MESSAGE FROM HOD

As the Head of a vibrant Department like Biochemistry, I am pleased to pen this message to say how proud I am of each one of you. Ever since I arrived in this Department, I have been telling everyone how we can achieve a greater level of excellence. I have talked to students and to staff, from faculty and to lab technicians. Indeed, each of you, after being cajoled, harangued and prodded, has taken yourself to a higher plane. There is no limit to our quest for excellence in whatever we choose to do, other than the limit we place on ourselves. We must believe that together, we can do it!

By first removing this artificial self-limiting ceiling, we can soar individually and collectively. First and foremost, it is important for us to choose the right research area. Although we should not limit ourselves, there is a cap on the resources available to us. Therefore, to optimize the yield on our efforts, careful choice of the research areas we should compete in will be critical. In my efforts to study the areas of excellence and competitive edge, I believe that my policies of trying to encourage our Principal Investigators in our Department to band together and move in a scientific pack and hunt together will enhance our chances of success. If we can team up with medical and clinical scientists, we will be able to increase the scope of our impact. Already, our grant awards show that our staff is extremely successful in obtaining external funding. How much more can we obtain if we can work together to achieve another RCE for NUS? How much more can we achieve if we can work with clinicians now that we are in NUHS, to carry out translational research from bench to bedside? I am truly expecting that the quality of our research will significantly improve in the year to come.

High quality training of the future of Biochemistry is high on my agenda. Giving the best education and training to our students is our priority. I have spoken at length to our students and encouraged them. Thanks to our hard working faculty members, we have achieved our mission in teaching well in the past year. I encourage you to do even better in the new academic year. I am pleased that our students have taken their own initiatives: Our 2nd Biochemistry Student Symposium is on the way. This is another good sign of sustainability in whatever new initiatives we want to carry out. In previous years, our staff, A/P Markus Wenk, has successfully initiated and hosted consecutive meetings of the Singapore Lipid Symposium, a shining “trade mark” for the Department now. This year we will be facilitating the 8th International Conference on Bioinformatics (InCoB) in Singapore and the HUPO events. We should continue to place our mark internationally in our areas of expertise. In this way, we can know of the latest, and be known by others for the research excellence we exemplify and for the greater heights of global excellence we aspire to.

Finally, I wish all of us the very best in the forthcoming annual appraisal. The financial climate has been volatile and globally in turmoil. Let us be prepared to weather the worst and put our best foot forward and support each other shoulder to shoulder as we work together as a team in this department as we enter the new Academic Year of 2009/2010.
Our Heartiest Congratulations

Staff
Congratulations to **A/P Markus Wenk** for being selected as a recipient of the *Faculty Outstanding Researcher Award 2009 (Young Researcher Category)*. He was presented with a memento during the NUHS Dinner and Dance which was held on 11 July 09.

Congratulations to **Qian Feng** of A/P Chang Chan Fong’s lab on being awarded *VOICE-Outstanding Suggestion of the Month for April 2009*.

Congratulations to **Professor Sit Kim Ping** on being awarded *VOICE-Outstanding Suggestion of the Month for June 2009*.

Adjunct Staff
Congratulations to **Dr Victor Tong** on being awarded Singapore’s highest accolade for youth, the *Singapore Youth Award (SYF) for Science and Technology 2009*. He received his award at a ceremony in the Istana on 5th July 09 from Deputy Prime Minister Professor S. Jayakumar.

Postgraduate Students
Congratulations to the following students on the conferment of their postgraduate degrees. You have done us proud!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Date of Conferment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangarusamy Dhinoth Kumar</td>
<td>PhD Professor Edison Liu</td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chan Ler Min, Robin Barry</td>
<td>PhD A/P Markus R Wenk</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heiny</td>
<td>MSc A/P Tan Tin Wee</td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Hwee Siang</td>
<td>MSc A/P Chua Kim Lee</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lim Chiaw Hwee</td>
<td>PhD Dr Jiang Yun-Jin</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liu Jingxian</td>
<td>PhD A/P Song Jianxing</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ng Ee Ling</td>
<td>PhD A/P Tang Bor Luen</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhang Jiping</td>
<td>PhD A/P Li Guodong</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Internal Appointments

Management Committee
We’re pleased to inform that **A/P Gan Yunn Hwen** is our *Research Director* while **A/P Maxey Chung** is our *Teaching Director*. 
Academic Staff

*A/P Too Heng-Phon* is currently on sabbatical leave until May 2010 while *A/P Tan May Chin Theresa* is on no pay leave until 16 July 2010. We look forward to their return to the Department next year!

Renovation

MD7 Level 3 has been successfully renovated. It now comprises spanking new open labs, staff offices and the new Bioinformatics Lab headed by Professor Peter Little.
Welcome to Our New Staff

Adjunct Staff

Adjunct Associate Professor
A/P Ng Huck Hui
Assumed Duty: 18 June 09
Joint Appointment with Department of Biological Sciences

Adjunct Professor
Professor Barbara B Knowles
Assumed Duty: 1 July 09

Adjunct Assistant Professor
Dr Cheok Chit Fang
Assumed Duty: 1 August 09

Lab Executive

Chew Yuan Yuan
Supervisor:
Dr Yeong Foong May

Hor Sok Jing
Supervisor:
A/P Theresa Tan

Shen Yanqing
Supervisor:
Dr Takao Inoue

He Peiru
Supervisor:
Dr Chen Ee Sin
Welcome to Our New Staff

Lab Technologist

Noor Hazim Bin Sulaimee
Supervisor: Dr Sashi Kesavapany

Research Assistant

Dashayini Mahalingam
Supervisor: Dr Wang Xueying, Sherry

Lee Yun Hwa
Supervisor: Dr Wu Qiang

Natascha May Thevasagayam
Supervisor: A/P Tan Tin Wee

Rashmi Sukumaran
Supervisor: A/P Tan Tin Wee

Tan Yong Liang, Benjamin
Supervisor: A/P Tan Tin Wee

Akshamal Mihiranga Gamage
Supervisor: A/P Chua Kim Lee
New Postgraduate Students

Our warmest welcome to the new Postgraduate Students for our August 2009 cohort!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Course of Study</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wang Xiaoning</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Dr Deng Lih Wen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Dang Vinh</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Prof Fu Xin-Yuan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hou Qian</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>A/P Maxey Chung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin Qifeng</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>A/P Tan Tin Wee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lim Shen Jean</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>A/P Tang Bor Luen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tan Gek Ling Janice</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Dr Sherry Wang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lim Yi Shan</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Prof Barry Halliwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shriram Venkatesan</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>A/P Too Heng-Phon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soumiya Srinivasan</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>A/P Theresa Tan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aishwarya.S</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Dr Thilo Hagen</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Recent Events

Department Strategic
The 1st Department Strategic Retreat was held at Furama City Centre on 18 May 2009. This offsite one day retreat was organized to give all academic staff uninterrupted time to discuss, trouble-shoot and re-strategize on the two most important missions of the Department – teaching and research.
Recent Events

1st Biochemistry Workshop For Lab Technologists & Lab Executives
The 1st Biochemistry Workshop for Lab Technologists and Lab Executives was held on 22 July 2009 at MD7 LS Lab 8. The workshop was organized by Long Lee Hua, Qian Feng, Chai Siaw Ching and Tan Boon Kheng.

The workshop was made up of 2 sessions - Emergency Awareness, conducted by Office of Safety, Health and Environment (OSHE) and Career Path Ahead, by Deputy Head A/P Tan Tin Wee.

There was also a short briefing session by Aniza on the latest NUHS harmonization changes to the Executive and Professional staff salary and appraisal framework.
### Grants Awarded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Amount Awarded</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Source of Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 09</td>
<td>Prof Barry Halliwell</td>
<td>$706,000.00</td>
<td>Probing the correlation between oxidative damage and wound healing outcomes</td>
<td>NMRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A/P Gan Yunn Hwen</td>
<td>$354,651.00</td>
<td>Control of <em>Burkholderia pseudomallei</em>’s virulence through the regulation of Type III and Type VI secretion systems - identifying novel targets for therapeutic intervention in melioidosis</td>
<td>NMRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 09</td>
<td>Dr Sashi Kesavapany</td>
<td>$612,363.00</td>
<td>Halting P25/CDK5 induced neuroinflammation in an alzheimer’s disease paradigm</td>
<td>NMRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A/P Chung Ching Ming, Maxey</td>
<td>$214,337.00</td>
<td>Clinical validation of stathmin as a biomarker for colorectal cancer metastasis using tissue microarrays</td>
<td>NMRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 09</td>
<td>Dr Sherry Wang</td>
<td>$200,000.00</td>
<td>Targeting Cancer with Telomerase Interference and Characterization of Progenitor Cancer cells and Cancer Stem cells</td>
<td>NMRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 09</td>
<td>A/P Song Jianxing</td>
<td>$802,000.00</td>
<td>Signaling Mechanism and Antagonist Design for Treating Human Cancers and Other Diseases by Targeting Eph Receptors and Ephrins</td>
<td>NMRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 09</td>
<td>A/P Tang Bor Luen</td>
<td>$40,000.00</td>
<td>Characterization of Sirt1’s Epigenetic Role in Neuroprotection/Neural Differentiation and its Modulation by IGF-1</td>
<td>CFG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prof Sit Kim Ping</td>
<td>$40,000.00</td>
<td>Pyruvate Metabolism in Benign and Malignant Tumor Cells</td>
<td>CFG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prof Jeyaseelan Kandiah</td>
<td>$40,000.00</td>
<td>Elucidating the Potential Cure for Diabetes Mellitus: Molecular Studies of Gene Expression in Obese Individuals with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus</td>
<td>CFG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 09</td>
<td>Dr Chen Ee Sin</td>
<td>$184,900.00</td>
<td>Elucidation of the Epigenetic Roles of Histone H3 Phosphorylation</td>
<td>ARF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Publications


**Upcoming Events**

**InCoB – 8th International Conference on Bioinformatics in Singapore (7 – 11 September 09)**
The InCoB is an annual conference on Bioinformatics. For the first time, the InCoB conference will be held in Singapore. The organizers and steering committee includes A/P Tan Tin Wee, Adjunct Assistant Professor Dr Victor Tong Joo Chuan and Adjunct Professor Shoba Ranganathan.

Event highlights include Nobel Laureate Keynote Speaker Professor Robert Huber, Keynote Speaker Professor Peter Little and many other distinguished professors. The conference includes a student symposium called SYMBIO’09. Call for student papers is on for SYMBIO. Papers for InCoB main sessions are completed, and will be published in BMC Bioinformatics, BMC Genomics, and Bioinformation.

Further details can be found at [http://incob.apbionet.org/incob09/](http://incob.apbionet.org/incob09/)

**2nd Singapore Symposium on Computational Biology 2009 (SYMBIO 2009)**
The International Society for Computational Biology Student Council (ISCB-SC) Regional Student Group (RSG) Singapore is proud to present the 2nd Singapore Symposium on Computational Biology 2009 (SYMBIO 2009).

SYMBIO 2009 aims to achieve a 3-fold objective – to provide an avenue of exposure for students who are interested in the areas of Bioinformatics and Computational Biology, to provide collaboration opportunities for academia, scientists and professionals and to provide an avenue of exposure for students who are interested in the areas of Bioinformatics and Computational Biology and to provide an invaluable opportunity for industry professionals to present and share their challenges. This symposium also intends to gather the industry research institutes as well industry, education institutes so that a future generation of computational biology scientists may be nurtured by spurring their interests within the different areas in bioinformatics.

**Date : 8th September 2009**
**Time : 08:00 – 18:30 (Registration starts at 08:30)**
**Venue : Matrix, Biopolis, Singapore**

Registration is free!

Lunch and refreshments will be provided.
**Upcoming Events**

**Eusoff Hall Anniversary Laureate Lecture - Beauty and Fitness for Purpose with the Building Blocks of life, the Architecture of proteins**

The public lecture for residents and members of the public is co-organized by A/P Tan Tin Wee at Eusoff Hall

**Date:** 9th September 09  
**Time:** 6pm to 9.30pm  
**Venue:** Eusoff Hall, Kent Ridge, NUS

For more details, please visit  

Pre-Event Registration is required.  
**Contact Person:** Ms Rashidah Bte Salleh  
**Tel:** 67752288  
**Email:** eshsec@nus.edu.sg

**Biochemistry & NGS Nobel Laureate Lecture - Professor Robert Huber**

The Department of Biochemistry and NGS proudly presents  
A Nobel Laureate Lecture by **Professor Robert Huber**.

**Date:** 10th September 2009  
**Time:** 11am  
**Venue:** University Hall Auditorium, NUS

More details can be found in the attached seminar notice.
Upcoming Events

Biochemistry Student Symposium 2009
The Biochemistry Postgraduate Student Committee (Biochemistry PgSc) is proud to present the annual Biochemistry Student Symposium 2009 where it will be held on the 28th September 2009, Monday, at the CRC Auditorium, MD11, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. The initiatives of this symposium serve to provide an avenue where research graduate students from various disciplines and labs meet, interact, share and present their scientific discoveries.

The theme for this year’s symposium will be ‘Graduate trainee today, scientific leaders of the future?’ and aligned with this theme, the PgSc have invited the keynote speaker, Dr. Edison Liu, executive director of GIS, to deliver the plenary talk, entitled ‘Doing Good Science.’ Also, an inaugural student interaction session, where students come together in groups to discuss topics that touch on important issues of their postgraduate studies, will be incorporated to harvest constructive propositions for improvement of postgraduate training in the department.

The Biochemistry PgSc warmly welcome all staff and students to join us in this exciting and informative symposium, coming soon on the 28th September 2009.

Staff Welfare Event
Say Hello to the wildlife! We’re going to the Singapore Zoological Gardens for our next staff welfare event sometime in September 2009. Be prepared to run with the cheetahs and climb with the monkeys as we get together for an exciting afternoon. Stay tuned for more details.

Bon Voyage

We bid farewell to Dr Fu Jianlin who left the Department on 31 July 2009. We wish him an enjoyable retirement.

We also say goodbye to Ms Evelyn Loh of Dr Sashi’s lab. We extend our appreciation for her contributions to the Department for the past two years.