APCDA Conference: Past and Future
by Carla S. Siojo

I still feel "inebriated" by the 2019 APCDA Conference held at RMIT University, Saigon South Campus, Vietnam, May 21 through 25. It was our best organized and largest-ever conference with 234 career development professionals in attendance. There were 97 presentations given by 120 presenters. We were honored to listen to 3 distinguished keynote speakers: Dr. Seung-Ming (Alvin) Leung, Dean of Education at the Chinese University of HK, who described the remarkable career development intervention project of the CLAP (Career Life and Adventure Planning) for Youth@JC program for N.E.E.T. students in Hong Kong; Mr. Tran Anh Tuan, a highly respected labor market analyst in Vietnam, who spoke about the effects of Industry 4.0 on the future labor market in Vietnam; and Dr. Mary McMahon, a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at University of Queensland, Australia, who explained her Systems Theory Framework of Career Development and its application to narrative career counseling.

Attendees' comments on the evaluation forms were predominately positive and many expressed their gratitude for the kind, caring, and responsive assistance of the APCDA staff, the 30 professional Vietnamese volunteers, plus an approximate equal number of local student volunteers. The applause was thunderous when awards were given to our 4 conference host coordinators: Phoenix Ho of Hon Viet, Eric Asato, Felicity Brown and Tran Ngoc Thuy Loan of RMIT, and Chau Nguyen, Vietnam Country/Regional Director for APCDA as well as professional staff member of the Center of Career Education and Professional Development.

The APCDA Awards Ceremony continued with recognition of the following members for their achievements in the Career Development Field:

- Nika Ohashi (Japan) - Newsletter Contributor Award
- Gulnur Ismayil (Azerbaijan) - Outstanding Career Practitioner Award
- Han Kok Kwang (Singapore) - Outstanding Educator of Career Professionals Award
• Professor Narender Chadha (India) - Lifetime Achievement Award
• Serene Lin-Stephens (Australia) - President's Award
• Chi Hanh Nguyen (Vietnam) - Martha Russell Scholarship

Next, Emerging Leader Scholarships were awarded to the following who exhibited leadership in the career planning field:

• Yvonne Shi Qi Kong-Ho (Singapore)
• Maria Felicitas (Marife) Mamanau (Malaysia)
• Valerie Wong (United Kingdom/Cambodia)
• Ashique Rafi (Abu Dhabi/UAE)
• Hongshan Shao (China/USA)
• Anna Grazziella (Ziella) Barreno (Philippines)
• Hae Na Kim (South Korea)
• Fiona Soso (Papua New Guinea)

The Awards Ceremony was followed by the intricate motions and loud beats of the Lion Dragon Dance, and a cocktail reception hosted by Kuder, Inc. The lunch, sponsored by Dick Knowdell (2018 APCDA Lifetime Achievement Award winner and APCDA Legacy Partner Lifetime Member) was delectable.

Many participants also enjoyed the visits to local cultural attractions which enhanced the overall conference experience.

To all who contributed their time, energy and selfless service, thank you very, very much:

**Marilyn and Emily**, for taking the lead, coordinating and sorting all the details for the Officers, Board, all the participants, presenters and keynote speakers!

**Phoenix, Felicity, Eric, Loan**, for being the perfect hosts!

**Chau**, for arranging the tours!

**The Hon Viet professionals, RMIT students, RMIT career center staff and events office** for your sense of volunteerism and enthusiasm!

**Kuder, Inc. and Dick Knowdell's Career Development Network**, for sponsoring, respectively, the reception and lunch!

**Global Career Services Summit, Lifology, Points of You, APCD Journal** for being our exhibitors!

**Soonhooon and Connie**, for manning the Auction and book table!

The **APCDA Officers and Board**, for your presence, contribution and support!

The 2019 Conference was a smashing success because of you!

I hope all who attended got home safely.

2020 APCDA India Conference, here we come!

Our 2020 conference will be held in Faridabad, India (a suburb of Delhi), from March 10-15, 2020 at the Manav Rachna International Institute of Research Studies.

Note that this conference will happen only 10 months from now! It was intentionally scheduled in March to coincide with the festival of Holi and more comfortable weather.

Together, let us keep the action going! Don't miss the learning, sharing, and fun that will be part of our 2020 conference.
Call for Nominations
by Brian Hutchison, PhD (APCDA Immediate Past President)

Please seriously consider who you would like to see as the next President-elect and Treasurer of APCDA then contact her/him to share your thoughts. If s/he agrees, nominate her/him without delay.

President-Elect: Is a 3-year term (President-Elect, President and finally Past President)
Treasurer: Is a 2-year term (with the option to renew after 2 years) [click on the job title for a full job description]

Self-nominations are also welcome. Send your nominations to me at Nominations@AsiaPacificCDA.org before June 22 (sooner is better). Nominations should include a) a letter or email from the nominee stating her/his willingness to serve and b) the résumé or CV of the nominee.

The election will be held in early July. The new President-Elect and Treasurer will take office on October 1st.

A Snapshot of The Challenges for New Graduates
by Chau Nguyen, Vietnam Country/Regional Director, APCDA

Graduation is a milestone marking the official transition from school to work. While the prospect of future employment seems promising, new graduates in Vietnam have their own concerns and challenges in seeking jobs according to a latest report from Navigos, the leading recruitment agency in Vietnam. The report points out challenges students face and suggestions on how to overcome those challenges. It sheds light on how higher education institutions and employers can assist students in work readiness with appropriate strategies and solutions.

Of the main findings, a lack of career orientation is one of the major factors that hinders fresh graduates from seeking jobs; 38% of respondents admit this unclear career orientation. Others factors include:

- lack of job availability in their fields of study (33%)
- low average starting salary (36%)
- 33% express that they lack job searching skill
- 35% think they are unqualified for the job openings due to their qualifications, soft skills, work experience and language competency.

The Navigos' report also reveals an evident gap between school-delivered knowledge and real work practice; according to 61% of respondents. Because of this and previously mentioned challenges, the respondents expect schools to provide active guidance and support in career orientation. Over 67% of respondents demand schools to organize workshops with industry guest speakers as well as develop real-world internship program through partnership with suitable host companies (66%). In addition, 49% expect schools to provide soft skills training workshops and foreign language training (53%).
Looking to a future 5-year career plan post graduation, 29% of respondents expect to be promoted to managerial positions, whereas 26% of respondents wish to try out various jobs before committing to one position. Notably, less than 10% show an interest in pursuing a postgraduate degree. As far as the readiness for Industry 4.0 is concerned, while 46% of respondents show their interest in and preparation to embrace the changes of the fourth industrial revolution, more than half of them show little to no interest or provide neutral opinion.

The Navigos' report lays out suggestions for education institutions, employers and new employees to tackle challenges and grasp opportunities.

To be effective providers of a capable workforce, schools should understand the evolving demands from the job markets and accordingly equip students with a proper mindset and the needed knowledge and skills, especially in an era where Industry 4.0 is gaining prominence, to successfully embrace changes. Schools should develop and expand close links with employers in training and leveraging the next generation of the workforce. Schools should also provide support to students through career orientation, workshops, careers fairs and more.

To attract, engage and retain young employees, employers are encouraged to develop a thorough employee journey encompassing pre-recruitment, recruitment and on-the-job stages where clear career roadmaps and progressive training are critical factors. Employers should customize positions suitable to new graduates and transparently assist them with developing their career paths. Employers should prioritize training and development in order to enhance young employees via internal courses, mentorship or external training programs.

In order to ensure a smooth transition from school to work, students should actively prepare themselves for employment with the right mindset and necessary knowledge and skills. They should be self-motivated and notice requirements from the job markets. Life-long learning is needed to remain relevant and compatible with ever-changing requirements. They should seek support and guidance from supervisors and other field experts to best develop a clear career path. In addition, in the age of globalization and with Vietnam as a top FDI recipient in the region, new graduates must improve language competency and soft skills in order to boost career prospects. As the fourth Industrial revolution brings about changes at an unprecedented speed and impacts to the labor market, new graduates should strive to stay on top of change in order remain secure in the marketplace.

Link to the full report

Journey to Meaningful and Purposeful Careers in the Philippines

by Prof. Lucila O. Bance, PhD, RGC, RPsy Country Director for APCDA and Stephanie Anne C. Lu, MA, RPm, RGC Chairperson, Career Services University of Santo Tomas

The University of Santo Tomas is one of the Model Career Centers in the Philippines (USAID-STRIDE, 2018). With around 45,000 students, the university directs its efforts to realize its overarching objective: empowering Thomasiens towards meaningful and purposeful careers. Having meaning and purpose in one’s career is a product of self-discovery, informed decisions and application of one’s strengths and skills. Their Career Services support the Academic Units of the University by providing additional learning experiences that promote students’ self-discovery, encourage exploration of opportunities available to them and assist them in planning and realizing their desired career goals.

Fig. 1. Career Services Framework in UST with the Career Services' three main roles

Activities are aligned according to the roles of the Career Services team. In terms of Training for Career Services, the team offers the Thomasiian the G.U.T.S., Gear-up Tools for Success or ThomGUTS Program. This ThomGUTS Program is a series of career seminars and workshops that run across all year levels with defined career themes, mock interview sessions, online résumé critiquing and the Career Ambassadors Program. Through the variety of ThomGUTS sessions, industry partners as well as alumni leaders in the field are engaged and bring back invaluable insights, tips and information to the students. Topics covered include Thomasiian Identity, Career Exploration, Personality Development (e.g. Communication, teamwork and collaboration skills), Job Preparation and Management Skills, as well as Career Leadership. Mock Interview sessions and online résumé critiquing
the identified core roles of the Career Services team

Integral to students' career development is their ability to process their experiences, set goals and overcome concerns that may block their progress. Career Counseling and Coaching, carried out by licensed counselors of the department, assist with experience processing. Career Coaching is a promising tool in promoting mental health in such a way that it focuses on inherent strengths, identification of solutions and expanding vision of oneself through dreams and aspirations.

Fig. 3. Career counseling and coaching as an integral part of the career services framework

Throughout all of the activities provided by Career Services, students come to understand that career planning is a lifelong journey wherein curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism and risk-taking are key attitudes that will enable them to achieve career success given the ever-changing landscape and transformation of the world of work and careers. Evaluation of the program is getting an overwhelming positive feedback with a good turnout of accumulated data on graduates' placement.

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The CONVERSATION is the RELATIONSHIP: Strategies for Employer Engagement in Post-Secondary Education
by Dr. Candy Ho, Professor, Educational Studies, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Canada

Within the Canadian context, there has been a continual trend for post-secondary educational institutions to partner with organizations and employers to develop and offer meaningful experiential learning opportunities for students. For instance, in 2015, the Business/Higher Education Roundtable (2019), represented by leading companies and post-secondary institutions, declared an ambitious goal of having 100% of undergraduate students gain access to work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities prior to graduation. To date, major companies in industries such as finance, mining and aerospace are pledging to increase their offering of WIL opportunities to post-secondary students.

The trend presents both opportunities and challenges for institutions to identify suitable organizations and employers who will offer these various forms of meaningful opportunities for students. Scott’s (2011) quote of "the conversation is the relationship" (p. 5) comes to mind as a motto to embrace when striving to develop mutually beneficial partnerships. Below are three key strategies to help post-secondary institutions enhance their CONVERSATIONS - and in turn, their RELATIONSHIPS - with employers.

A. Establish clear outcomes and expectations. When engaging new employers, during the intake process, consider asking the following:

- What do you want out of this potential engagement?
- What are the pain points you wish to alleviate by offering WIL opportunities?

For instance, many accounting firms see hiring co-operative education students or student interns as an effective short-term solution during the busy tax season.

This initial conversation is also an opportunity for institutions to outline the employer’s critical role as educators in the workplace. In my own experience, I see this conversational piece getting overlooked at times, and in turn leading to misunderstanding of employer and institutional expectations in this collaboration. Having the conversation now can mitigate risk and maximize the experience for students, employers and institutions.

B. Recognize longstanding employers who are strong contributors. While appreciation events, plaques and certificates are popular approaches to appreciating loyal employer partners, it is important to make recognition genuine and regular. Consider collecting student testimonials on their positive work experience with the company and make it a habit to pass them onto those who supervise students, and better yet, their supervisors.
Turn these recognition opportunities into two-way conversations: ask employers how you and your institution can further enhance their experience as educators in the workplace. They may also be invited to impart their best practices at future employer events, or even be guest speakers in classes to talk about the realities of the workplace, which can act as a recruitment tool for them as well.

**C. Partner and engage with your post-secondary counterparts.** This last one seems somewhat counterintuitive, yet, there are tremendous benefits to partnering with other nearby institutions to implement a joint employer engagement strategy. Notable examples include the Association for Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning British Columbia/Yukon (ACE-WIL BC/Yukon) and Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL Canada). Representing multiple institutions, these associations advocate for the importance for WIL with companies and agencies, as well as government on both provincial and federal levels. As each school might be distinct in mission and program offering, working together as a post-secondary contingency means that employers would have more choices in student talent, further solidifying the argument to provide WIL opportunities.

Ultimately, high quality conversations between employers and institutions enhance employer engagement, which has the potential to elevate the reputation of the institution, and possibly, the overall reputation of post-secondary career services as a key contributor to our society and economy. This results in a win-win-win scenario whereby the employers are leading great talent and future recruitment potential, the institution is increasing its opportunity to provide meaningful connections to industry, and students are yielding practical opportunities to build their skills and networks that ideally positions them for smoother transitions post-graduation.

**References**


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You are cordially invited to attend the **Japanese Association of Industrial Counseling's 24th Annual Conference** . . .

Era of the Showa, the Heisei, the Reiwa, for the future story from now on Career Counseling for the next generation

**Keynote Speaker: Marilyn Maze**

**Date:** August 24 & 25, 2019

**Venue:** Otsuma Women's University, Chiyoda Campus, Tokyo

For further information, such as cost, please contact **Midori Nonogaki**, APCDA Country/Regional Director for Japan: [Japan@AsiaPacificCDA.org](mailto:Japan@AsiaPacificCDA.org)

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**Incorporating Past & Future into our APCDA Newsletter Issues, too!**  
*by Natalie Kauffman, APCDA Newsletter Committee Director*

This third APCDA themed issue addressed Career Development Challenges, Research and Best Practices with College/University Students Emphasizing the Employer Connection Regarding...

- Employer Partnership Strategies
- Internships and other 'hands-on' experiences
- Successful Job Placement Programs
I hope y'all picked up something new to consider adding to your own work setting whether it be higher education, K-12, nonprofit, like me--private practice/consulting, or something else. Prior to my current career development arena, however, I worked in higher ed for years and experienced first-hand the importance of PERSISTENCE shared by Bance & Lu in their article about **Securing Meaningful & Purposeful Careers**.

Shortly after the birth of my first child, I returned to work to fill an Internship Coordinator position in a college Career Services Office. Initially, we offered 3 binders of opportunities to share with our student body. In time, with persistence and a little something more, we quadrupled the number. But it wasn't easy because employers did not value internship experiences in the same way students and our center staff did. Employers looked at ALL the work and expense involved in taking on interns with little immediate Return On Investment (ROI). As Ho mentioned in her article **Conversation is the Relationship**, I learned I needed to understand to talk to the employers in their language and see Internships and other 'Hands-On' experiences from their diverse perspectives.

Throughout my tenure as Internship Coordinator, I often read and repeated the following Calvin Coolidge (former US President) quote as I called and left multiple messages with employers about taking on one of our students for an internship.

"Nothing in [the] world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful [people] with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent . . . Press On!"

And I did **Press On**! I also began to integrate the same principles I learned from my counseling diversity classes into my **Conversations** with employers and built solid Relationships with them. I hope y'all **Press On** to build solid relationships with those who can help those you serve so **Meaningful and Purposeful careers** result.

This APCDA Newsletter issue also celebrated the conference bliss recently experienced by those who attended and participated in our 2019 annual APCDA gathering! In an attempt to virtually share the fun with those of us who could not attend (myself included), our Public Relations Committee hired the RMIT Media Club to create a video. It includes interviews with many Board members and others, like Dick Knowdell, who are not camera shy and have supported us for years. It will be available soon. (I, personally, can't wait!)

Our next newsletter issue deadline is Wednesday, July 24th, and the deadline for our final theme issue for 2019 is Wednesday, September 18th. I look forward to receiving a submission for one or the other from YOU! If you are not a writer, perhaps you may want to join and actively participate on the Newsletter Committee. Please contact me through, **Newsletter@AsiaPacificCDA.org**. Thank you.

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