



Bringing Insider Perspectives into Inclusive Service Learning

Lingnan University hosted the Higher Education Service-Learning Symposium titled '21st Century Service-Learning Model for Inclusive Growth' on 12 November. The event was organised by the University's Office of Service-Learning and as part of the Jockey Club 'We Care, We Serve & We Learn @ Tuen Mun' Programme. Over 120 guests from Hong Kong, India, Malaysia and Singapore had registered for the symposium and various post-conference events. Local and overseas experts from Kazakhstan, Taiwan and elsewhere spoke on a wide range of topics including Education for Whole Person Development, Startups and Social Innovations, as well as Inclusive and Sustainable Development. An exhibition was also held to showcase the companies started up by Lingnan students and alumni and the products offered by these startups.

To kick off the conference and welcome more than one hundred guests, Professor Joshua Mok, Vice-President of the University, highlighted the vital role of universities nowadays in fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation and elaborated on the Lingnan's liberal arts tradition in offering service-learning experiences for students through the university curricula, campus life, internationalisation efforts and community service projects.

Building on Professor Mok's focus on the importance of whole person development, Dr. Gulmira Kurganbayeva, the Rector of Almaty Management University in Kazakhstan, expounded on the ways to use service-learning to enhance spiritual intelligence which may be regarded as an additional dimension to intelligence quotient (IQ) and emotional quotient (EQ).

In a more interactive panel session, Dr. Albert Ko, Director the University's Office of Service-Learning, Dr. Cecilia Chan, Head of Professional Development at the Centre for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, the University of Hong Kong and Mr. Howard Ling, Chief Consultant of the Social Enterprise Business Centre shared their views on how to cultivate generic skills of university students, the importance of financial sustainability in social enterprising and their experiences in training students to become social entrepreneurs.

After the networking luncheon, participants in the breakout sessions further discussed topics on Smart Devices for Ageing Citizens, Volunteering in a Smart City, Woman Empowerment and Inclusive Entrepreneurship. One of these sessions focused on the humanitarian entrepreneurship collaborations between Lingnan University and the higher education institutes in Kazakhstan. Ms. Yevgeniya Tanassoglo and Ms. Assel Zhandossova from the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University introduced their One-Belt-One-Road International Research Institute and the plans on developing another Joint Humanitarian Entrepreneurship Summer Academy with the Office of Service-Learning.

Apart from the above parallel sessions, an exhibition and a series of post-symposium activities have also offered useful takeaways to guests on how the Office of Service-Learning collaborate with its community partners. The exhibition featured projects of several young social entrepreneurs funded by the Entrepreneurial Knowledge Transfer Fund under the Lingnan Entrepreneurship Initiative which is a collaborative innovation and entrepreneurship platform established by the University to empower entrepreneurs, innovators and inventors to take action for inclusive growth. Workshops on Design Thinking, Curriculum Design and Community Building were organised to demonstrate how the educators in Lingnan deliver a wide range of service-learning projects, promote innovative and transformative teaching methods and nurture socially conscious young entrepreneurs through its unique liberal arts education.

