



University of
Bedfordshire

International Office

Monthly update for international students
and our partners overseas



eLife

March 2011

A traditional array of colour

A SHOWCASE of sketches, songs, games and traditional instruments in the new Luton Campus Centre kicked off a series of University-wide celebrations to welcome in the Chinese New Year.

The Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) ran the event on 29 January with support from the Students' Union and the International Office. Professor Les Ebdon (Vice Chancellor), Professor Ashraf Jawaid (Deputy Vice Chancellor) and Harry Wang (Director of the International Office) were all in attendance, along with three Ambassadors from the Chinese Embassy.

Ciaran O'Brien, Student Activities Manager at the Students' Union, said: "The event was a wonderful success. The CSSA had spent months rehearsing and working with us to ensure that the event went to plan. It was such a nice experience to see 240 staff and students celebrating Chinese New Year alongside each other."

Yang Li is the President of the CSSA and played a big part in organising this event. Yang studied MA Documentary and is



CELEBRATING: A dazzling range of events at the University ushers in the Chinese New Year



devoted to enhancing the experience of our international students by encouraging events like this.

Yang said: "The spring festival is the biggest event of the year for us, because it is the most important day for Chinese tradition. Every year we have new students join the CSSA, and we all come together to arrange this event. The CSSA is greatly helped by the Chinese Embassy, the

WELCOME!

ONE of the best things about Bedfordshire being such an international university is that we all join in with cultural and national celebrations.

Last month we heard from some of our international students who had experienced a truly British Christmas, and this month the whole University came together in spectacular style to celebrate Chinese New Year, with several events throughout February that culminated in a dazzling display at the Luton Campus Centre.

In between the celebrations, we caught up with one of our graduates, Nalin Asanka, from Sri Lanka. Nalin studied MSc Information Management and Security, and as well as pursuing his PhD in London, he is returning as a visiting lecturer to pass on some of his expertise to our current students.

And, Nalin is certainly in for a surprise when he returns, as the Department of Computer Science and Technology has undergone a million pound makeover, and now boasts new engineering and computing facilities. And as usual, the eLife team were there to celebrate the official opening.

To all those who joined us in February, we hope you are settling in well and for those heading our way in May, see you soon!

Students' Union and the International Office of the University."

Vice president of the CSSA, Qinyi Cui, who is studying BA (Hons) Media Production, said: "I think we had a very exciting night, which was even better than last year. The lighting and music, managed by the media students in the CSSA, matched the performance very well. I was really happy that all of the audience – not only the Chinese people, but also

● **Continued over the page**



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Department's £1m upgrade

ENGINEERING is back at the University of Bedfordshire as our successful Department of Computer Science and Technology (CST) continues to expand.

New engineering and computing facilities and courses are part of a million pound investment at the Luton campus, which includes two new laboratories and a group study area with four learning pods and a social area.

The official opening of the new facilities attracted staff, students and industry partners, including Rohde & Schwarz and National Instruments, who supported the University in the provision of the new state-of-the-art facilities.

The unveiling of the commemorative plaque was conducted by Stephen Ball, one of

the University's Governors and Chief Executive of international company Lockheed Martin UK.

Professor Yong Yue, Acting Head of the Department of CST, said:

"This investment has increased the department's ability to offer students the kind of facilities that enable them to gain real experience that will make them more attractive to future employers."

Three new electronics courses have been

added to the University's portfolio – BEng (Hons) degrees in Telecommunications and Network Engineering and Computer Systems Engineering began last October, while the third, a BEng (Hons) in Electronic Engineering, is due to start this October, subject to validation.



INDUSTRY STANDARD: Lockheed Martin UK Chief Executive Stephen Ball unveils the new facilities

Nalin ready to share his knowledge

Nalin Asanka, right, graduated in 2009 with MSc Information Management and Security. Since then, his career has really taken off. Not only is he studying for his PhD in London, he is working as a visiting lecturer here at Bedfordshire and sharing his knowledge and expertise with the next generation of computing masterminds!



So, Nalin, how did the University of Bedfordshire help you?

Well, it was amazing! After my Bachelor's degree at University College, Dublin, National University of Ireland and SCJP, Sun Microsystems, USA, I met Professor Carsten Maple in Sri Lanka, at the UK Education Exhibition 2008. I was really impressed with his talk and finally made up my mind to come to University of Bedfordshire for my MSc Information Management and Security. Carsten offered me the opportunity of some part-time work experience within the

department, which helped me to assess my best skills. I would like to mention here that I feel Carsten changed my career and many thanks go to him!

Do you have any advice for current students?

The University of Bedfordshire is a great place to study, especially the Computer Science and Technology Department. You will find it is a friendly environment with state-of-the-art computer facilities and there are opportunities for independent and work-related learning.



WORKSHOP: The writing's on the floor

A traditional array of colour

● **From the front page** individuals from other countries – enjoyed the performance."

Following on from the CSSA event, the Campus Centre at Luton was buzzing with excitement for the climax to the celebrations on 17 February, and Professor Les Ebdon kicked off the proceedings by 'waking the lion'. Other attractions included acrobats, contortionists, balancing acts and musicians, as well as a dragon dance, plate juggling in the Students' Union, and a free Chinese calligraphy workshop.

Business Development Manager Sarah Waller, who organised the event in association with the International Office, said: "The performances took place all over our great new building and it was a truly colourful and exciting event for our colleagues and students to witness and enjoy."



A CREATURE STIRS: Professor Les Ebdon 'wakes the lion'

GET OUT AND ABOUT . . .

HERE'S what our amazing Social Events team have planned in the next month:

- 5 March 2011:** Day trip to Oxford
- 8 March 2011:** Bowling at the Galaxy Centre
- 9 March 2011:** London Luton Airport trip
- 12 March 2011:** Day trip to Cambridge

● To check out the full programme of social events, visit:

www.beds.ac.uk/internationalevents or find us on Facebook, UoB International Student Events.

