

# Talisman, UMS to offer 30 scholarships

By Mariah Doksil

**KOTA KINABALU:** Talisman Malaysia Ltd (Talisman), a global, diversified, upstream oil and gas company headquartered in Canada, is committed to providing employment opportunities in Sabah.

Its Senior Vice President & Country Manager Ron Aston said the company is also investing in three key pillars of community investment namely education, environment, and health and well-being.

"We will be here in Sabah for a long run. We are committed to contribute to the state economy, and we currently just signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) to offer 30 scholarships to young Sabahans pursuing engineering courses at the university over a five-year period.

"On the environment front, we have conducted an environmental awareness programme on mangrove conservation with over 200 secondary students in Kota Kinabalu last year. This year, we are planning to host an environmental forum with UMS undergraduates in conjunction with World Environment Day next month," he said during the Talisman Media Night held at Shangri-La Tanjung Aru Resort on Sunday.

"We have championed a capacity building project with an NGO, Pacos Trust, in which we assisted a group of 82 single mothers from Bongawan district with a seed grant to create a sustainable income through the commercial production of salted eggs. I am glad to report that these single mothers are now benefiting from the projects," added Aston.

Last year, Talisman launched a safety education campaign among primary schoolchildren in four districts namely Papar, Kuala Penyu, Beaufort and Sipitang.

This safety campaign has reached out to over 2,000 primary schoolchildren in its first year, and it will continue the campaign this year to include Labuan, Ranau and Sandakan.

Last month, Talisman brought joy to over 60 thalassemia children and their parents when the company sponsored a motivational and healthy lifestyle awareness seminar in Kota Belud.

Another upcoming programme in Sabah is the Talisman Annual Mount Kinabalu Expedition, which is set to take place this June 14th. The expedition, which is set to benefit five local NGOs in Sabah, will see the climbers raise a minimum of RM2,500 each which will be matched by Talisman.

Last year's climb was a resounding success as they raised more than RM55,000.

"With this and a lot of other exciting programmes planned ahead, Talisman will continue to contribute to the development of Sabah such as hiring more Sabahans, providing education and training as well as investing in the community through sustainable programmes and staff volunteerism activities.

"With the Kaamatan Festival just around the corner, it was on this that Talisman Malaysia, an organization anchored by personnel of diverse nationalities and backgrounds, pledged over RM90,000 in cash and kind support to the event this year," he said.

During the event, Aston also announced his retirement from Talisman effective September 1, after almost eight years with the company. He described his eight years with the company, firstly in Indonesia and then Malaysia, as the most enjoyable of his career.

"I have been able to witness the exciting business growth of Talisman in the Asia Pacific region, along with the growing influential reputation of the company. In Malaysia, the future of Talisman looks very bright indeed," he said.

Later on that night, Aston introduced the incoming Vice President and Country Manager, Rob Mills, who officially took the leadership role in Talisman Malaysia on May 14.