Community service project

A group of Universiti Malaya students take part in a project promoting the importance of education to a rural school.

THE students from Universiti Malaya’s Tuanku Bahiyah Residential College (KK2) got together to organise the Baktisiswa Secholian 2015 (BSS2015) project.

The project was held at Kampung Kaingaran, Ulu Sugut, Ranau, Sabah earlier this year. It involved 30 students from various disciplines and backgrounds.

BSS2015 is the second edition of the college’s annual project. It is a community service project that aims to promote the importance of education at the tertiary level. The project also strives to instil the love between university students and the community through various interactions.

The drive from Kota Kinabalu to Kampung Kaingaran took almost six hours.
The villagers use a generator for electricity and their water supply comes from the rain or river.

The untarred road to the village is also rough and made for a bumpy ride.

Most of the villagers are farmers and rubber tappers.

The project was launched by UM deputy vice-chancellor (student affairs and alumni) Prof Datuk Dr Rohana Yusof.

"I am extremely proud of the efforts made by the students. They are so passionate about helping others in the rural area," she said.

She said the university would follow up with other initiatives to ensure the living conditions in the village could be improved.

Jamri Ronggitom from SMK Ulu Sugut said they were touched by the UM students’ willingness to come to the school to help the children.

"We hope that our students will be inspired by them. We always welcome such programmes in our school," he added.

"BSS2015 is very unique and different from other community service programmes as it includes education as one of its main agenda. I would be most happy to nominate this as the best project of the year," said KK2 principal Dr Nahrizul Adib Kadri.

UM cultural affairs officer Aida Rahman, who is also the project advisor, expressed her pride in the hard work the committee members had put in despite the hurdles and limitations they faced.

"Though rejected by many companies to fund the RM 20,000 project, they persevered and continued the effort to raise funds through sales and donation drives within the past four months," she said.

The inspiration behind her students’ perseverance, she added, is their serious passion for helping the community of Ulu Sugut.

The project also received help and support from Dr Mohamad Ismail Ali, Sabah Foundation, Radio Television Malaysia, Teh Lin Prosthetic and Obstetric Sdn Bhd, Ranau District Education Office, Hotspot Empire Company, Al Razy Innovative Solution, the Health Ministry and Staedtler (M) Bhd.

**Giving back to the society**

Many activities were held throughout the programme such as medical checks,
gotong-royong, tree planting, games, motivational talks for school students, fun learning session with pre-school children, Q&A sessions with parents as well as a healthcare talk by Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Associate Prof Dr Helen Benedict Lasimbang.

The participants also had the opportunity to try out Sabah’s famous traditional Nasi Linopot prepared by the villagers and the participants themselves.

They also had a good time learning the local language, culture and customs.

Let’s do it together: The team teaching a fun activity to the school students during one of the sessions.

One of the project’s aims was to give back to society. So, the participants set out on a walk around three villages to distribute basic daily supplies such as cooking oil, rice, flour and Milo to the villagers.

Here, the participants got the chance to see the real hardships faced by the rural folks.

The project’s director Siti Munirah Mohamad Ismail said the “charity walk” was an amazing experience for the participants from UM.

"By visiting the villagers at their homes, we got a comprehensive view of their lives. The villagers were determined to build a better future for their children," she said.

Siti Munirah added, “Through this experience, I hope that the participants from UM will realise just how blessed they are to have access to basic facilities, education and opportunities to learn and grow as a person.

"I hope BSS2015 has managed to inspire them to continue helping those in need and give back to the community."

Inspiring the young

The most crucial goal of BSS2015 was to inspire the young Form Four and Form Five students of SMK Ulu Sugut to further their studies after completing SPM.

Four motivational talks were given throughout the programme. The first was on rising above hardship to inspire the students.

The second talk was conducted by KK2 secretary Norfaizal Jamain, the secretary of KK2.

The third talk was by Panorama RTM producer Rosli Nordin and the fourth by a student representative from UM Wan Haziq Fadhullah. The students responded enthusiastically towards the talks, with many eagerly asking and answering
questions.

The talks gave a new insight about education to the school students, helping them realise the need for education to improve their lives. The students were also taught how they could apply to higher education institutions.

Other group activities were carried out where each group of students, guided by two facilitators were tasked to complete activities designed to build teamwork.

Iman Jabilin, a final year Biomedical Engineering student from Ranau said, “It feels surreal to see how much these teenagers have grown just within these three days.

“They remind me so much of my school days, burning with passion and desire to achieve my dreams, pushing aside all obstacles and finally making my way into UM.

“I pray they will achieve the same or even better feat than mine.”

During the closing ceremony, two students from the school, Mohd Kazarudin and Jeanet Lempisik@Marx were given the opportunity to deliver speeches on education.

They were trained by one of the UM participants Fadhli Zulkifli, who is also an orator, and their eloquent speeches captivated the audience.

The final night in SMK Ulu Sugut was filled with tears and goodbye hugs. Everyone had formed deep attachments and felt reluctant to leave one another.

One of the students, Asnita Joiny, 17, said, “Our brothers and sisters from UM have left such a significant impact on our lives. They made us realise the importance of being ambitious. One of my ambitions is to enrol in UM.”

Another student, Ricky Pawchia Sami, 17 said, “I am so inspired. I will strive to achieve my dreams. I will make everyone proud.”

TAGS / KEYWORDS:
Universiti Malaya

You May Be Interested

Of snow and teaching in Russia
Young inventors not content to rest on laurels
Double joy for twins in art contest
Healthy breakfasts for your champ under 10 minutes
What is it like to love someone who forgets you?
Axiata Group overall champion in ACCA MaSRA for 2015