

JCSMHS NEWSLETTER



JEFFREY CHEAH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Monash University Malaysia
Jalan Lagoon Selatan,
47500 Bandar Sunway
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Monash University Malaysia is a joint venture

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



This will be our last School newsletter in the current format. While it was designed to be an important communication and information resource, I think it is too unwieldy to be that and three issues per year makes that objective difficult to achieve. We will be moving to monthly bulletins where important information relevant to the School can be communicated regularly. Hopefully, it will be more frequent than our current newsletters.

The recent exciting news is our PVC award winners who are listed in this issue. The School has won 60% of the awards offered. When the PVC awards were re-organised and the selection criteria were made much more stringent as well as reducing the number of awards, there was a general feeling in the School that it will become much more difficult to get these. The fact that we run our medical program very similar to our Australian program meant that innovation was very difficult. Over the last year or two, we have not been very successful. However, I have always felt there were many things happening in the School which were unique and highly innovative. This year's award is a recognition of this. I am particularly pleased that we swept both the professional staff excellence awards; one for the Integrated Timetabling system (IIT) and importantly for the first time one for research. Congratulations to the award winners.



I would like to bring to your attention to one important initiative. We are hoping in the coming months to run journal clubs regularly by various school strengths. Hopefully, we will be scheduling such meetings weekly in Sunway and perhaps slightly less frequently in CSJB. The aim of these are three-fold: first, to inform and communicate to School members the full range of research that is going on and hopefully encourage collaborations; second, to provide a forum for invited external speakers to present and talk about their own research; and third, to give a forum for research strength leaders to regularly meet, which can happen after the journal club presentations. In Sunway, Dr Lee Learn Han and Dr Farooq have initiated regular (I believe monthly) journal clubs. Let's see how this develops. With that said, I would like to suggest supervisors encourage their HDR students to attend these sessions.

Professor Dr Shajahan Yasin
Head of Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences





MALAYSIAN BRAIN BEE CHALLENGE 2019

The Malaysian Brain Bee Challenge (MBBC) 2019 was held on 18 March 2019 to search for upper secondary school students to represent Malaysia at the International Brain Bee Challenge (IBBC) 2019, which will be held at Daegu, South Korea in September 2019.

Coordinated by Brandon Choo with the assistance of Dr Mohd Farooq Shaikh and Dr Vinod A/L RMT Balasubramaniam, this marks the second time Jeffrey Cheah School Medicine and Health Sciences is hosting the Zone M finals.

MBBC 2019 saw 84 students from 14 different schools vying to become one of the top three winners for Zone M. The winner will proceed to the national level grand final at University Sains Malaysia in July 2019 and the national finalist will represent Malaysia at Daegu.

MBBC is a joint university-community project nationwide, recognised by Malaysian Ministry of Education, and the event has found success where MBBC 2018's champion succeeded as the eighth runner-up at IBBC 2018.



BRIMS OPEN DAY 2019

Brain Research Institute Monash Sunway (BRIMS) organised BRIMS Open Day on 11 April 2019 to enhance awareness and showcase our research capability and infrastructure including the bioimaging and drug discovery platforms in the hopes of promoting future research collaboration with BRIMS.



BOOK LAUNCHING 'MINDFULNESS AND EMOTIONS'

1-in-3 people in Malaysia will experience some form of mental health issue in their lifetime, and over 60% of Malaysia's workforce reported significant levels of work-related stress in the last year. Our mental health is as important as our physical health, and at Monash University Malaysia, there is a strong focus on raising awareness of psychological well-being and how we can take care of ourselves.

On 12 April 2019, Head of Department of Psychology Associate Professor Shamsul Haque introduced Sandy Clarke, Master of Professional Counselling student, and emotions researcher, Dr Eugene Tee, as they launched their debut book at Monash University Malaysia. Together with a distinguished panel, including Associate Professor Shian-Ling Keng from Yale-NUS, they spoke with the audience about mental health issues in Malaysia and how mindfulness can help us develop a calm, focused, and resilient mind.

To learn more about the practice of mindfulness, the book is now available at MPH Malaysia.





'INTRODUCTION TO MASS SPECTROMETRY' WORKSHOP

Liquid Chromatography Mass Spectrometry (LCMS) Platform at Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences organised 'Introduction to Mass Spectrometry' workshop for beginners in the field of liquid chromatography and mass spectrometry on 22 and 23 April 2019.

Guest speakers, Robin Philp and Dr Erhan Simsek from Agilent, respectively spoke on the fundamentals and applications of chromatography and mass spectrometry, and of omics study.

Dr Syafiq Asnawi, Principal Technical Officer of LCMS Platform, also enlightened the participants with basic mass spectrometry sample preparation and data analysis using PEAKS software.

The workshop was a success with a turnout of 45 participants.



DENGUE AWARENESS AT CANNOSIAN CONVENT PRIMARY

Monash Segamat Medical Precinct held a dengue awareness event, as part of its community engagement effort, in the Cannosian Convent Primary School on 30 April 2019.

The purpose of the event was to educate the students about the dengue virus, the Aedes mosquito, the symptoms of the disease and steps to prevent dengue. The Year 5 medical students gave a talk to a total of 178 primary school students and guided the students to identify mosquito breeding sites in the school compound.

During the finale of the event, Monash Segamat Medical Precinct presented both students and teachers with gifts, as well as receiving certificates of appreciation from the primary school.

With the successful event, the Headmaster of the School, Madam Mallar Selive A/P Krishnasamy aims to organise a field trip for her students to visit the Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Bandar Sunway the end of the year.



VISIT BY VICE-CHANCELOR, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Professor Stephen J Toope, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge visited Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences (JCSMHS) during his recent trip for Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Speakers Series at Sunway University. Professor Toope and his entourage were received by Professor Dr Shajahan Yasin, Head of JCSMHS. They had discussed on various education and research topic and subsequently visited Medical Anatomy and Pathology E-Learning (MAPEL) and toured Brain Research Institute Monash Sunway (BRIMS).

Born in Montreal, Canada, Professor Toope graduated magna cum laude in History and Literature at Harvard University, before earning degrees in common law and civil law at McGill University. Professor Toope is a distinguished scholar and academic leader with interests in international law, human rights, international legal theory and international development. In recognition of his service and achievements, he was inducted as an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2015.



INAUGURAL JOURNAL CLUB MEETING

The School Research's Journal Club Meeting is a platform forum to encourage researchers to get together to critically discuss about scientific research and with the aim to promote further collaboration.

22 APRIL - MICROBIOME AND BIORESOURCE RESEARCH STRENGTH

Microbiome and Bioresource Research Strength (MBRS) of the Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences (JCSMHS), Monash University Malaysia, consists of a multidisciplinary and highly skilled team, which works at the interface of biomedicine, molecular biology and microbiology.

The MBRS's focus is on understanding the human and environmental microbiome in relation to human health and illness. MBRS works on understanding and investigating various interactions of the human host and microbiota in maintaining good health, and how these interactions can lead to dysbiosis.

The Leader of MBRS group is Dr Lee Learn Han, one of the reputable Malaysian scientists (Malaysia's Research Star Award (MRSA) Winner 2018 of High Impact Paper in Medical Science). Dr Lee is a senior lecturer at JCSMHS and also the Leader and Principle Investigator of Novel Bacteria and Drug Discovery Research Group.

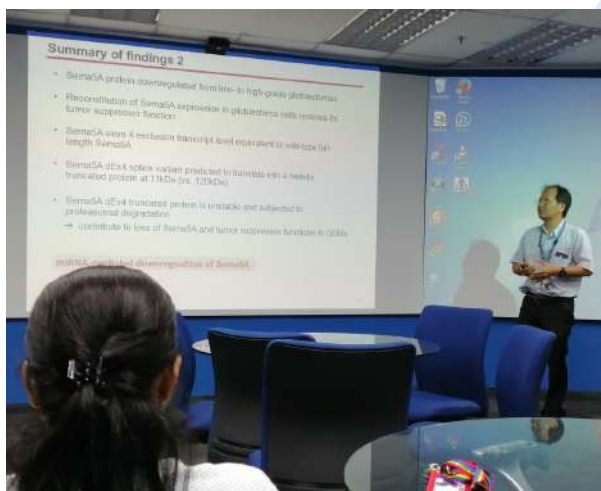


24 APRIL - THE ROLE OF AXON GUIDANCE MOLECULE SEMAPHORIN 5A IN BRAIN TUMOUR DEVELOPMENT

Astrocytomas are the most common forms of brain tumour in human, among which glioblastoma multiforme is highly malignant and exhibits high invasiveness and resistance to chemo- and radiotherapy, leading to high recurrence rate even after radical surgical resection of the tumour and a median survival of only 15 months after initial diagnosis.

This calls for development of novel effective treatment regimens. Dr Alan Lee and his research team have demonstrated the effects of semaphorin 5A (Sema5A) and its receptor plexin-B3 in inhibiting glioma cell migration, invasion and proliferation. Their findings provide compelling evidence of Sema5A's tumour suppressor effect and its therapeutic potential. Dr Lee presented his research findings at Journal Club Meeting, Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Dr Lee is a senior lecturer at the School of Pharmacy, Monash University Malaysia, and currently focuses on the functions of axon guidance molecules semaphorins and plexins in cell migration and invasion, axon navigation, cellular differentiation, neuronal regeneration and brain tumor development.





BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IN APRIL 2019

In accordance with the monthly birthday celebration, Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences celebrated the birthdays of Dr Christina Gertrude Yap, Dr Khoo Boo Aik, Dr George Lee, Dr Narendra Pamidi, Dr Sharad Ratnarajah and Rohana Binti Bahari in the month of April.



Photos of birthday and special celebrations are available on JCSMHS intranet -- tinyurl.com/jcsmhs-photos





BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IN MAY 2019

On 2 May 2019, Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences celebrated the birthdays of Professor Daniel Reidpath, Dr Sharuna Verghis, Chitra Ponnusamy, Khairul Nizam Ahmad, Nurul Izziani Ismail, Uma Devi Munuasamy Thevi, Rachel Shalini, and Dr Yatinesh Kumari.



Photos of birthday and special celebrations are available on JCSMHS intranet -- tinyurl.com/jcsmhs-photos



DOUBLE CELEBRATIONS IN JUNE 2019

In the occasion of Hari Raya Aidilfitri, Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences hosted double celebrations this month, to celebrate both the festive season and the birthdays of Daphne Goh, Dr Karim Bettache, Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Bin Abdul Kadir, Dr Lakshmi Selvaratnam, Dr Nik Asmah, Professor Parasakthi Navaratnam, Dr Rajesh Singh, Dr Sharifah Syed Hassan, and Dr Siti Noraida.



Photos of birthday and special celebrations are available on JCSMHS intranet -- tinyurl.com/jcsmhs-photos

BIGGEST BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IN JULY 2019

July marked the largest birthday celebration as Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences celebrated the birthdays of Professor Ammu Kutty A/P G.K. Radhakrishnan, Dr Amudha Kadirvelu, Dr Lau Choon Ping, Dr Sivalal A/L Sadasivan, Dr Tomoko Soga, Camelia Marsha Minjoot, Devi A/P Arunasalam, Emmalyn Chan, Gurmeet Kaur, Ungku Zulaikha Binti Ungku Omar, Wan Asida and Zulkhaili Bin Zainal Abidin; 12 birthdays altogether!



Photos of birthday and special celebrations are available on JCSMHS intranet -- tinyurl.com/jcsmhs-photos



JCSMHS

3 MINUTE THESIS (3MT)

Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences (JCSMHS) held the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) where PhD students presented their research to a general audience under three minutes. The winners were:

Winner - Lim Chor Hong

Thesis title: *'The role of Spexin in Social Stress'*

Supervisors: Associate Professor Dr Tomoko Soga and Professor Ishwar Parhar

First Runner-up - Khadeeja Munawar

Thesis title: *'Why we recall certain memories?'*

(Explaining the recall of certain memories from youth)'

Supervisor: Associate Professor Dr Shamsul Haque

Second Runner-up - Ng Siok Shen

Thesis title: *'Which Oral Anticoagulant Do We Choose?'*

Supervisor: Professor Nathorn Chaiyakunapruk

BEST POSTER AWARD

Rahela Zaman, PhD candidate of Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences, has won the 1st prize for poster presentation in the 3rd Cambridge-Oxford-Sunway Biomedical Symposium entitled 'Diabetes: Disarming the Silent Killer' that was held on 26 and 27 March 2019.

Her research project titled 'Fabrication of Oral Nano-Insulin Formulation for Regulating Blood Glucose Level' investigates the potential of nanoparticles to electrostatically bind insulin molecules with sufficient affinity for protection against enzymatic degradation of insulin in the gut. The project is a pre-clinical study of oral insulin formulation and has shown promising findings *in vitro* level.





PSYCHOLOGY BEST GRADUATE AWARDS

Department of Psychology recently awarded Best Graduate Awards to its exceptional graduates in their respective programmes:

Tuang Ling Jie (center)
Bachelor of Psychological Science and Business

Nadya Elvina (2nd from the right)
Bachelor of Psychological Science and Business (Honours)

Kerly Yap Li Yin (3rd from the left)
Master of Professional Counselling

Michelle Teng (2nd from the left)
Bachelor of Psychological Science

VIRGIN MONEY LONDON MARATHON 2019

Congratulations to Associate Professor Dr Quek Kia Fatt for successfully completing another milestone, the Virgin Money London Marathon, on 28 April 2019. He is now one marathon away from completing his sixth and final Abbott World Major Marathon in Boston to be a Six Star Finisher.





NATIONAL LONG SERVICE AWARD

Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Abdul Kadir has been awarded the National Long Service Award (30 years and above in Teaching Profession) by the Private Education Co-Operative of Malaysia (EDUCOOP) on 25 May 2019, in conjunction with the national Teachers' Day Celebration at Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka Kuala Lumpur.

Sharing his teaching approach, Professor Khalid encourages the bright young minds to think outside the box by having a simple rule of five, "So if you see someone, who has got, say, shortness of breath? You have to think about the five things that can cause shortness of breath and look for which of the five things."

A highly accomplished academic clinician for more than 30 years, Professor Khalid believes research and teaching are crucial to improve medical practices and technologies, on top of being a clinician, as he expressed, "To get to new technology, we must do research. And teach. Teach each other."

DOUBLE AWARDS AT MSPP 2019

Dr Mohd Farooq Shaikh has bagged two awards at the 33rd Scientific Meeting of Malaysian Society of Pharmacology and Physiology (MSPP) 2019, held on 15 and 16 July 2019.

The MSPP Young Teacher's Award 2019 was awarded to Dr Farooq for his articulate delivery of lecture on 'Opioids in Pain Management', while the MSPP Young Researcher Award 2019 was awarded for his outstanding research output alongside a 20-minute presentation, evaluated by a panel of international experts that includes Roderick J Flower, a distinguished pharmacologist and the author of the bestselling 'Rang and Dale's Pharmacology'.

When asked about his achievements, Dr Farooq expressed, "I feel extremely delighted for the double-award win. This is only possible with the tremendous support from the School, my colleagues and students. I am extremely thankful to my wife and kids for their moral support."





BEST ORAL PRESENTATION

Dr Chai Xin Ying, Bachelor of Medical Science (Honours) graduate from Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences, has won 'Best Oral Presentation' at the Johor Surgical Conference held on 12 to 14 July.

Supervised by Associate Professor Anil Gandhi and Dr Najnin Ahmed, Dr Chai impressed the panel of judges and audience with her research project, 'Density of Breast; An Independent Risk Factor for Developing Breast Cancer: A Prospective Study of Patients Presenting to Breast Clinic in Hospital Sultanah Aminah and Hospital Sultan Ismail Johor Bahru'.

2019 PVC AWARDS WINNERS AND COMMENDATIONS

Congratulation to all the recipients of PVC Awards 2019:

2019 PVC Awards for Excellence in Education

Innovations in Teaching

Associate Professor Amudha Kadirvelu

2019 PVC Awards for Excellence in Performance by Professional Staff

Kong Li San, Tan Pei Jean, Devi A/P Arunasalam, Linda Patricia Anthony Faleel and Lucy Oon Soo Sai

2019 PVC Awards for Excellence in Performance by Professional Staff

Chandra A/P Nadrajah, Umavathy A/P Sevesankaran, Muhamad Azwan Bin Md Yasin and Khogilaraj N. Supramaniam

2019 PVC Commendation for Excellence in Education

Innovations in Teaching

Dr Priyia A/P Pusparajah

2019 PVC Commendation for Excellence in Education

Innovations in Teaching (Team)

Associate Professor Uma Devi M.Palanisamy, Associate Professor Arkendu Sen, Associate Professor Rakesh Naidu A/L Kuppasamy Naidu, Muhamad Azwan Bin Md Yasin and Chandra A/P Nadrajah

2019 PVC Commendation for Excellence in Research

Open Category

Dr Lee Learn Han



DR MAGESWARY A/P SIVALINGAM

Dr Mageswary Sivalingam joined Brain Research Institute Monash Sunway (BRIMS), Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Monash University Malaysia as an assistant lecturer in June 2019. She received her MSc from University Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) in 2012, BSc (Hons) from University Science Malaysia (USM) in 2005, and recently completed her PhD in Neuroscience. Her academic qualifications and training are in neuroscience, molecular biology and molecular morphology. Her research interests involve negative emotion and related psychiatric disorder such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and its association to neurodegenerative disease.



DR B SAATHEEYAVAANE BHUVANENDRAN PILLAI

Dr B Saatheeyavaane is an assistant lecturer in neuroscience at Brain Research Institute Monash Sunway (BRIMS), Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Monash University Malaysia since 2019. She received her BSc from AIMST University in 2008 and then obtained her PhD from Monash University in 2019. Her PhD research project dealt with the evaluation of the neuroprotective effect of natural compound against Alzheimer's disease by targeting the multifactorial condition and further develop into drug for treatment and/or prevention of AD. She also has published in international journals such as Frontiers in Pharmacology and Frontiers in Neuroscience.





NITA AZLIN JAAFAR

Nita Azlin Jaafar joined the School Research Office, Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences as Administrative Executive (Research).

With a Bachelor in Biotechnology, MSc in Plant Biotechnology, she has been a tissue culturist in GLC company for the past ten years. She also has extensive experience in laboratory, project and people management.



WE WOULD LIKE TO BID FAREWELL TO THE FOLLOWING STAFF:

DR ARUL DURAIRAJAH

PROFESSOR PARASAKTHI A/P NAVARATNAM

PROFESSOR DANIEL REIDPATH



TRAINING ON TRAUMA AND RECOVERY

DATE: 4 - 6 SEPTEMBER 2019

VENUE: MONASH UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

Co-organised by Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences (JCSMHS), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Health Equity Initiatives, this event aims to build the capacity of the JCSMHS refugee health research team on using trauma-informed approaches in refugee health research. It also looks to build capacity of practitioners working with forcibly displaced populations on trauma informed care.

This event welcomes medical practitioners, clinical psychologists, counselors, social workers, researchers, and lawyers from international agencies, non-profits and academia working in the area of refugee health.

For more information, please email gurmeet.kaur@monash.edu.

HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING

DATE: 11 - 12 SEPTEMBER 2019

VENUE: MONASH UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

Co-organised by Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences (JCSMHS), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Health Equity Initiatives, this program aims to build the capacity of immigration detention officers on health and to support Jabatan Imigresen Malaysia (JIM) Detention Unit in developing strategies to address health problems in immigration detention centres. Tuberculosis, HIV, and mental health will be some of the issues to be addressed in the program.

The program was developed in consultation with the Director and Deputy Director of Depots, JIM, and was approved by the Director General of Immigration. The targeted audience for this program will be commandants and deputy commandants of the immigration depots from all over Malaysia.

For more information, please email gurmeet.kaur@monash.edu.





IBRO-APRC ADVANCED SCHOOL 2019

DATE: 7 - 20 OCTOBER 2019

VENUE: MONASH UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

The Brain Research Institute Monash Sunway (BRIMS), Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Monash University Malaysia, is organising the IBRO-Asia Pacific Regional Schools since 2007. The purpose of the IBRO-APRC Advanced School is to provide a platform for postgraduate students and post-doctoral fellows in the Asia Pacific region to meet in an environment where they can acquire knowledge of both theoretical and technological advances in key areas of neuroscience research.

Funding from IBRO will cover travel and accommodation expenses of up to 15 postgraduate students and young scientists specialising in the field of neurosciences. Laboratory neuroscience research experience of applicants is essential.

Official application to the school will be announced on the IBRO website: ibro.org

BRIMS TECHNICAL WORKSHOP SERIES 2019

DATE: 8-11 OCT 2019 & 14-16 OCT 2019

TIME: 9AM-5PM

VENUE: BRIMS, LEVEL 3, BUILDING 3, MONASH UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

Three intensive modules comprising of lectures and practical sessions conducted by a team of dynamic and accomplished scientists. Special technical lectures session will be scheduled on 8 October 2019 for all modules.

Early bird registration is open from 1 July 2019.

For more information, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/y5xj2o7o>





SCHOOL MEETING

The upcoming meeting will take place on 31 October 2019 at Room 4203.

SCHOOL RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

The next Schol Research Committee Meeting will be on 29 October 2019 from 10 to 11.30am.

UPCOMING EVENTS & NEWS

If you would like to share any news (past and/or upcoming events, achievement, student events, grants, etc.) with the School via newsletter, please email to gurmeet.kaur@monash.edu.

