



Math Adds Up to a Rewarding Career

MANY still assume that a degree in Mathematics could not go beyond a teaching career. Well, it doesn't seem to be that way anymore.

"In today's society, the involvement of mathematics in computing, physics and finance has provided math graduates with a wider career choice as compared to the past job markets," said Prof Lee Seng Luan from the National University of Singapore's Mathematics department.

"For example, today's technologies are maximising the use of mathematical applications to develop electronic commerce, model of the human heart, image compression, computer-generated movie scenes and even the 'Google' Internet search engine," he said during his talk at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) campus in Petaling Jaya recently.

Titled What Can Mathematics and Mathematics Graduates Do?, the talk was attended by some 100 lecturers and students from UTAR and the Universiti of Malaya to discover career prospects in mathematics and the field's contributions to society.

He said mathematics help students to develop a quantitative sense as well as a strong analytical and logical reasoning skills, which will assist them in acquiring new knowledge, be innovative and take calculated risks with confidence.

"A background in math coupled with an intimate understanding of problems faced with enable students to solve challenges efficiently.

"If they are armed with this, math graduates are able to expand their careers in science and technology, information and communication technology as well as in research and development," said Lee, who is also an External Examiner for UTAR's degree in Applied Mathematics with Computing.

He also reminded students that it's pointless to memorise whatever information they've learnt without understanding its usage.

UTAR student Christelle Loo Chiang Lian, 22, said she found Lee's talk enriching as it exposed her to many career prospects in math.

"I was particularly entranced by his explanation of math usage in compression and computer-generated movies. The next time I watch a movie, I'd be more appreciative of how math applications are used in its making," said the Year Three student who is pursuing a degree in Applied Mathematics with Computing.

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