

# Keep on smiling

Teachers, students join global Humane Happiness 2021 to offer each other social-emotional support

IN a world gripped by a health crisis, happiness can sometimes be elusive for even the most jovial of us.

That, however, was no reason for over 3,700 teachers and students from across the globe to feel discouraged as they took part in a project to make the

world shine brighter.

Held from January to April this year, the Humane Happiness 2021 saw 60 educators from Malaysia and their students joining their international counterparts in offering each other social-emotional support.

Through activities carried out over the course of 10 weeks, the participants were given opportunities to develop constructive habits, a sense of optimism and relationship-building skills.

They also experienced the joy of contributing towards a social cause, which is essential for effective understanding of global citizenship.

It is hoped that the project will empower the participants to become global citizens who strive to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and are competent in the 10 life skills laid down by the World Health Organisation.

Humane Happiness South-East Asia coordinator Nirmaladevi Kandasamy found that her pupils were motivated to learn the English language during their participation.

"The pupils are second language learners, so they have low self-esteem and a fear of learning English. But throughout this pro-



**Starting them young:** Pupils were excited to be part of the project.

ject, they were encouraged to listen, speak, read and write in the language," said the teacher at SK St. Patrick, Tawau, Sabah.

The international research-based collaborative project is the brainchild of Pramod Thube, an English

language teacher from Maharashtra, India.

It aims to instil compassion in the student fraternity and encourage everyone to explore ways to attain and spread happiness in these unusual times.

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A COUPLE of Malaysian students have been accepted into two of the premier tertiary institutions of the world.

Jarrell Cheong won a spot in Harvard College in Massachusetts, whose admission rate was at its record low this year at just 3.43%.

Another school leaver who only wants to be known as Sarah secured an offer from the London School of Economics in the United Kingdom.

Both PrepWorks students, Cheong and Sarah had additional help in nailing their applications.

"The level of detail my tutors put into their work certainly formed a big part of my success in my college enrolment process," Cheong said.

He added that the education consultant had been invaluable in giving him an insider perspective on top college admission requirements, from essay submissions to interview preparations.

PrepWorks founder Tamara Lim said she first realised many needed help with their applications when

A PRINCIPAL at an international school in Kuala Lumpur has won a prestigious award from the United States-based National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

High school principal Jeff Farrington of the International School of Kuala Lumpur (ISKL) was named the Principal of the Year for 2021.

The award was in recognition of his efforts in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students, as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession, according to an ISKL press release on April 27.

ISKL head of school Rami Madani extended his appreciation for Farrington's leadership, professionalism, and commitment to excellent education.

US ambassador to Malaysia Brian D. McFeeters, whose two children attended ISKL during his posting as political counsellor here from 2009 to 2011, expressed his gratitude for the energy and devotion Farrington has given to the ISKL community.

## 'Insider perspective' helps students enter top varsities

she was approached to review their personal statements.

Having gone through the same challenges as a student, Lim decided to set up services providing students with access to tutors who have first-hand, recent experiences of enrolling in Oxbridge and Ivy League institutions.

"I want to help more Malaysians reach their dreams.

"What they need can vastly differ. Some require crucial guidance in the last mile, while others need help right from the start, such as selecting suitable subjects for their secondary level exams," said Lim, who graduated from Oxford University in the UK and spent a year carrying out her research studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the US.

She added that early guidance,

along with uncovering the students' strengths and passions, can broaden their options and optimise their chances of admission.

The services provided have expanded to include its fully online academy, which was established last year to fill the need of providing holistic, interactive education from homes during the enforcement of several phases of the movement control order.

"We have created a comprehensive after-school programme to cover most of the UK national curriculum topics taught by tutors from top universities," said Lim in a press release.

Since its inception in 2015, all students have received offers from premier boarding schools and universities, and most of these offers were their first choices.

## Prestigious award for principal

"Knowing that educators like Jeff are engaged in shaping our children's lives makes Kuala Lumpur a wonderful place to live and work in," he said.

The NASSP National Principal of the Year (POY) programme will see the year's top principal from each of the 50 US states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and the US Department of State Office of Overseas Schools, convening in Washington from Sept 17 to 22.

Farrington, who joined ISKL in 2014, has over 20 years of experience in leading instruction, assessment, and teacher supervision.

He has been a trainer for the Principals' Training Center in the US, and holds a master's degree in international education, and bachelor degrees in education and science.

The award was sponsored by the NASSP, through its affiliation with the US Department of State Office of Overseas Schools.

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