

Faculty of Medicine  
Khon Kaen University, Thailand

# MD@KKU Today

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"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being,  
and not merely the absence of disease" World Health Organization, 1948

## Khon Kaen University (KKU) scientists rank top in tropical diseases in Asia

► A recent presentation on Thai university competencies-reported by Yukun Harsono, Senior Vice President of Product Management, Elsevier Inc., at the 4<sup>th</sup> QS University Rankings and Evaluation Workshop held in Singapore (November, 2010)-revealed that most of the publications from Thai universities (based on Scopus, 2008) were in Biology and Infectious diseases, which can be further categorized into: Parasitology (61.4%), Tropical Medicine (35.3%) and Ethnopharmacology (3.2%). **Paiboon Sithithaworn, Banchob Sripan and Pewpan M. Intapan** are among the top five authors and they are members of KKU's Faculty of Medicine. KKU had the most number of fractional publications in Tropical Medicine and Parasitology in Thailand and Asia Pacific countries. We can proudly say that KKU is Asia's best destination for tropical disease research!



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## Strengthening Friendship between Mie University School of Medicine and Faculty of Medicine, KKU

On September 28, 2011, Professor Pisake Lumbiganon, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University and the administrative team were honored to welcome Professor Tsutomu Nobori, Dean of the Mie University School of Medicine, Japan, and his colleagues (Professor Taizo Shiraichi and Professor Katsuhiko Ando) at the Dean's Office. Associate Professor Jintana Sattayasai (Associate Dean for Academic Affairs), Associate Professor Witoon Prasertcharoensuk (Associate Dean for International Affairs), Associate Professor Surapol Virasiri (Associate Dean for Quality Assurance), Professor Weerachai Kosuwon (Head, Department of Orthopedics), Associate Professor Pensri Kosuwon and Associate Professor Surapon Wiangnon (both from the Department of Pediatrics) also attended. Also present was Assistant Professor Toshihiko Sakakibara from Mie University, who is attending a 4-week faculty exchange program (between September 5 and October 4, 2011) at the Department of Orthopedics, MD-KKU.



Dean Nobori spoke about the two main purposes for the visit to Khon Kaen. The first was to thank the Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University the only overseas partner medical school to send a donation (via Mie University) to help Japanese people who suffered from the 2011 Japanese earthquake and tsunami. And, secondly, to take the opportunity to personally invite our Dean to participate in the auspicious opening ceremony of a new building at Mie University Hospital this November.

Discussions centered on how best to develop collaborative activities in laboratory and clinical research, especially those requiring multicenter collaborations. There is already an exchange in progress between our respective Departments of Orthopedics (conducted by Professor Kasai and Professor Weerachai). Relatedly, Dean Pisake plans to give a special lecture on "Evidence-based Practices and Research Synthesis" during his visit to Mie University.

After the courtesy visit, Professor Weerachai Kosuwon, Head of the Department of Orthopedics, led the visitors from Mie University on a tour of Srinagarind (University) Hospital; during which he presented the facilities of the Department of Orthopedics, which was then conducted a fresh cadaveric workshops.





There is indeed a longstanding friendship between Mie University School of Medicine and the Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University. The first mutual Academic Collaboration Agreement was first established in 1994. The cooperation developed and expanded to include the university level with the establishment of an MOU in 2000, which continues to the present. Since 1993, the two institutions have each year exchanged academicians, clinicians and students.



The Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University, esteems Mie University School of Medicine as its elder.



### Academic collaboration with Tokyo Medical and Dental University, Japan

►► **Professor Pisake Lumbiganon, Dean, MD-KKU**, welcomed **Professor Miyuki Azuma from the Department of Molecular Immunology, Graduate School, Tokyo Medical and Dental University, Japan**, in her role as overseas visiting professor between August 24 and 27, 2011.

Our two institutions have had a 5-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place since January 2008. Professor Azuma and Pisake discussed the development of academic and research cooperation, including: Supervision **research work** in the

**postgraduate program in Medical Microbiology, Molecular Immunology** and related fields;

- Supervise the development of the Medical **Microbiology Laboratory**;
- Discuss the potential for collaborations with the **HPV-CA Research Group in the field of head and neck cancers and HPV**; and,
- Deliver lectures on the **"Control of immunity and tolerance by co-signal molecules"** at the academic seminar for **graduate students and PhD candidates**.



Associate Professor Chamsai Pientong, PhD, MD, from our Department of Microbiology, MD-KKU the coordinator of staff exchanges participated this meeting.





## Academic Achievement in Community Medicine

► On September 12, 2011, Dean Pisake Lumbiganon attended a meeting with **Professor John F. Smith**, Head, Department of Community Health Development, Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences, **Auckland University of Technology (FHES-AUT)**, New Zealand, and **Assistant Professor Pattapong Kessomboon**, MD, Program Coordinator, Department of

Community Medicine, KKU, in order to discuss the development of collaborations between AUT and our Faculty.

The four-month academic visit of Professor Smith (between July 8 - October 31, 2011) was very fruitful as he assisted with topics related to community health development; provided consultations on theses/dissertations; participated in giving suggestions at academic meetings and conferences; supervised community health research; and provided guidelines on how to write a research paper on community health.

The Department of Community Medicine, Khon Kaen University (MD-KKU), is developing an internationalized standard for post-graduate courses, using various approaches. One is to invite professors from foreign universities to teach at the Faculty.

The Department of Community Medicine, MD-KKU, has many challenging courses for both Thais and foreign students, including international short training courses for persons receiving scholarship support from the WHO and/or other international organizations. For example, in 2011, the Department enrolled five foreign master degree students: 3 from PR China, 1 from Lao PDR, and 1 from Nepal.

## Visiting Scholars from Harvard

► On September 7, 2011, Associate Dean for International Affairs welcomed **Assistant Professor Michael G. Morley, MD**, MHCM, Retina Specialist, from Ophthalmic Consultants of Boston and Harvard Medical School, and **Dr. Katharine Morley, MD, MPH**, Emergency Medicine, Metrowest Medical Center, Boston, Harvard School of Public Health. The visit to Khon Kaen University was to encourage involvement of academic staff in exchange activities. The visit was coordinated by **Dr. Thuss Sanguansak**, from the Department of Ophthalmology, MD-KKU.



Of historical note: HRH Prince Mahidol of Songkla, the King's Father graduated from Harvard School of Medicine and His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rama IX of Thailand, was born in Massachusetts at Mount Auburn Hospital in Cambridge, Massachusetts, making HM the only foreign sovereign to be born within the continental USA. Photos of His Majesty & Her Majesty are displayed at the birth place on the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor of Mount Auburn Hospital. King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand Square, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is a popular destination place for Thais visiting Boston.

Dr. Witoon introduced our international programs in Tropical Medicine, Infectious Diseases, Parasitology and Clinical Epidemiology. Professors Morley and Associate Dean Witoon then discussed the possibility of establishing an academic exchange agreement between our two medical schools, beginning with elective exchanges. Dr. Morley agreed that exchanging clinical residents helps to provide medical experience to residents and doctors as they learn from patients from different cultures and having a different suite of illnesses. Additionally, residents from both schools become friends with shared experience.



## Cooperation between MD-KKU and JSS University, India



► September 5, 2011, Associate Professor Sopit Wongkham, PhD, Associate Dean for Research Affairs and Associate Professor Witoon Prasertcharoensuk, MD, Associate Dean for International Affairs welcomed **Dr. S. Suriyanarayanan**, PhD, from the Faculty Medicine, Jagadguru Sri Shivarathreeswara University, Sri Shivarathreeswara Nagara, Mysore, Karnataka, India. Dr. S. Suriyanarayanan, visiting on behalf of JSS University invited our Dean to visit.

The official collaboration between our two institutions started with the MOU Signing Ceremony between our two institutions August 5, 2010. On that occasion, the participating representatives from JSS U were: K. Puttappa, Registrar; Dr. H. B. Gowdappa, Principal, JSS Medical College; and, Dr. B. Nandlal, Principal, JSS Dental College. Their visit to Khon Kaen was on behalf of their Chancellor - His Excellency Jagadguru Sri Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahasawarniji.

Dr. S. Suriyanarayanan visited us from July 12 to September 8 to further cooperation under the MOU. Of particular interest is the co-research program on "Environmental Impact Assessment Global Warming" between Dr. Suriyanarayanan and Dr. Pisit Charoensudjai, Head, Dept. of Environmental Science, Faculty of Sciences, KKU. Two PhD candidates are working on the Microbiological Impact Assessment of the Drinking Water System. There is also interest in establishing cooperative activities with the Water Analysis Unit, Department of Biochemistry, MD-KKU.



Drs. Sopit and Witoon were pleased to inform JSS staff about: the availability of scholarships from our Faculty for foreign students who attend the postgraduate program here; the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MD-KKU next year; and, the International Conference to be held in October in celebration of this.





## Helping to celebrate Vietnam's Independence Day



►► Independence Day in Vietnam is celebrated

on September 2nd to commemorate Ho Chi Minh's proclamation of a provisional government on the same day in 1945. On September 2, 2011, **Associate Professor Charnchai Panthongviriyakul** (MD), Associate Dean for Hospital Affairs, the Director of Srinagarind (University) Hospital, and **Associate Professor Witoon Prasertcharoensuk** (MD), Associate Dean for International Affairs, paid a courtesy visit to **His Excellency Nguyen Huu Din, Consul General**, and **Consul Vu Quang Tao**, at the Consulate General of Vietnam at Khon Kaen, Thailand. Professor Panthongviriyakul wished the people of Vietnam

happiness, health and prosperity, and that Thailand and Vietnam would lead ASEAN to greater cooperation and progress. In this regard, Dean Professor Pisake Lumbiganon has made academic and research cooperation and exchange activities among ASEAN and ASEAN+6 a priority.

Ideas were also exchanged on how to expand collaborations. Since 2010, Associate Dean Witoon visited Hanoi Medical University and Hue College of Medicine and Pharmacy, Hue University, academic exchange agreement with Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University, in order to: exchange academic staff, researchers and students; do collaborative research; and, conduct joint academic meetings. An MOU between the Faculty and Hue College of Medicine and Pharmacy, Hue University, commenced November, 2010. Currently, there is one Vietnamese postgraduate student studying at the Faculty.

The new Consul General had been at his duties for just a month ago but had already heard about the close relationship between the Faculty and the Consulate. He was therefore delighted to receive a visit from the Faculty. He sincerely hopes that there will be further cooperation to foster growing ties, especially student exchanges.





### TDR recruited several foreign staff and students this year

» TDR Lab recruited several staff and students to join our laboratory and field works on neglected tropical diseases in this fiscal year 2011. These include Dr. Yuji Arimatsu (a Post-doc, Japan), Salma Teimoori Zendehehdel (Iran), Phung Thi Luyen (Vietnam), Sakhone Lamanivong (Lao PDR) and Christina Kim, an exchange research student from Ohio State University. We will also have two more exchange research students from the University of Queensland, Australia and the University of California at Berkeley by early next year 2012. They all will have more experience in tropical disease research from bench to community.



Sakhone Lamanivong  
(Lao PDR)



Phung Thi Luyen  
(Vietnam)



Salma Teimoori Zendehehdel  
(Iran)



Christina S. Kim  
(Ohio State University, USA)

### Newcastle University Medical Students, UK

» Associate Professor Dr. Witoon PRASERTCHAROENSUK, Associate Dean for International and Special Affairs, welcomed Ms. Joanna Godbehere, Ms. Charlotte Victoria Hargreaves, and Ms. Lianne Harrison, 4<sup>th</sup>-year medical students from Newcastle University, UK. These students trained at the Department of Surgery and Department of Psychiatry between July 19 and August 8, 2011.



### Elective Students from Medical University of Vienna, Austria



» Associate Professor Dr. Witoon PRASERTCHAROENSUK, Associate Dean for International and Special Affairs, welcomed Ms. Teresa BINDER, a 4<sup>th</sup>-year medical student from the Medical University of Vienna, Austria. Ms. Binder was an elective student at the Department of Surgery between August 1 and 26, 2011.



### Warmest Welcome to Laotian Residents

» Associate Professor Dr. Witoon PRASERTCHAROENSUK, Associate Dean for International and Special Affairs, welcomed residents from the University of Health Sciences, Lao PDR. Their training was supported by Health Frontiers. The residents trained at the Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine,

Khon Kaen University between July 4 and 31, 2011. Those from the University of Health Sciences included: Dr. Ammala Chingsamod, Dr. Vilayvanh Vilay, Dr. Thippasone Saysompheng, Dr. Thippalax Phengpaseuth, Dr. Sonedaohuang Daovanhoung and, Dr. Manachit Luangluxay.





## Warmest Welcome to Residents from the University of Health Sciences

» **Associate Professor Dr. Witoon PRASERTCHAROENSUK,**

Associate Dean for International and Special Affairs, welcomed **Dr. Phouthamath SORCHANVILAY**, and **Dr. Saysavath KEOSODSAY** from the **University of Health Sciences, Lao PDR**. The training is supported by Health Frontiers. The residents trained at the **Department of Medicine**, Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University, between August 1 and September 30, 2011.

## Warmest Welcome Lao Residents

» **Associate Professor Dr. Witoon**

**PRASERTCHAROENSUK**, Associate Dean for International and Public Affairs welcomed a group of clinical staff members and 10 anesthesiology residents from Lao PDR. The residents trained at the Department of Anesthesiology, Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University between August 15 and September 9, 2011.

The names of the participants include:

Dr. Khamsay DETLEUXAY, Dr. Phonxay KEUAPHAPHONE, Mrs. Sengdavone KHOUMMAPHONG, Mr. Phankham CHANTHILATH, Mr. Somphone PHOTHILACK, Mr. Khamsouk PHETSANOUBANH, Mr. Poyang YIAYENG, Mr. Nelamith KHAMVONGSA, Mr. Bountham LUANGLATH, Mr. Khampha THOUMMABOUTH, Mr. Sengkheo PHILAVONG, Mr. Amphayvanh VILAYVONG.



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International Affairs, Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University  
123 Mittraphap Highway, Muang, Khon Kaen 40002 THAILAND

Tel: +66-43-36-3377 Fax: +66-43-34-8375

Website: [www.md.kku.ac.th](http://www.md.kku.ac.th) E-mail: [intermed@kku.ac.th](mailto:intermed@kku.ac.th)

Facebook Fanpage: [www.facebook.com/medelective](http://www.facebook.com/medelective)