

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.

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Professor Fu Xin-Yuan
Head

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!

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

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*.

Departmental Updates

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.



The newly renovated open lab on Level 3.



New staff office at Level 3.



The Bioinformatics lab staff work stations.



The Bioinformatics staff office.

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 Sulaimie

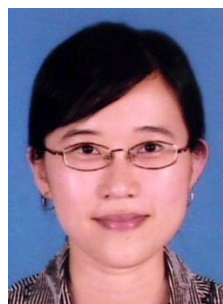
Supervisor:
Dr Sashi Kesavapany

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!

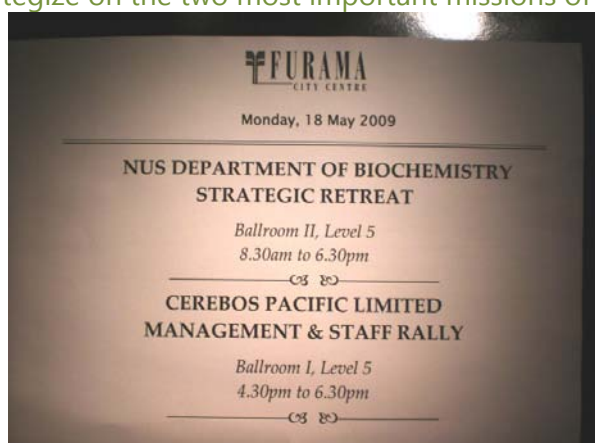
Name	Course of Study	Supervisor
Wang Xiaoning	PhD	Dr Deng Lih Wen
Do Dang Vinh	PhD	Prof Fu Xin-Yuan
Hou Qian	PhD	A/P Maxey Chung
Lin Qifeng	PhD	
Lim Shen Jean	PhD	A/P Tan Tin Wee
Tan Gek Ling Janice	PhD	
Lim Yi Shan	PhD	A/P Tang Bor Luen
Shriram Venkatesan	PhD	Dr Sherry Wang
Soumiya Srinivasan	PhD	
Aishwarya.S	PhD	Dr Yew Wen Shan

Name	Course of Study	Supervisor
Ng Li Fang	MSc	Prof Barry Halliwell
Li Xiaoyang	MSc	A/P Chua Kim Lee
Lee Pei	MSc	Dr Deng Lih Wen
Chinari Pawan Kumar	MSc	Prof Fu Xin-Yuan A/P Tan Tin Wee
Ng Pei Ern Mary	MSc	Dr Jenner Andrew
Charlene Priscilla Poore	MSc	Dr Sashi
Lee Liying Corinne	MSc	
Goo Chong Kiat	MSc	Prof Sit Kim Ping A/P Too Heng Phon
Geng Wei	MSc	A/P Theresa Tan
Wanpen Ponyeam	MSc	Dr Thilo Hagen
Ho Yoon Khei	MSc	A/P Too Heng-Phon
Tao Ren	MSc	Dr Sherry Wang

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.



Emergency Awareness Session



Career Path Ahead...



Briefing Session by Aniza

Grants Awarded

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

Publications

Sethi, G and **T Vinay***, "Potential pharmacological control of the NF-kappaB pathway." *Trends In Pharmacological Sciences*, 30, no. 6 (2009): 313-321. (Netherlands).

Chow*, J Y, **L WU** and **W S Yew***, "Directed Evolution of a Quorum-Quenching Lactonase from *Mycobacterium avium* subsp. Paratuberculosis K-10 in the Amidohydrolase Superfamily". *Biochemistry*, 48, no. 20 (2009): 4344-4353. (United States).

Lim, S J, "Allergen Atlas: a comprehensive knowledge center and analysis resource for allergen information." *Bioinformatics*, 25, no. 7 (2009): 979-980. (United Kingdom).

Chia, W J and **B L Tang***, "Emerging roles for Rab family GTPases in human cancer". *Biochimica Et Biophysica Acta-Reviews On Cancer*, 1795, no. 2 (2009): 110-116. (Netherlands).

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

Kawase, T, R Ohki, T Shibata, S Tsutumi, N Kamimura, J Inazawa, T Ohta, H Ichikawa, H Aburatani, F Tashiro and **T Yoichi***, "PH domain-only protein PHLDA3 is a p53-regulated repressor of Akt". *Cell*, 136, no. 3 (2009): 535-550. (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).

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/>

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

Website: <http://symbio2009.rsg.sg/>

Registration is free!

Please register early at <http://symbio2009.rsg.sg/registration>

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

http://www.sciencemonth.org.sg/event/event_detail.aspx?s=ev&y=2009&m=9&d=9&id=762BBD0A-1941-4F7B-BC4B-8B21E1DF0942&c=3

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.

The image is a seminar notice for a Nobel Laureate Lecture. At the top left is the NUS logo. The text reads: "Department of Biochemistry & NGS proudly presents A Nobel Laureate Lecture". The title of the lecture is "Intracellular Protein Degradation and its Control". The main text describes the lecture content: "Within cells or subcellular compartments misfolded and/or short-lived regulatory proteins are degraded by protease machines, cage-forming multi-subunit assemblages. Their proteolytic active sites are sequestered within the particles and located on the inner walls. Access of protein substrates is regulated by protein subcomplexes or protein domains which may assist in substrate unfolding dependent of ATP. Five protease machines will be described displaying different subunit structures, oligomeric states, enzymatic mechanisms, and regulatory properties: Proteasome, HslV/HslU, Tricorn, Dipeptidyl peptidase IV, DegP/HtrA." Below this is a small portrait of Professor Robert Huber. To the right of the portrait, it says "By: Professor Robert Huber" followed by his affiliation: "The Heiner Prior 10 Chemistry 1988 Max Planck Institut für Biochemie Universität Duisburg Essen Cardiff University School of Biosciences". At the bottom left, it lists the date, time, and venue: "Date: 10 September 2009 Time: 11am Venue: University Hall Auditorium". A note at the bottom states "Light refreshments will be served after the seminar".

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 post-graduate 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.

