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CONTRIBUTIONS

# Alumni can play a big role in helping varsities

**THE** success of alumni in terms of employability shapes the reputation, identity and image of universities in the long term.

But there is no specific way to encourage alumni to contribute to the university post-graduation. Perhaps it is time for policymakers to look at the role and function of alumni.

For example, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Cambridge, and Oxford universities receive millions of dollars through donations, including from their graduates, that raise their image as higher education institutions.

External funding contributions to universities in the United States amounted to US$37.45 billion in 2014, with Harvard University collecting more than US$1.6 billion.

It would be good if a policy is formulated where every alumnus in Malaysia who has worked contributes RM1 every month to the wakaf fund or university endowment.

Their contributions can be used for the development of universities and welfare of students, especially those from the B40 group.

This endeavour will depend on the employment of graduates, with media reports showing only 776,742 out of almost two million job seekers getting a job from 2020 to 2023, using the national job platform MyFutureJobs.

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Out of those 776,742, 251,815 applicants were youth or university graduates.

Therefore, graduate employment numbers have to be increased before one can think of contributions from alumni.

Perhaps graduates might have better chances of employment by seizing incentives offered by the Social Security Organisation (PERKESO) involving the allocation of RM313 million.

I also expect universities through the Student Affairs Unit to compile information about job requirements in each field of study, apart from seeking the cooperation of employers to help students in their careers.

Providing information to students through MYFutureJobs Satellite Centres at Urban Transformation Centres should be done by every public university.

This is to enable the matching and identification of talent of prospective graduates or job seekers with employers that will allow them to get jobs quickly.

The initiative of the Halal Development Corporation Berhad in establishing a halal talent portal is a commendable step where graduates can be matched with more than 7,000 employers who hold halal certificates in Malaysia.

Alumni can play their role too.

Universiti Utara Malaysia received corporate sponsorship when its alumni helped the university brand student dormitories with the names of companies, such as Malaysia Airlines, TNB, Tradewinds, Proton, Petronas and Sime Darby.

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