

## MESSAGE FROM HOD

The beginning of a new year always brings challenges of all kinds. I am pleased to have had the opportunity to work with all of you thus far and I am happy to say that I have learnt a lot in the past year with you in the Department.

Our recruitment drive has been successfully executed in the past year and in this latest issue of Biochemistry Buzz, I encourage you to familiarize yourselves with the new faces in our department, almost at every level, from adjunct staff, academic staff to lab technologists and teaching assistant. On behalf of the Department I extend the warmest welcome to all of you.

I have implemented a Meet-the-HoD session for academic staff and requested Deputy Head to do likewise for research staff, lab technicians and office staff. I want to encourage all of us at every level to implement an open door policy for every staff working under us to be able to have full access to our undivided attention and that includes all our students as well.

Our Department's renovation has progressed and we expect Level 3 renovation to be completed close to or on schedule. My deepest admiration goes out to staff with whom I have had to ask for your patience, understanding and most of all, your sacrifice, in giving up this space, or in suffering inconvenience of relocation and many other things.

The Department will continue to face even more challenges ahead especially in this economic downturn, and I hope that all of us will rise up to the call to meet these challenges head on and pursue the excellence that each one of us has dreamed of. And when you have success, I will make sure that I will be among the first to congratulate you and to celebrate your success. So going forward, the Visiting Committee has already tendered its report to us and we shall be progressively implementing their recommendations and reassessing our improvements as we move along.

In this Department's 9th decade of existence, let us lay the groundwork for global excellence as we approach our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. I am most certain that the young students we train as undergraduates and graduate students, they will achieve much more than our generation. Our investment of time, patience and support now will bear fruit manifold then. They will be our crown and our glory.

From the desk of your HoD  
Professor Fu Xin-Yuan



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## Our Heartiest Congratulations

### Fire Safety Compliance Award

Our Department building, MD7, is awarded the **Gold Award** for the *Fire Safety Compliance Program* conducted by OSHE in 2008. This is in recognition for our compliance with the Fire Safety Code and the implementation of fire safety rules and regulations. HOD will be receiving the award during the Safety & Health Day 2009 (on 22 April 2009). Well done, Biochemistry!

### Young Researcher Award

Congratulations to *A/P Markus Wenk* for being conferred the NUS Young Researcher Award 2009 during the University Awards on 24 April 2009.

### 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN e-Culture Workshop (Brunei)

Congratulations to our Teaching Assistant, *Mr Asif Khan*, of A/P Tan Tin Wee's lab, for his winning project titled "Capturing Culture Materials on photos and videos; Collection of cultural information" at the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN e-Culture Workshop. The video, which is from the perspective of the ASEAN youth on the culture of Brunei showcases how technology can be used to preserve heritage digitally. It was completed by Asif and his team in just one day.

### Postgraduate Students

Congratulations to the following students for receiving the *Biochemistry Student Travel Fellowship*:

- *Lau Siang Lin, Vincent* (Supervisor: A/P Maxey Chung)
- *Zubaidah Ramdzan* (Supervisor: A/P Maxey Chung)
- *Wang Yu* (Supervisor: A/P Caroline Lee)

Look out for our next call for the Biochemistry Student Travel Fellowship in May/June 2009.

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## Internal Appointments

### Finance Committee

*A/P Chua Kim Lee* has been appointed as the Chairman of the Finance Committee

### Management Committee

HOD has appointed a Management Committee to assist and advise him on the running of the Department.

The members of the Committee are:

- *A/P Tan Tin Wee*, in-charge of Administration
- *A/P Too Heng-Phon*, in-charge of Postgraduate Education & Training
- *A/P Chung Ching Ming, Maxey*, in-charge of Undergraduate Teaching
- *A/P Gan Yunn Hwen*, in-charge of Research

## Welcome to the Family

Congratulations to **Dr Sashi**, **Ms Chen Yanan**, (A/P Tang Bor Luen's lab) and **Ms Wang Xiaoning**, (Dr Deng Lih Wen's lab) on the birth of their children.



Yanan's baby boy,  
Yi Chen



Dr Sashi's baby girl,  
Jayna



Xiaoning's baby girl,  
Zhao Ningxin

## Speedy Recovery

We'd like to extend our get well wishes to **A/P Michael Raghunath** and **Neo Ah Gek** who are currently on hospitalization leave.

## Welcome to Our New Staff

Our warmest welcome to our new staff.

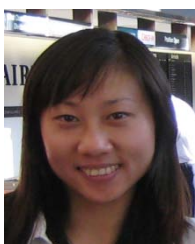
### Academic Staff



**Professor Peter Little**  
(Funded by DPRT)  
Assumed Duty:  
3 December 08



**Professor Yoichi Taya**  
(Funded by CSIS)  
Assumed Duty:  
4 August 08



**Dr Wang Xueying, Sherry**  
Assumed Duty:  
17 November 08



**Dr Wu Qiang**  
Assumed Duty:  
19 January 09



**Dr Chen Ee Sin**  
Assumed Duty:  
2 March 09



**Dr Takao Inoue**  
Assumed Duty:  
2 March 09

Welcome to Our New Staff

Adjunct Staff



**Dr Tong Joo Chuan, Victor**  
Institute for Infocomm  
Research (I2R), A\*STAR



**Dr Prabha Sampath**  
Institute of Molecular and  
Cell Biology



**Dr Ernesto Guccione**  
Institute of Molecular and  
Cell Biology

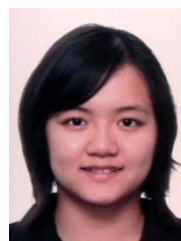


**Professor Anne C.  
Ferguson-Smith**  
University of Cambridge

Office Staff



**Wu Guoxiang**  
Finance Matters



**Ang Yick Ling, Elaine**  
Executive &  
Personal Assistant to HOD



**Pham Thuy Dung, Dee**  
Student Matters

Welcome to Our New Staff

Lab Manager



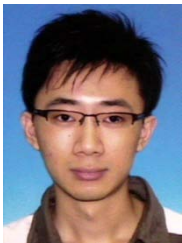
**Dr Fu Jianlin**

Teaching Assistant



**Lim Shen Jean**  
Supervisor:  
A/P Tan Tin Wee

Lab Executive



**Chai Juin Hsien**  
Supervisor:  
Dr Wang Xueying, Sherry



**Ong Joo Yong**  
Supervisor:  
A/Prof Chua Kim Lee



**Chong Yew Mei**  
Supervisor:  
Dr Wu Qiang

Welcome to Our New Staff

Research Fellow



**Amaury Gassiot**  
Supervisor:  
A/P Markus Wenk



**Chu Zhaoqing**  
Supervisor:  
Professor Fu Xin-Yuan



**Joseph Abraham**  
**Christopher John**  
Supervisor:  
A/P Mridula Sharma

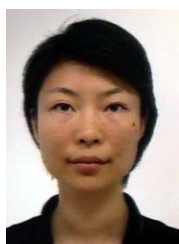


**Shahid Noor**  
Supervisor:  
A/P Markus Wenk



**Wu Long**  
Supervisor:  
Dr Yew Wen Shan

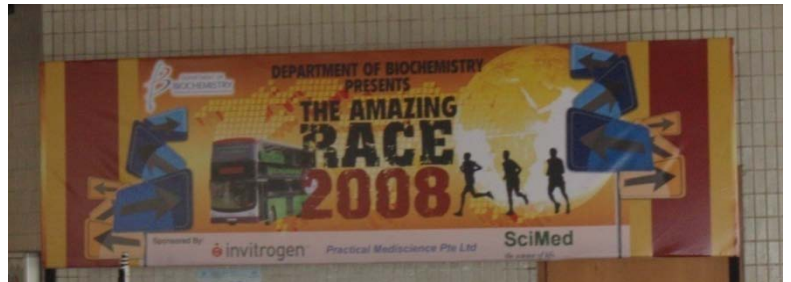


**Welcome to Our New Staff****Research Assistant****Chan Ler Min, Robin Barry**Supervisor:  
A/P Markus Wenk**Do Dang Vinh**Supervisor:  
Professor Fu Xin-Yuan**Guan Xueli**Supervisor:  
A/P Markus Wenk**Han Qing**Supervisor:  
A/P Tang Bor Luen**Howard Saw**Supervisor:  
A/P Chua Kim Lee**Lin Peiyu, Joyce**Supervisor:  
Professor Fu Xin-Yuan**Zhou Yi**Supervisor:  
Professor Fu Xin-Yuan**Zhou Yue**Supervisor:  
A/P Markus Wenk

## Recent Events

### Amazing Race 2008

The Staff Welfare Committee proudly organized our very own **Amazing Race 2008** held on 12 December 08.



10 teams made up of our Staff and Students, were racing around campus, competing to be Biochemistry's fastest team to check in at the pit-stop. It was an afternoon full of challenges, fun and laughter.



We ended the fun-filled afternoon with a hearty meal.

For more photos, please go to [http://medicine.nus.edu.sg/bioweb/staff\\_welfare.shtml](http://medicine.nus.edu.sg/bioweb/staff_welfare.shtml)



Congratulations to Team 9 on winning the 1<sup>st</sup> Prize!

We thank *Practical Mediscience* and *SciMed* for sponsoring the prizes for this event.

Top (from left to right):

Tan Weiqi, Beatrice Goh, Dr Deng Lih Wen

Bottom (from left to right):

Wong Veen Senn, Bian Hao Sheng, A/P Michael Raghunath



## Recent Events

### Honours Open House

The Honours Open House was held on Thursday, 19 February 09. The open house is an opportunity for our academic staff to attract students to undertake honours projects. It was well-attended by the undergraduates.

**NUS**  
National University of Singapore

**DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY**

*Open House for Honours Projects*

Department of Biochemistry  
Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine  
National University of Singapore

**Date:** Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009  
**Time:** 5pm - 7pm  
**Venue:** Seminar Room M9  
Blk MD7, Level 2  
Department of Biochemistry

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 5:00 pm - 5:15 pm | Opening Remarks by HOD                       |
| 5:15 pm - 5:30 pm | Speech from Senior Professors                |
| 5:30 pm - 5:45 pm | Presentation                                 |
| 5:45 pm - 6:00 pm | Q & A  |
| 6:00 pm - 6:20 pm | Share experience by previous Honors Students |
| 6:20 pm - 7:00 pm | Interacting with Professors & Tea reception  |

[http://www.dobio.nus.edu.sg/HA\\_09.jpg](http://www.dobio.nus.edu.sg/HA_09.jpg)

### Postgraduates Prize Giving Session

On 2 February 09, our postgraduate students were surprised with an iPod as a token of appreciation for their superb attendance during Research Progress Seminars. Keep it up!



From left to right: HOD, Hu Yongli, Hendrick Loei, Zubaidah Binte M Ramdzan, Benny Paula-Beth Angelica Tiqui, Liu Jie, Cheng Fei, Choo Yin Yin, Dr Thilo Hagen

## Recent Events

### Hi-Tea @ Carousel (Royal Plaza on Scotts)

On Friday 27 February 09, the Staff Welfare Committee organized a Biochemistry Hi-Tea Session at Carousel @ Royal Plaza on Scotts.

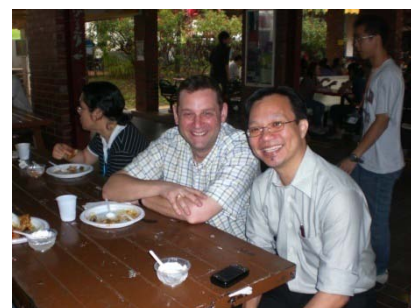


We had a short quiz and lucky draw prizes were given to 11 people.

It was a memorable afternoon of good food and enjoyable company.

### Biochemistry Staff Lunch

The Staff Welfare Committee's last activity was a Staff Lunch on Friday 20 March 09. It was a relaxing time catching up with fellow colleagues.



## Visits

### Visiting Committee

The Department welcomed the Visiting Committee comprising of Professors C.J. Leaver and Edmond Sanders of University of Oxford and University of Alberta respectively on 16 February 09. The Visiting Committee met with our academic staff, undergraduate & postgraduate students to gain insights on the Department's and NUS processes and will write a report on our strengths and suggestions for improvement.

## Grants Awarded

| Month        | Staff                              | Amount Awarded  | Project Title  |
|--------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| September 08 | A/P Tang Bor Luen                  | \$270,000.00    | Syntaxin 16's Role in Dendritic Outgrowth and Membrane Traffic in Neurons  |
| October 08   | Prof Jeyaseelan Kandiah            | \$150,000.00    | Molecular Approach to Validate the Progress of Clinically Stable Young Stroke Patients   |
| December 08  | Dr Sashi Kesavapany                | \$526,671.00    | Lipid metabolism in the survival of dopaminergic neurons - relevance to Parkinson's Disease  |
|              | A/P Tang Bor Luen                  | \$360,520.00    | Rab22B/Rab31, a brain enriched small GTPase in astrocytic membrane traffic and brain pathophysiology   |
|              | A/P Theresa Tan                    | \$640,200.00    | Role of microRNAs in lipid metabolism  |
| January 09   | A/P Marie Clement                  | \$713,500.00    | A study to decipher the pathway(s) involved in S-nitrosylation of the tumour suppressor PTEN by an increased intracellular level of superoxide and hydrogen peroxide in normal and malignant cells |
|              | Dr Sherry Wang                     | \$300,000.00    | Telomeres and Telomerase in Cancer and Stem Cell Disorders   |
| February 09  | Prof Jeyaseelan Kandiah (As Co-PI) | \$10,000,000.00 | Ischemic stroke with a focus on intracranial stenosis<br>(National Research Foundation (NRF)-Competitive Research Programme (CRP) Funding)   |
|              | A/P Mridula Sharma (As Co-PI)      | \$8,000,000.00  | An Integrated Approach to Overcome Sarcopenia and Frailty in Aging Humans<br>(Competitive Research Programme (CRP) Funding)  |
|              | Dr Thilo Hagen                     | \$45,000.00     | Developing YC-1 analogues as anti-cancer agents  |
|              | Dr Yew Wen Shan                    | \$50,000.00     | Synthetic enzymology: Metabolic Engineering for Biomining of Electronic Wastes for Environmental Sustainability  |
| March 09     | Prof Fu Xin-Yuan                   | \$677,054.00    | Mechanisms of Epigenetic Control of Leptin-STAT3 Axis in the Body Homeostasis  |

## Tier 1 Publications

Moh A, Zhang W, Yu S, Wang J, Xu X, Li J, **Fu XY**, "STAT3 sensitizes insulin signaling by negatively regulating glycogen synthase kinase-3 beta" *Diabetes*, 57(5):1227-35.

Wegrzyn J, Potla R, Chwae YJ, Sepiri NB, Zhang Q, Koeck T, Derecka M, Szczepanek K, Szelag M, Gornicka A, Moh A, Moghaddas S, Chen Q, Bobbili S, Cichy J, Dulak J, Baker DP, Wolfman A, Stuehr D, Hassan MO, **Fu XY**, Avadhani N, Drake JI, Fawcett P, Lesnfsky EJ, Larner AC, "Function of mitochondrial Stat3 in cellular respiration" *Science*. 2009 Feb 6;323(5915):793-7.

Cohen PA, Koski GK, Czerniecki BJ, Bunting KD, **Fu XY**, Wang Z, Zhang WJ, Carter CS, Awad M, Distel CA, Nagem H, Paustian CC, Johnson TD, Tisdale JF, Shu S, "STAT3- and STAT5 dependent pathways competitively regulate the pan-differentiation of CD34pos cells into tumor-competent dendritic cells" *Blood*. 2008 Sep 1;112(5):1832-43.

**Halliwell, B**, "The wanderings of a free radical". *Free Radical Biology and Medicine*, 46 (2009): 531-542. (United States).

Wong\*, Y T, R Ruan, G Jan, **A M Jenner\***, P E M Ng and E H Tay, "Elevation of oxidative-damage biomarkers during aging in F2 hybrid mice: Protection by chronic oral intake of resveratrol." *Free Radical Biology and Medicine*, 46 (2009): 799-809. (United States).

Breitbach\*, K, G W Sun, J Koehler, K Eske, P Wongprompitak, G Tan, Y Liu, **Y H Gan** and I Steinmetz, "Caspase-1 mediates resistance in murine melioidosis". *Infection and Immunity*, doi:10.1128/IAI (2009). (United States).

**Song, J**, "Insight into "Insoluble Proteins" with Pure Water". *FEBS Letters*, 583, no. 8 (2009): 953-959. (Netherlands).

Kutik\*, S, M Rissler, X GUAN, B Guiard, G Shui, N Gerbert, PN Heacock, P Rehing, W Dowhan, **M R Wenk\***, N Pfanner\* and N Wiedemann, "The translocator maintenance protein Tam41 is required for mitochondrial cardiolipin biosynthesis". *Journal of cell Biology*, 183, no. 7 (2008): 1213-1221. (United States).

Zubaidah\*, B M R, G S Tan, BES Tan, S G Lim, Q Lin and **M C M Chung**, "2-D DIGE profiling of hepatocellular carcinoma tissues identified isoforms of far upstream binding protein (FUBP) as novel candidates in liver carcinogenesis." *PROTEOMICS*, 8, no. 23-24 (2008): 5086-5096. (Germany).

QIN, H, H. X Pu, M LI, Sohail Ahmed and **J Song\***, "Identification and Structural Mechanism for a Novel Interaction between a Ubiquitin Ligase WWP1 and Nogo-A, a Key Inhibitor for Central Nervous System Regeneration". *Biochemistry*, 47, no. 51 (2008): 13647-13658. (United States).

**Chung\***, **M C M**, K Nakamura and TW Jordan, "The AOHUPO Membrane Proteomics Initiative, Fourth Workshop 22 June 2008, Cairns, Australia". *Proteomics*, 8, no. 19 (2008): 3920-3923. (Germany).

Tan, S B E, H T Tan and **M C M Chung\***, "Membrane proteins and membrane proteomics". *Proteomics*, 8, no. 19 (2008): 3924-3932. (Germany).



## Upcoming Events

### Strategic Retreat

Academic Staff will be attending a Departmental Strategic Retreat on Monday, 18 May 09.

### New Staff Welfare Committee FY09

Look out for more events by our new Staff Welfare Committee, consisting of Dr Sashi, Evelyn Loh and Amanda Lim.



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