

60% of Students of the ISS-WDA Professional Conversion Programme Found Jobs Upon Graduation

Singapore, 19 May 2010 - The economic downturn last year has been a stimulus to many people to hit the books again. Many of them, either retrenched or decided to have a career change grabbed the opportunity to upgrade themselves or try their luck at a different industry.

Many programmes mushroomed as a result of the SPUR programme which was 90% funded by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency. Among them was the Professional Conversion Programme for Software Developers (PCP SD) offered by the Institute of Systems Science, National University of Singapore (ISS-NUS). This one-of-its-kind nine-month programme was developed due to the high demand of infocomm professionals despite the unfavourable economic climate. What is special is that upon successful completion of the programme which comes with a four and a half month internship with a company, ISS-NUS will provide job placement opportunities for the trainees.

The inaugural run of the PCP SD has successfully graduated 15 students who had their minds set for an IT career back in June 2009. They have undergone stringent tests and interviews in order to secure a seat for this programme. For these students who have little or no background on software development, it was certainly much more challenging for them. The PCP SD brings together best practices and proven techniques to equip trainees with effective skills in Java enterprise application development to meet the increasing demand of the infocomm industry.

Said Mr Lim Swee Cheang, Director/CEO of ISS-NUS "The demand for IT professionals suffered a drought in the last ten months due to the recession. Now, there is a pent-up demand for them and our students are graduating at the right time. To complement their past experiences in varied domain areas such as engineering and electronics, they are now skilled in software engineering and development. Armed with cross-disciplinary skills, they are all ready to contribute effectively to the rejuvenated IT industry."

"I enjoyed and learnt a lot from the in-depth Java programming language taught in this course. The best thing is to learn something of my interest and obtain a diploma certificate at the end of the course." Said Andrew Tay, a graduand who found employment at NCS Pte Ltd.

Of the nine students who had found jobs, three of them were hired by NCS Pte Ltd. The other students found employment at other companies such as Autoscan, MavenTree, Startin Point, ST Electronics (Info-Software Systems) and Orangejive. The jobs that were offered range from software developer, tester, and programmer to IT support. Most of them were attached to these companies during their internship.

The supervisors were so impressed with their enthusiasm to learn and determination to deliver a reliable internship project that they decided to take them onboard. The projects they were put in-charge of include developing systems and performing software integration testing to improve business processes.

"The three graduands whom we employed exhibited commitment and have relevant technical competencies and skills to achieve work objectives in their internship. They have portrayed positive working attitude and good team work." Said Ms Soon Fui Yoon, Senior Director of Human Capital Management at NCS Pte Ltd.

"I am pleased to know that the PCP SD has successfully met the objective of helping those in need secure a job during the economic downturn. The need for a skilled workforce continues to increase and WDA is pleased to work with training providers like ISS-NUS and our Continuing Education and Training centres to create more

avenues to help enhance continuous training and skills upgrading. Such initiatives not only help produce a more creative and competitive workforce, but also help them secure good jobs in the longer run," said Ms Lynn Ng, Director of Creative & Professional Services at WDA.

These 15 aspiring IT professionals are expected to receive their certificates at their graduation ceremony on 26 May 2010. This will mark the start of their IT career and a stepping stone for them to climb high up in an industry which was considered beyond their reach merely a year ago. The Guest-of-Honour for the ceremony is Mr Andrew Khaw, Senior Director of Industry Development Group at the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA).

"In delivering a wide range of NICF courses, ISS-NUS has helped infocomm professionals to raise their competency levels and remain relevant in changing market conditions. This is in line with the commitment of the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore to ensure that both aspiring and experienced infocomm professionals are able to keep abreast with the developments in the vibrant infocomm industry, using the NICF framework as a map to chart their career development." said Mr Andrew Khaw, Senior Director, Industry Development Group, IDA.

With an aim to expose students to broader disciplines, ISS will be delivering PCP SD as part of the Professional Conversion Programme for Systems Analysis Professionals (PCPSAP). The PCPSAP gives trainees a more comprehensive learning scope in which students are taught Object-Oriented programming using C++, .Net with Visual Studio IDE, Java. JSP (Java Server Script), EJB (Enterprise Java Bean) on J2EE and many other topics. The PCPSAP was also aligned to NICF and accredited by the WDA. The next intake of PCPSAP is slated to commence in August 2010. Refer to Annex 1 for more information on Professional Conversion Programme for Systems Analysis Professionals.

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