THE 26-year-old field engineer in the oil and gas industry was looking to expand his knowledge in electronics and move ahead in his career when he chanced upon the electronics degree programme at Wawasan Open University (WOU).

Columbus Chin Yaw Kuan, from Miri, Sarawak is working in Kemaman, Terengganu. He credits his wife as the motivating force behind his decision to pursue higher learning at WOU.

"I want to go far in my career in the future. Besides there is a Chinese proverb which says ‘live till old, learn till old, and yet there is one-third not learnt. We should never stop learning,” he quipped.

With a Diploma in Electronics and Electrical Engineering, he feels the Bachelor of Technology (Hons) in Electronics is just the thing he needs right now. As to how he is coping since he has a three-year-old daughter, he remarked, "It’s all about balance. You have to schedule your time for studies, and stick to it. I also use any extra minutes I have to go through my reading materials."

Tan Sze Chieh, a 23-year-old technician with Agilent Technologies, Penang, and a WOU student since July 2010, opted for electronics at WOU since she works shift hours, and ODL allows her the flexibility she needs.

"The fees are lower compared to other universities that offer part-time studies,” she added.

Tan aspires to become a manager and is therefore real intent to study hard and draw closer towards her ambition. She holds a Diploma in Electronic Engineering from the Penang Skills Development Centre.

She finds the courses she’s taken so far – Operating Systems, Microprocessor, and Solid State Semiconductor Devices – provides “relevant skills for troubleshooting” and makes her more adept at her job.

She encourages other working adults to give ODL at WOU a try as they can study on their own time and learn from coursesmates in the other industries.

WOU, through the School of Science and Technology (SST) currently offers 12 Bachelor of Technology (Hons) programmes, and these are in – Electronics, Electronic Commerce, ICT, Computer Systems and Networks, Computing and Intelligent Systems, Database Management, Information Systems, Telecommunications, Multimedia Design, Software Engineering, Networks and Data Communication, and Construction Management.

The SST also offers three Graduate Diplomas in Database Management, Electronics and Telecommunication, and MBAs in Construction Management (MBA-CM) and in Manufacturing and Production Management (MBA-MPM).

The MBA-CM equips engineers, quantity surveyors, architects, construction project managers, planners, contractors, or property developers with the competency to manage the overall construction project, while the MBA-MPM allows them to progress to senior-level positions.

Apply today for the Bachelor of Technology (Hons) degree programmes through Regular Entry or via WOU’s unique Open Entry Admission System that takes your work experience into consideration – you just need to be at least 21 years old with a minimum PMR/SPM/MCE/UEC/Diploma or equivalent qualifications.

Enrolment for January 2013 intake is now open. New students will enjoy rebates up to RM500 on their tuition fees if they register by Dec 9, or they can apply for the free WOU Study Grant before December 16 to subsidise their first semester of study.

Call the WOU toll-free Caroline at 1-300-888-968 (WOU) or browse through wou.edu.my for details. Visit the WOU Open Days at the Main Campus and Regional Centres nationwide on Dec 15 and 16.