

**Winning
through
imagining**

THROUGH sheer creativity and hard work, four students from the Asia Pacific University College of Technology and Innovation (UCTI) emerged as the winners of the Imagine Cup 2012 Malaysia Finals.

The quartet, known as team Rhapsody in the competition, had built a solution known as the "WizBoard" which aims to solve the global issue of teacher attrition.

In keeping with this year's competition theme "Imagine a world where technology helps solve the toughest problem", the application requires just one teacher to teach a class.

The particular lesson will then be saved and made accessible to people from all walks of life, including those who are from different backgrounds, countries and speak different languages.

The Microsoft- and Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM)-organised annual competition has become known as the "Olympics" of student technology competitions and requires participants to use technology to help solve real world problems as defined by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

The team was among 30 groups that took part in the national finals in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah and also won the supplementary Innovation Award, presented by the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC) for the solution with the most business viability.

The team, comprising Tan Jit Ren, Wong Mun Choong, Chan Wai Lun and Ker Jia Chiun, will represent the nation in the world finals of the competition in Sydney, Australia in July.

"I'm happy to note that the Imagine Cup has clearly depicted the Higher Education Ministry's efforts to further enhance and nurture technical literacy through Information and Communication Technology (ICT) among students," said Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin, in a speech read by the ministry's secretary-general, Datuk Ab Rahim Md Noor.

"Knowledge and wealth creation has become one of the major factors in the nation's economic development, and this is determined by the ability to innovate in a continuous manner. The competition is thus a platform for students to hone their potential in technology innovation, and to code their ideas and imagination on real world issues," he said.

UTeM vice-chancellor and chairman of the Imagine Cup

2012 organising committee Prof Datuk Dr Ahmad Yusoff said that since the competition first began in 2003, the response has grown by leaps and bounds.

"This encouraging response is a testament of the competition's success in reaching out to the hearts of students who are eager to make a difference and tackle global economic, environmental and healthcare issues," said Prof Ahmad.

Microsoft Malaysia managing director Ananth Lazarus said that students had a significant responsibility to ensure the continual progress and success of the country and that the competition was an investment into the nation's future game-changers.

Coming in second in this year's national finals was the 4GM team from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). The team had developed "Recycle Bingo", a system on the Windows Phone platform that tackles environmental sustainability and energy wastage.

Students have a significant responsibility to ensure the continual progress and success of the country. – LAZARUS

Team Sirius, another UPM group, came in third with their invention "Hooray Hubby". Their invention is a pregnancy information game that targets husbands wishing to understand pregnancy in an informative and fun way. The team also took home the supplementary Presentation Superstars Award for their outstanding teamwork and presentation.

Other competition winners include team SLIM from Tunku Abdul Rahman (TAR) College.

The team won the Windows Phone Seven Mobile Development Award for its project called "Gavida", a solution that helps reduce the maternity mortality rate and improve the healthcare of conceiving mothers by providing them with different ways to ensure that the mother is prepared during childbirth.

Team KIHECT from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia won the Kinect Fun Life Award for its "Kinect Hand-Eye Coordination Trainer". The application is related to physical fitness, and seeks to enhance human potential and coordination ability.

Sydney awaits! Tan (left), Wong (second from left), Chan and Ker (right) will represent the nation in the competition finals in July.

