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The emotional state of learners is an essential aspect of student development that institutions of higher learning should address. Generally, learners achieve a lot more out of their academic efforts if they are able to create an optimum balance between their physical and mental health. One of the factors to be considered is the emotional and psychological well-being of students, which may be affected by the issues they may face in their personal lives.

Occasionally, academicians may be called upon to play the role of listeners or counsellors to those students. Hence, the ILD Unit of UiTM Kota Samarahan in collaboration with the Counselling Unit, organised a counselling workshop on 25 May 2016. This interactive session was

targeted towards academicians who invariably face many challenges in dealing with students at their workplace.

The one-day workshop, from 8.00 am to 4.00 pm held at *Bilik Sarjana*, Kota Samarahan Campus 1, was conducted by two experienced student counsellors from UiTM Sarawak Counselling Unit namely Dayang Nordiana Bt Awang Othman and Shafiza Salleh. Participants included 35 lecturers from various faculties and departments in campuses 1 and 2.

Overall, the participants were exposed to very useful information regarding counselling for students. Besides presenting in lecture mode, the speakers also included a number of case studies for the participants to engage in and provide suggested solutions. In conclusion, the workshop was a success with several requests for future sessions.

Indigenous America to Indigenous Borneo Programme

By: Margaret Chan

The 2016 one-month "Indigenous America to Indigenous Borneo Programme" was run from 24 May to 24 June 2016. Integrated into a cultural programme of participating Gawai Dayak Festival in the Iban and Bidayuh Community and a *Buka Puasa* event, the project was on identifying and characterizing bamboo fungi and their enzymes as potential degraders of bamboo lignin for biodiesel production. Two undergraduate students, Koralis Reyes and Barbara Rodriguez from Puerto Rico jointly conducted the first phase of the projects with two Masters students, Seraphina anak Dominic Gisong and Ayu Zurainah from the Faculty of Plantation and Agrotechnology. These students were under the supervision of Associate Professor Dr. Margaret Chan assisted by Mr. Sulaiman Man and Assistant Professor Dr. Michael Ceballos from the University of Minnesota-Morris, USA.





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