Don't assume you're right about anything

Life is lived in moments, this moment, this moment now. Be willing to press your edge but be respectful of your limitations.

Cheers

Siva Balasundram
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Editorial Committee

Dr Siva K Balasundram
Ms Banumathy Devi
Miss Sushmeetha Morugan

New members

Our membership is growing, slowly but surely! We now have 129 registered members. We are pleased to welcome the following new members to IGAUPM:

1. Mr Gurunathan Supurmanin (#107) from United Overseas Bank
2. Mr Suresh Kumar Subramaniam (#128) from AirAsia
3. Mr Ravindran Varadaraju (#129) from Exxon Mobil

I can't understand why people are frightened by new ideas. I'm frightened of old ones.
-- John Cage

Activity report

• Family Day at Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM)

On the 15th of September 2007, IGAUPM held a family day at FRIM. The half-day event kicked off at 8.15 am. This event was attended by 18 participants, mostly IGAUPM members and family.

The excursion started with a guided canopy walkway trail. The organizing chairperson, Miss Jeyanny Vijayanathan, who was also the excursion guide, gave participants in-depth information about the tree flora. This was followed by a visit to the fish pond, which houses the famous *Arowana* species (not *Pirana*, thank God!). Next, was a visit to the dipterocarp and non-dipterocarp arboretum. The scenic arboretum was awesome! Participants then advanced to the Sg. Kroh picnic area, which had a nice waterfall. After much walking (or rather after burning 200+ kcals, based on my pedometer!), the waterfall area was just the perfect place to be. Participants warmed down by dipping their tired feet in the clear waters. Lastly, participants proceeded to the open field area for an interesting game called 'rain dance' (if you like to learn more about this game, talk to our game master - Mr Kaveyarasu Ellapan).



The family day was wrapped up by 12.30 pm. All participants were treated to a sumptuous lunch at one of Kepong's curry houses.

• Deepavali Dinner 2007

On the 2nd of December 2007, IGAUPM hosted a Deepavali Dinner at Nagas Restaurant, Brickfields. The dinner, themed *Delightful Fellowship*, was attended by 44 people, mostly IGAUPM members. Our guests included Prof Dr Vidyadaran Menon (former PHUPM co-adviser), Dr Nathan Ganapathi (formerly an academic with UPM's Faculty of Forestry), and Mr Khoo Hock Aun (from Cosma Biofuels; a friend of IGAUPM).

The informal setting provided an opportunity for members to interact socially and professionally in effort to strengthen fellowship and networking.



Congratulations to ...

Dr Uma Rani Sinniah

(Lecturer, Dept of Crop Science, Faculty of Agriculture, UPM & current IGAUPM Treasurer)

for being honored with the Excellent Teaching Award by the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM. The award was presented at the Quality Day Celebration held on November 6, 2007 at Equatorial Hotel, Bangi. Earlier in September of 2007, Uma received the Excellent Service Award from UPM.



Good job, Uma!

Mr Saravanan Kandasamy

(Formerly an engineer with Maxis, founding President of TheMIND Association & current IGAUPM Committee Member)

for being awarded the INESC Porto Research Grant to pursue a PhD in Telecommunications Engineering at the University of Porto, Portugal. The scholarship is tenable for four years. Good to note that Saravanan was one among sixteen scholars worldwide selected for this program.



Well done and good luck, Saravanan!

Random information

• Scholarship

The Honda Dreams Fund provides full academic scholarships to promising underprivileged youths. This effort is tied up with the United Nations Development Program. For details, look up <http://www.honda.com.my/hdf/01home.html>

• Leisure

The Genting International Show kicks off on February 8, 2008 at Genting Highlands Resort. This show features world class performances of illusions, acrobats and dances. For details, look up <http://www.genting.com.my>

Upcoming activities

• Seminar on College/University Opportunities for School Leavers

Several educational fairs will soon kick off to assist school leavers make that important choice of pursuing tertiary education. More often than not, many students (and parents) fail to optimize benefits from these fairs, simply because of a mismatch between students' aptitude and their desired academic path.

This seminar aims to equip students (and parents) with the necessary tips on choosing the right academic option.

⇒ Tentative date: **Mid February 2008**

(stay tuned for more updates)

• Colloquium on Biofuel Opportunities in Malaysia

Crude oil prices are escalating at an alarming rate. The need for alternative energy sources has never been so intense.

This colloquium will focus on Malaysia's biofuel policy, research & development efforts, and business/commercialization opportunities.

⇒ Tentative date: **Early March 2008**

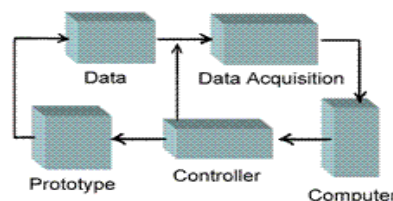
(if you have ideas to share on this proposed event, feel free to shoot us an email)



*An expert is one
who knows more
and more about
less and less until
he knows
absolutely
everything about
nothing
-- Murphy's Law*

Reality check ... (source: www.phdcomics.com)

What your research supposedly looks like:



What your research actually looks like:

