

BULLETIN

Monthly News from JCSMHS

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



The year has started with the Novel-CoronaVirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak hogging the news. The University, Faculty and Campus in Malaysia have moved quickly with several preventive strategies. As a Campus with nearly 30% international students, these measures are important and necessary. The February semester has the biggest intake and for medicine it is the only intake.

As you are aware the semester start date at the Campus has been pushed back by one week to 9th March with the first week of the semester teaching to be mainly online. Students will only start classes on campus 2 weeks after arrival in the country, i.e., on 16 March. This of course is especially important for students who have travelled to China. However, to be safe especially with the Chinese New Year season where there is usually lots of travel, the Campus has made a decision that applies to all students. Australia which has a much larger number of students who are from China has also put in place similar strategies.

Students in the clinical years of the medical program have started their classes. They have been carefully screened for travel and contacts. As they spend most of their time in Sultanah Aminah Hospital, which is also the referral centre for suspected cases, and Permai Hospital in JB, which is where patients are treated and suspected cases are quarantined, we have to work very closely with the hospitals and MOH to ensure all preventive measures are in place and our students and staff are safe, while ensuring our students get adequate clinical exposure.

We have cancelled all external events in the campus at least until mid March. Internal meetings and events within the school will go on as usual.

ACHIEVEMENTS & EVENTS

RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM



Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences (JCSMHS) organized a 2-day research symposium on 15 and 16 January with the aim of showcasing research activities by academic staff and graduate research students. We hope to make this an annual event and are grateful to have distinguished speakers such as Prof. Cheah Yoke Kqueen (Universiti Putra Malaysia), Prof. Abhi Veerakumarasivam (Sunway University), Prof. Nazalan Najimudin (Universiti Sains Malaysia), Prof. Mark Seielstad (University of California San Francisco, US) and Dr. James Woodall (Leeds Beckett University, UK) to deliver keynotes, career talks as well as scientific sessions.

This first school research symposium was well received with 125 participants, 26 poster presentations, 11 graduate students' oral presentations and various research presentations from our staff. We also received sponsorships from various industry partners namely Agilent Technologies Sales (M) Sdn. Bhd., Yakult (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd., Biomarketing services (M) Sdn. Bhd., TRP Technologies (M) Sdn. Bhd. and Interscience Sdn. Bhd.

RESEARCH DAY

In conjunction with the JCSMHS Research Symposium 2020, the School organised the first Research Day event for the year on 17 January in the Creative classroom where researchers who successfully secured large grants in 2019 were invited to share their projects and experience, as well as tips on how to secure the grants.



For the grant sharing sessions, we invited Prof Dr Iekhsan Othman, Prof Dr Tin Tin Su and Associate Professor Dr Alexandre Schaefer who were awarded with the Wellcome Trust Research Fund, MyPAIR (Newton-Medical Research Council – Malaysia Joint Partnership with Ministry of Education Malaysia) grant and Long Term Research Grant from Ministry of Education Malaysia, respectively. The half-day session ended with sharing from Ms Namita Santra, the Senior Manager (Research and Learning) from Library and Learning Commons on useful research metrics/tools to improve researcher's visibility. In addition, the School Research Office conducted a soft-launch of the SRO Information channels which incorporates 3 different existing platforms such as Workplace, new staff intranet and Google calendar as dissemination channels to broadcast research related activities such as research events, graduate research (GR) student milestone presentations, journal clubs, GR seminars, grant call deadlines.

TEA GET-TOGETHER: RESEARCHERS WITH ORANG ASLI

This event that was held on 9 January was the brainchild of both Prof Maude Phipps and Dr Rachel Ting, both dedicated field researchers who have long established a working relationship with the Orang Asli of Malaysia. This event, supported by GA21 platform, is the first of hopefully many future gatherings for researchers in Monash University Malaysia who are in different research areas and are already working with Orang Asli communities. The aim of the event was to have researchers

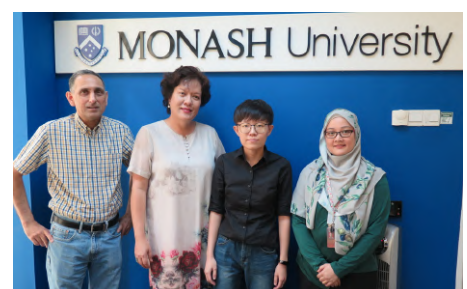
share their work and allow the mapping of all the research areas and expertise available in Monash University that will hopefully pave way for trans-disciplinary collaboration and large grant applications. It was a good kickstarter event where everyone, whether academic, professional staff or HDR student, chimed in to put together a list of Monash researchers who were working with Orang Asli communities and their research expertise/area.



PHD STUDENT WINS LEAKEY FOUNDATION GRANT

Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences' (JCSMHS) PhD student Lee Sze Mei was awarded the Leakey Foundation Grant along with her supervisors in Monash University, Professor Dr Maude Phipps (main supervisor) and Prof. Dato Dr Khalid Kadir from JCSMHS and also co-supervisors A/Prof Dr Qasim Ayub and Dr Farhang Aghakhanian from Genomics Platform.

The aim of her research is to characterise the variations in olfactory receptor genes and to understand the genotype-phenotype correlations between receptor variations and odorants. This study focuses on two geographically distinctive indigenous tribes with different modes of subsistence, including Negrito hunter-gatherers from Jehai tribe and Proto-Malay non-hunter-gatherers from Temuan tribe.



PHD STUDENT AWARDED WITH YOUNG INVESTIGATOR SCHOLARSHIP

Md Emranul Karim, a PhD student from Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences (JCSMHS) was awarded with a Young Investigator Scholarship to attend a workshop that was jointly organised by the Korean Cancer Association (KCA) and American Association for



Cancer Research (AACR) on Precision Medicine. He is currently working to develop hybrid inorganic-organic NPs for the delivery of mRNA to the breast cancer cells under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Md Ezharul Hoque Chowdhury, Prof Mark Banaszak Holl, Dr. Kyi Kyi and Dr Athirah Bakhtiar. The workshop was beneficial to him in completing his project as it gave him a platform to meet and interact with other scientists and because he attended several sessions on cancer biology, challenges and treatment options conducted by world renowned cancer researchers.



ONLINE AND BLENDED LEARNING FOR DISTANCE STUDENTS TALK

A talk was held by Dr Daniëlle Verstegen from Maastricht University, on 14 January, to present on her findings with online and blended learning for master-level and post-academic students who are working professionals and live far away. The university has a

strong history in Problem-Based Learning (PBL) which has proven to be effective with students who are on-campus and study full time but also was proven successful in one of the examples given where the online course used PBL principles. This online and blended learning worked better with mature students because they actively chose to pursue a course and therefore more motivated and used to organizing their own work. It was advantageous to mature students because they had the flexibility to work at their own pace, choose a course that was probably not offered in their country and saved on travel time. The main takeaway from all examples given was the importance of flexibility that was given for all the courses and that there is no one-size-fits-all solution for student-centred online learning. The instructional design needs to be adapted to the characteristics of the target learners, the setting and the available resources.



PROTEOMICS IN MASS SPECTROMETRY AND MULTI-OMICS WORKSHOP

On 13 & 14 January, the LCMS Platform and JCSMHS successfully held the workshop that was meant for advanced users in the field of liquid-chromatography mass-spectrometry (LCMS). The speakers for the event were Robin Philp and Dr. Erhan Simsek from Agilent, Dr. Ronald Lee from School of Pharmacy and

Dr. Syafiq Asnawi from JCSMHS. Prof. Iekhsan Othman were one of the panels for the student discussion session together with the other speakers. The workshop was divided into theoretical and hands-on session. In the hands-on session, access to Agilent software were made possible through Agilent cloud-based PC connected through the internet.

WE WOULD LIKE TO BID FAREWELL TO THE FOLLOWING STAFF:

DR LING KAH HING

DR MOHD AZLEE BIN AHMAD

A/P DR NOR'AZIM BIN MOHD YUNOS

A/P DR RAFIDAH BINTI ATAN

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE FOLLOWING COURSES WILL COMMENCE ON THESE DATES:

**MEDICINE PROGRAM
(YEAR 1 & 2)**

**9 MARCH 2020
(ONLINE TEACHING)**

**16 MARCH 2020
(FACE TO FACE)**

**MEDICINE PROGRAM
(YEAR 3)**

3 FEBRUARY 2020

**MEDICINE PROGRAM
(YEAR 4 & 5)**

28 JANUARY 2020

**PSYCHOLOGY
PROGRAMS**

**9 MARCH 2020
(ONLINE TEACHING)**

**16 MARCH 2020
(FACE TO FACE)**

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.