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Cisco: Identify talented students in varsities

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia is not short of talented ICT (information and communications technology) graduates but there is a shortage of those with the right kind of talent, said networking giant Cisco Systems.

"We have about 60,000 unemployed graduates because the supply outpaces the private sector demand for those skills," said Cisco Malaysia managing director Anne Abraham.

"The private sector needs to be more involved with prospective employees at the university level so that they can be scouted out and trained for the positions they will ultimately be holding."

"All the players in the ICT industry should get involved in higher education," said Abraham. "This is the only way we can guarantee the effective streamlining of our human capital."

Cisco organises annual networking competitions, called NetRiders, that give networking students the opportunity to put their knowledge to the test.

The competition utilises Cisco Telepresence and Cisco WebEx videoconferencing technology and the contestants have to troubleshoot simulated enterprise network problems.

Soon Sing Tee, 23, Chamal Sapumohotti, 23, and Ravan Nagalingam, 24, from the Multimedia University (MMU) won the national and Asia-Pacific NetRiders 2009 competition. They received an all expense paid trip to San Jose to visit the Cisco headquarters.

"Our lecturers told us about the competition and urged us to participate," said Chamal. "The competition also certifies us in practical training which will definitely help us start our careers."

Although the three students have yet to graduate, Chamal and Soon have already found jobs. Chamal is now a WiMAX (Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access) research officer for MMU while Soon is a trainee network engineer for Mesiniaga.

The Cisco Networking Academy hosts national and regional networking competitions in universities throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

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