CE’S MESSAGE

for the new year

2015 has been a fruitful and memorable year for all of us at SHATEC. We reached many milestones this year, one of which was the launch of the Industry Mentorship Programme in July, the first structured mentoring programme offered by an industry school. Our students were paired with industry professionals where they were given guidance, and in so doing, were offered opportunities to increase their employability skills, industry awareness, and obtain insights into the work practices in the hospitality industry. This year, the programme will continue to grow and we hope to get more mentors and mentees on board and to contribute even more to the distinctive SHATEC edge that our students enjoy.

Our training restaurant was also relocated from The Treasury to within the premises of the Enabling Village in 2015. Renamed “The Sapling”, our hope is for our students, who begin as saplings, to eventually grow and blossom into strong and sturdy trees in the hospitality industry. A new programme at The Sapling is Gourmet Night where our students get to cook alongside some of our illustrious alumni as well as other celebrity chefs. The programme is yet another form of mentorship and guidance to our students and part of our journey in nurturing talent. Gourmet Night is held once a month.

To keep in touch with our alumni, SHATEC organized its inaugural Homecoming event on 28 January 2016. The event brought together alumni who span the entire 32-year history of SHATEC. It is indeed our hope for our graduates to remember their roots even as they go on to become accomplished professionals in the industry. The time our students spend with us at SHATEC may not be long, but I am sure it leaves an indelible impression upon every one of them.

At this juncture, I would like to extend my well wishes to the incoming batches of students for 2016. I am sure you will enjoy a fruitful, enjoyable and meaningful time at SHATEC.

Ms Margaret Heng
Chief Executive
Poultry Takes Pole Position
at this SG50 Cookoff
The SG50 Jubilee Cookoff Competition – 28 November 2015

In line with the year-long SG50 Golden Jubilee celebrations last year, SHATEC, in partnership with USA Poultry and Egg Export Council, contributed to the celebratory mood by holding a cookoff competition on 28 November at The Sapling. The star ingredient of the competition was a US boneless chicken thigh that was provided by the co-organiser. The atmosphere in the kitchen was intense as 10 pairs of competitors put in their best efforts – chopping their ingredients with precision, marinating their chicken thoroughly, and vigilantly monitoring the heat of the stove – in order to win the much-coveted first prize of a thousand dollars.

Participants came up with interesting recipes with the chicken they were provided. There was otah-spiced chicken curry, salted egg yolk chicken, and chicken rendang amongst other mouth-wateringly delicious dishes.

The panel of judges comprised five esteemed chefs, four of whom were SHATEC alumni. SHATEC is also honoured to have the event graced by Ms Denise Phua, Mayor, Central Singapore District, who penned a note on The Sapling’s Nurturing Wall on how she enjoyed her visit.

Team Black and White, comprising SHATEC graduates Teo Jun Xiang and S. Viknesh clinched the first prize with their paper-wrapped chicken. “I have fond memories of the dish, having eaten it a long time ago. Because Viknesh and I feel that this traditional dish seemed to have been forgotten, we decided to present this dish and breathe life into it once again,” says Jun Xiang.

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– Teo Jun Xiang

Chef Edmund Toh, S.Viknesh, Teo Jun Xiang, Ms Denise Phua and Ms Margaret Heng
S HATEC held its second Parents Engagement Day of the year on 7 November 2015, with a slew of interactive stations and games for parents to experience first-hand both the learning and fun that takes place at SHATEC. Our students arrived early in the morning to help with the set-up and the preparation of food, eager to do their best for their parents. Students from SHATEC’s hospitality programmes were stationed at the reception and their smiles lit up the place as they welcomed the arrival of the parents.

Besides the usual parent-teacher meetings, parents were greeted with attractive displays of pastries and food from different countries, given a detailed walk-through of how guestrooms are prepared for guests, and experienced an interesting bar workshop where students displayed their mixology skills. There was even a station on napkin-folding, teaching parents how to fold a series of intricate napkin designs!

Parent Mr Myles Baker said, “I found the event very interesting as it showcased the students’ talents and offered me an opportunity to understand the learning that takes place in the school. I really enjoyed myself, especially the tasting of the food, pastries and drinks that the students took time and effort to prepare.” The happy smiles of our proud parents definitely made every effort in organising the event worthwhile.
REKINDLING MEMORIES AND BUILDING NEW BRIDGES
at SHATEC’s First Homecoming
Homecoming – 28 January 2016

Despite the heavy rain, the night saw more than a hundred alumni from over the years streaming back to the school to relive the good memories and reconnect with their old classmates.

SHATEC held its inaugural Homecoming event on 28 January 2016, bringing together pioneers and stalwarts of Singapore’s hospitality industry who share one thing in common – having graduated from SHATEC. Despite the heavy rain, the night saw more than a hundred alumni from over the years streaming back to the school to relive the good memories and reconnect with their old classmates. It was a good turnout indeed. The night started with a walkthrough of the Bukit Batok campus, triggering much chatter on how things used to be at the old campuses.

Dinner commenced over much talk and laughter following Ms Margaret Heng’s welcome speech, calling for all to continue to fly the SHATEC flag high wherever they may be. Our alumni were also encouraged to come on board SHATEC’s Mentorship Programme, to extend guidance and help to their juniors, and to be part of the movement to nurture a future generation of talents in the hospitality industry. As the night drifted by amidst the relishing of the good times, the proverb “old is gold” really seemed to ring through. Some of the old friendships are really the best in life.
Frida, 20th November 2015 was a day to remember for the SHATEC family as we celebrated SHATEC’s 30th graduation ceremony. The venue at Singapore’s National University Cultural Centre was abuzz with activity and excitement as more than 500 attendees including graduands, scholarship recipients, board directors, SHATEC partners, parents and other guests awaited the beginning of the ceremony.

SHATEC was especially privileged to have Dr Koh Poh Koon, Minister of State of Trade and Industry, grace Graduation 2015 with Mr Harmil Singh, SHATEC’s alumnus and now President and CEO of Compass Hospitality, delivering an inspiring speech encouraging our graduands as they embarked on their next chapter of life.
SHATEC welcomed hundreds of visitors to our home at Bukit Batok during two Open Houses held on 20 December 2015 and 16 January 2016. Both events took on a slightly different approach this year, with more interactive activities to engage both the young and the young-at-heart. Hours were also extended to cater to an expected larger crowd.

Visitors streamed in bright and early, with some starting their day with a campus tour that introduced them to the facilities at SHATEC and our long history of hospitality and culinary training. Talks and sharing sessions from SHATEC’s directors as well as students and graduates offered personal insights into life at school, complementing the consultation sessions that were being held.

SHATEC’s very own chef trainers and students helmed the hands-on workshops, bringing home pizzas that they had tossed themselves, sauces that they happily mixed and expertly self-baked almond-cinnamon rings from the various culinary and pastry sessions.

Ms Charlene Lee, who expressed interest in the pastry courses at SHATEC, enjoyed herself at the pastry-making session, adding that “the different professional equipment she saw got her excited as they were too expensive for her to buy for her home.”

Workshops in January’s Open House allowed participants to try their hands at mixing their own drinks, to learn the fine art of packing a luggage in the most efficient manner and managing a hotel through a simulated hour-long game experience. While waiting patiently for their turn for consultations, visitors enjoyed refreshments prepared by the students and were entertained by the different game booths that incorporated the theme of hospitality. All in all, both Open Houses received positive feedback from visitors and were huge successes.
The Food Drop initiative was a collective effort by staff and students, with every individual doing their part and finding a way to contribute, through monetary donations and in the purchasing, packing, carrying and delivering of grocery bags.

Partnering with South West CDC and the Food Bank on a Food Drop corporate social responsibility initiative on 9 November, SHATEC helped to usher in an early Christmas for 360 needy households in Bukit Batok. Named “The SHATECare Movement”, the initiative aimed to generate greater awareness on the plight of needy families in our society and is aligned to the “caring” virtue in SHATEC’s culture statement.

The Food Drop initiative was a collective effort by staff and students, with every individual doing their part and finding a way to contribute, through monetary donations and in the purchasing, packing, carrying and delivering of grocery bags. More than $10,000 worth of food and daily utility supplies were distributed and the SHATEC spirit was exemplified by Chief Executive Margaret Heng and other SHATEC directors who were on the ground helping to distribute the packs.

“I am very happy to have the school mobilized for such a meaningful initiative,” says Ms Heng. “I could sense the build-up of excitement from our students as they were hard at work in the kitchens producing festive cakes for the residents and as they helped to pack the items and distribute them. Good job SHATEC! I hope each and every one of you will continue to exemplify the spirit of caring in your everyday life.”

Expressions of joy were reflected not only on the faces of the recipients, but on the faces of SHATEC students as well.

Yan Ling from HCA 10-15, who volunteered her time for the initiative said, “We have been accepting so much from society that it is only right for us to give back. Our efforts may not be a great deal, but to them it is like warmth in the snow.”
SHATEC began its Lunar New Year Lunch on 16 February with a blast, playing host to a professional lion dance troupe that fired up the festive mood with an entertaining performance, ushering in a new year of prosperity and blessings.

Staff, together with the board of directors and members from SHA, crowded around tables and did the prosperity toss, loudly exclaiming good wishes for the year. The sumptuous feast prepared by the students included fish maw and crab soup, steamed fish and fried nian gao amongst many others. Lunch ended with a prize-giving ceremony for nine lucky winners and a roomful of people with happy smiles and satisfied stomachs.

Here’s wishing everyone a year of prosperity, good health and many happy moments to treasure.
The last time SHATEC Times spoke to SHATEC alumnus Samuel Quan, he was about to begin his participation in the prestigious ICEX Training Programme in Spanish Gastronomy. Founded in 2007, this world-renowned culinary programme held in Spain admits only 12 young chefs from around the world every year and Samuel was picked for the programme in November 2014. Recently, we caught up with Samuel to find out what he has been up to.

SHATEC Times (ST): What was your most important learning point from the programme you attended?
Samuel Quan (SQ): The most important thing I learned was that when it comes to food, it all boils down to having the freshest produce. I have also learned a lot from my programme mates and from my time in the Michelin restaurant I was attached to.

ST: What do you think about the Michelin Guide rating restaurants in Singapore?
SQ: It will definitely bring up the standard of cuisine in Singapore and give future chefs the opportunity to have a more serious take on food.

ST: What are you up to now?
SQ: I’m doing a lot of research and digging much deeper into food. One area I am researching on is the umami* component. I am now more interested in the scientific area of food because I am involved in a few projects that I am going to start with my team where we hope to bring and share more knowledge to future generations of chefs. My team and I have a plan to attract investors to open a concept kitchen and to develop an app for future generations of chefs and home cooks.

ST: To you, what’s the most important thing about cooking that you think every chef should know?
SQ: I think critical thinking about the structure of food and how to pair different ingredients together.

ST: How has your education in SHATEC helped you in your career?
SQ: It has helped me a lot in terms of my personal development. For example, I gained confidence in speaking and, through the guidance of the chefs at SHATEC, I gained a much better understanding of and developed a closer connection to different cuisines. It is very important for chefs today to know how to speak and to do so with confidence. Subjects such as Hosting and Communication Skills that were taught in SHATEC gave me the confidence to speak to customers as well as to better accept their comments and feedback in order to improve myself.

* Umami is a savory taste, one of the basic taste sensations along with the sensation of sweetness, sourness, bitterness and saltiness.
ANOTHER SHATEC STUDENT
Hits the Heights
Graduate, Teo Jun Xiang, emerged Champion in the 8th Training Programme in Spanish Gastronomy

The biggest satisfaction SHATEC graduate Teo Jun Xiang gained from his experience in Spain was that his limits were stretched and he was able to achieve the high standards that he had set for himself. It was a personal milestone attained in his culinary journey, an affirmation of his skills that has emboldened and strengthened his cooking spirit.

Jun Xiang graduated from SHATEC’s Diploma in Culinary Skills course in 2015. The 24-year-old was nominated by SHATEC in the same year to participate in the Spanish Gastronomy Training Programme, the 8th edition of the prestigious programme that culminates in a competition from which he emerged champion. His exciting 6-month journey in Spain was spent partially with 11 other trainees from all around the world including countries such as Canada, China, South Korea, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Mexico and Ireland. For three months, he was attached to the restaurant La Botica in Matapozuelos, hard at work in the kitchens, familiarizing himself with Spanish food and a rather different work culture in Spain.

Jun Xiang also spent his time trying out authentic Spanish tapas and learning how to make them. His award-winning tapa called “3-in-1” is a creative fusion of Zamorana rice, potato, chorizo, eggs and croquette. Inspired by the multi-ethnic makeup of Singapore, Jun Xiang felt that it was significant for his tapa to reflect this – that different ingredients could come together and complement each other with flavours harmonizing as one. The journey of his tapa making was a long process of constant experimenting and refining.

While he did receive some feedback from his chefs and friends at La Botica in Matapozuelos, they continually challenged him to come up with his own solutions to perfect the taste and look of the tapa. Jun Xiang racked his brains over it and was relentless in trying to perfect his tapa. He eventually did achieve his desired outcome of having the egg yolk remain intact in the croquette, for the golden goodness to flow out as a surprise when people bit into it. The goodness of his tapa gave him the best comment one can receive from the judges – that it tasted 100% Spanish.

Jun Xiang faced several challenges in Spain, such as dealing with the language barrier, adapting to the changing seasons and the local food, and enduring long working hours in the kitchen. Yet, it was in such times that he realised the importance of going back to the beginnings of why he started on his culinary journey – to bring joy and comfort to people through food. And while tough, he enjoyed a series of new experiences in Spain such as foraging for fresh ingredients from their source – the forest!

And while heartened by his win at Spain, the humble Jun Xiang shared that the thought of winning had never crossed his mind. He is simply thankful for the opportunity offered by SHATEC that has given him the experience of a lifetime, broadened his perspective towards cooking and inspired him to keep on learning. His efforts at pushing himself have certainly paid off. He has been offered a job in the kitchen in Spain and has plans to move there to widen his knowledge about Spanish food culture. All the best to Jun Xiang as he embarks on an exciting new page in his culinary journey!
MENTORS AND MENTEES
From the MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME @ SHATEC

Hear from them!

Wilson Tan
(Diploma in Hotel Management, April 2015)

“I have learnt more about the importance of having a good working attitude and to be able to lead, especially the responsibilities of being a leader.”

Mr Andrew Ing
Chief Operation Officer, Lo and Behold Group

“One should keep getting a mentor in life. The mentor may be a different person based on your objective, current situation and age. It is a standing board for the sharing of experiences.”

Teo Wei Song Stephen
(WSQ Advanced Certificate in Hotel and Accommodation Services, September 2014)

“I feel that I have been given a chance to explore different options and doors have been opened for me.”

Mr Gino Tan
General Manager, Pan Pacific Singapore

“I mentor the student(s), train and coach them from Day 1 as they start their working life with us. Stephen has a positive and can-do attitude and is always willing to learn.”

Kevin Robert Fernandes
(Diploma in Hotel Management, October 2015)

“I think this programme is a wonderful platform for every willing individual who has a passion for the industry. This will be the first step to a bright future.”

Mr Darren Ware
Area General Manager, Far East Hospitality

“Kevin has been open to learning and understood the impact of soft skills. The key things to bring along through this mentorship process include questions on how to deal with certain issues from an EQ point of view.”

Ms Toni Robertson
Executive Chef, Mandarin Oriental

“Syahir is very grounded and this has allowed me to give him a very realistic perspective of the industry and what he can expect as he advances forward in the profession.”

Syahir Osman
(Diploma in Pastry and Baking, January 2016)

“The programme allows me to have a greater understanding of a hotel kitchen’s operations and prepares me well, not only to become a good cook in the kitchen, but also for a managerial position in the future, hopefully.”
TASTING SWEET SUCCESS

with Barry Callebaut

Roshin Perera graduated from SHATEC with a Diploma in Tourism Management in 1996. Today, less than two decades later, she has climbed the corporate ladder to become the South East Asia and Pacific Sales Director of global chocolate giant Barry Callebaut, which is the leading chocolate supplier in Singapore. She oversees three brands within the Barry Callebaut empire: Belgian brand Callebaut, Cacao Barry from France and Swiss gourmet brand Carma.

SHATEC Times sat down with Roshin to find out more about the wonderful world of Barry Callebaut chocolate.

SHATEC Times (ST): How is Barry Callebaut involved in training future talents?

Roshin Perera (RP): Most of the subjects I took in school are not practised in my job today. However, what is interesting is that I am able to apply some of the food knowledge that I learned at SHATEC to the job. As most of my customers are chefs, I am able to apply the knowledge that I have learnt in Food Service, for instance, menu planning and the sourcing of raw materials.

ST: How is Barry Callebaut involved in sustainable production?

RP: All of our global chocolate brands such as Cacao Barry support the sustainability effort and one of the key things that we believe in is to be able to trace where the cacao comes from. So in other words, we work with the farmers, make sure they have good agricultural practices, ensure that the beans are sustainable certified, and then it goes all the way to processing and then to the chef. I think this is important because customers today would like to know where their food is coming from. The traceability goes hand-in-hand with the sustainability initiative.

ST: Why did Barry Callebaut choose to sponsor SHATEC with chocolate for pastry classes and practical training?

RP: I was from SHATEC and I trust that SHATEC is now putting emphasis on its pastry programmes, so it is great that Barry Callebaut can support a school which has a vision for the pastry industry. Also, SHATEC has leaders like Edmund Toh (Director, Culinary Studies, SHATEC) who is on board and is very dedicated to the school. SHATEC does give back a lot to the culinary scene and so, when given an opportunity to do something, we decided to make SHATEC our priority.

ST: Any words of wisdom for SHATEC’s current students?

RP: I always remind myself of this line: For things to change, I must change first. That can be applied to anything whether you’re a student or working in the industry. I think it is important for current students to keep an open mind and be flexible because the culinary scene in Asia is very flexible. That means to say that even if you are studying a pastry course, you can also learn and acquire other skills from the hot kitchen. Besides being in the kitchen, it is also interesting to look at jobs like what I am holding right now, which is in the supply of raw materials, something which is still very much connected to the chefs in the industry. So you can be a chef or you can be a sales person. No matter what it is, you are still connected to the chef’s circle.