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Alumni Reception in Kuala Lumpur - 26 February 2013

Matt Mangan, Head of Principal Gifts, hosted an informal alumni reception for alumni in the glorious Mandarin Oriental Hotel next to the Petronas Towers. Despite the traffic (a given in Kuala Lumpur) and the rain, Matt was delighted to meet more than 20 alumni ranging from the graduating years of 1967 to 2010. The gathering really demonstrated the global nature of Higher Education and the mobility of our graduates. Matt met a German alumnus who studied for his undergraduate degree in Germany, his MBA in Birmingham, and is now working with VW in Malaysia and a Malaysian alumna who studied in Malaysia and China, did her undergraduate degree in the USA, and then her MBA in Birmingham before returning home to Malaysia. Conversely our younger Malaysian alumni mentioned that many of their peers have gone to Australia and the USA for work, highlighting a real 'brain drain' problem for Malaysia at the moment that the Government is hoping to address. It's clear that our alumni networks can help our students to find employment and each other to progress in their careers – Matt was therefore particularly pleased the hear that during the evening one of our alumni offered to help another alum to secure a new role via his high profile connections - alumni networks in action!

Conversations at the alumni event swiftly moved to Muirhead Tower (news of the new Starbucks has reached Kuala Lumpur already), and the Bramall Music Building which secured a resounding thumbs up from all attendees. Matt also asked our alumni for any advice they would give to our current students. Here is a summary:

"Take on challenges at work, seek them out, and show that you are willing"

"When starting out on your career, earn your reputation by doing every task you are asked to do well, no matter how big, small or menial"

"Be flexible! Too many graduates are fixated by following a certain career path. Your journey will deviate, and may not be linked to your degree, but if you remain flexible and adaptable to change then the opportunies will present themselves"

"Try a Balti in Ladywood!" (Unfortunately they didn't specify which one!)

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