

*Student Name:* Rui Fernandes  
*Program:* MSCM

## THE SCALE CONNECT

### **Traveling to Boston:**

Despite the long flight from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to Boston Massachusetts; I had a pleasant series of flights: Kuala Lumpur to Hong Kong; Hong Kong to Dallas, Texas; and Dallas to Boston. The Residence In just close to where all the SCALE Connect activities took place, was just fine.

### **The SCALE Connect Speaker Series:**

Excellent industry insights learned from the speaker series. Found that the choice of speakers was relevant to the overall supply chain management discipline. Was particularly impressed with the work being done at Flexe Logistics. Particularly, on the evolving role of third-party logistics providers: The global supply chain is changing rapidly every day, adding complexity to the roles of shippers and their third-party logistics providers (3PLs). Investing in technology and analytics is opening myriad opportunities for 3PLs as shippers continue to rely on their logistics providers for IT needs.

### **Industry Tours:**

We had 2 industry tours: Walgreens Distribution Center in Windsor Connecticut, and Boston Scientific. In my opinion the Walgreens tour was an amazing experience. The role of SCHAEFER logistic systems in creating a state-of-the art distribution center. As a leading logistics systems provider, SCHAEFER offers integrated systems that are improving throughput at the Walgreens facility. There is a seamless integration between Walgreens processes and SCHAEFER's components including: conveyor technology, shelving systems, and other systems. The diverse range of interfaces enables Walgreens to effortlessly combine the system with third party components.

### **Leadership Sessions:**

Soft skills are important in any career, and it is no different for supply chain professionals. Had great fun listening to Mr. Bhaskar Pant on the topic of Multicultural Awareness. Very relevant in today's increasingly globalized world. In which we all have to interact with people and situations that sometimes might be different from the ones we are used to.

### **Llamasoft:**

Llamasoft should not be mandatory. It should be optional for those interested in learning more about the software. There are many other software companies that offer more intuitive solutions. If the goal was for us to learn about supply chain network design, a series of lectures combined with case studies could have been perhaps more beneficial. On the other hand, for the majority, the individual assignment became a team/group effort.

### **Python Course:**

Python is used across diverse fields from web and game development to machine learning, AI, scientific computing and academic research. It is a valuable skill set to have for any supply chain professional.

### **Research Expo:**

The Supply Chain Research Expo 2020 was an amazing experience. Where 180 supply chain master's students from the MIT Global SCALE Network were able to showcase their research projects. I will always remember this experience. Great fun!

### **Supply Chain Game:**

A good way to understand the balance between supply and demand. And how best to make decisions in terms of the number of production units, distributions centers, locations, and modes of transportation.

### **Shark Tank:**

Another wonderful experience. The ability to work with other SCALE network students in a team, develop an innovative idea, and present it to a panel of judges was exciting.

### **Supply Chain Career Chats:**

I thought the concept of the supply chain career chats was interesting. However, I believe that it should have been gender neutral, i.e., not so much women-focused.

### **Supply Chain Topic Sessions:**

The researchers from the MIT Center for Transportation and Logistics presented some of the main areas of research, and it was a wonderful opportunity to have the chance to interact with the CTL faculty and researchers. Particularly, it was fascinating to learn more about the impact e-commerce is having on supply chains; and the emerging demands of retail cross-channel fulfilment driven by the growing number of consumer expectations, volatile demand and cost pressures on logistics and transportation.

### **SCALE Alumni Panel:**

It was interesting to hear from SCALE Alumni the different experiences they have had in their careers after graduation from the SCALE program.

### **Returning to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia:**

The return trip was a bit chaotic at the beginning due to the Coronavirus outbreak, and our flights got canceled. However, I did manage to secure a flight from Boston to Tokyo Narita, and from Tokyo to Kuala Lumpur. I was the first student to arrive at Kuala Lumpur at 5:30 in the morning on Monday February 3, 2020.

**Three positive Key highlights that you will take away from your three-week SCALE Connect experience:**

- Great networking opportunities with other participants from the SCALE Network.
- Having the chance to experience CTL (MIT – Center for Transportation and Logistics) a bit closer; interacting with the faculty and learning more about the different projects and initiatives they are working on.
- Research expo was a phenomenal experience.

*Quote: “Soft skills are important in any career, and it is no different for supply chain professionals. I had fun listening to Mr. Bhaskar Pant on the topic of Multicultural Awareness. Very relevant in today's increasingly globalized world, where we have to interact with people and handle situations that sometimes might be different from the ones we are used to”.*