

Dean's Report 2012

There can be no better starting point for the review of the past year than the success of our faculties and students in research and academic arena.

Awards

As mentioned in my 2011 report, Prof. Dr. Shukit Limpijumnong (Physics) was awarded the *National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) Distinguished Researcher Award* in January. In March, Dr. Khanchai Khosonthongkee (Physics) received the *Distinguished Teacher Award* in science and technology under the young teacher category from the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning-Thailand (ASAIHL-Thailand), a non-governmental organization founded in 1956. In July, Asst. Prof. Dr. Nathawut Thanee (Biology) and his team received *Distinguished Research Award* for their researches carried out at Sakaerat Environmental Research Station, Nakhon Ratchasima at the 8th international conference on "ASEAN Knowledge Networks for the Economy, Society, Culture and Environmental Stability" held in Republic of Korea. Prof. Dr. Yupen Yan (Physics) and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Puangratana Pairor (Physics) received *Distinguished Award* for research and for teaching, respectively from SUT. In August, Dr. Worawat Meevasana (Physics) was granted a *Young Scientist Award* from the Foundation for the Promotion of Science and Technology under the Patronage of H. M. the King. In December, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sajeera Kupittayanant (Physiology) as a head of the subproject under "*Local Learning Enrichment Network (LLEN) Project*," together with other fourteen subprojects conducted by other fourteen universities outside Bangkok, received an excellent research award from the Thailand Research Fund (TRF). Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vinich Promarak (Chemistry) received an *Asian Core Program Lectureship Award* at the 3rd New Phase International Conference on Cutting-Edge Organic Chemistry in Asia held in Singapore and he will be invited to give a series of lectures in Malaysia in 2013.

Honors

We congratulate Dr. James R. Ketudat Cairns (Biochemistry) and Dr. Santi Maensiri (Physics) for being appointed by H. M. the King to be full professors. This increases the proportion of full professors in our institute to 10%, the highest percentage among the faculties of science in the country. We are looking forward to seeing this number increase to 20% within the next five years as in our institute strategy plan. This is not far beyond the ability of our faculty members. We also congratulate Asst. Prof. Dr. Sunya Sarapirom (Remote Sensing) for being elected as the president of the Remote Sensing and GIS Association of Thailand.

Promotions

We congratulate Dr. Sirichok Jungthawanand and Dr. Worawat Meevasana (Physics), Dr. Pongthep Suwanwaree and Dr. Apichart Ngernsoungnern (Biology) and Dr. Benjawan Rodjanadid (Mathematics) for being promoted to be assistant professors, Dr. Saroj Rujirawat (Physics) for being appointed to be the director of the Center of Scientific and Technological Equipment, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jatuporn Wittayakun for being appointed to be the Head of the School of Chemistry and Acting Head of the School of Biochemistry, Asst. Prof. Dr. Rungrudee Srisawat

for being appointed to be the Acting Head of the Schools of Anatomy, Parasitology, Physiology and Pharmacology.

Education

Among our graduates, thirty seven successfully secured their Ph. D. and thirteen achieved M. Sc. At present, we have 176 Ph. D. and 82 M. Sc. students studying with us. The number of our Ph. D. students has reduced 17% from last year. Hopefully in a few years, we will have high potential undergraduates from our honors program to supply the graduate programs. The academic performance of our undergraduates in honors program after their first term was highly impressive. Thirty out of our thirty three students in HP got GPA over three, of these nine got four straight. The overall GPA of the class was 3.61. Next academic year, sixty six high potential students (twice as much as the last year number) have enrolled to study with us. The results augur well for the future.

The performance of our undergraduates in Sport Science was also highly creditable; twenty four were graduated and joined the commencement ceremony in October with one achieving 1st class honor. Twenty eight students joined co-operative education program; four were selected to go to Malaysia. Two years in a row that our student's project did go through the final round in the *Sport Science Innovation Contest 2012* organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports. This year a student's project on "9 Square Grid Test for the Respond of a Body Movement" won the second place with the price of thirty thousand Baht. We will have to wait for another year in the hope to win the first place.

Research and Publications

From SCOPUS database, the number of our faculties' publications in 2012 was 107 including the accepted and in press articles. A couple of instances of special distinction merit congratulatory here. A research conducted by Prof. Dr. James R. Ketudat Cairns (Biochemistry) and his co-workers was selected to appear on the journal front cover of Protein Science ($IF = 2.741$). Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yupaporn Chaiseha (Biology) was invited to write a new chapter entitled "Brooding" on the latest edition (Sixth Edition) of the Sturkie's Avian Physiology.

From the record of our Research Department, the number of the ongoing research projects receiving budgets from the government is one hundred and sixty and from other research grants is twenty two. By the rule of thumb, this means that each faculty is carrying out more than two research projects.

In addition, we have been parts of national excellent research centers namely 1) Thai Center of Excellence in Physics 2) Center of Excellence in Mathematics and 3) Center of Excellence in Nanotechnology.

MOU

Four MOUs initiated by members of our institute were signed in 2012, firstly, the MOU with Graduate School of Science, Osaka University, Japan, secondly, with the Faculty of Science, University of Tübingen, Germany to extend the collaboration from the previous MOU, thirdly, with the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST) for selecting, training and taking high school students to participate in the International Young Physicists' Tournament (IYPT), and finally, maybe the highlight, with A Large Ion Collider Experiment (ALICE), CERN, signed on 13th December, in which Her Royal

Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn hosted the signing ceremony at Wang Sra Pathum Palace. Many activities have been started in addition to the ongoing collaborations prior to the signing of these MOUs.

New Old Schools

As a number of pre-clinic faculties under the School of Biology grows larger, we thus officially separated the pre-clinic group out into the Schools of Anatomy, Parasitology, Physiology and Pharmacology. The pre-clinic faculty with academic promotion in Biology was also re-evaluated to the academic position of her own professional expertise. In addition, the graduate curriculum in Biomedical Science originally run under the School of Biology has been transferred with the pre-clinic group.

Retirement and Departures

During 2012 we said farewell to several colleagues. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikolay Moshkin (Mathematics) retired after sixteen years of working at SUT. He would like to spend more time with his family and has returned to his native Russia. He has put his scholarly stamp on the School of Mathematics and it will be hard to replace. Asst. Prof. Dr. Supagorn Rugmai (Physics) has taken up a position at the Synchrotron Light Research Institute and Asst. Prof. Dr. Pichaya Trakanrunroj (Chemistry) has moved to the United State to join with her family. We are saddened to lose faculties of their scholarly distinction.

New Members

We welcomed seven new faculties who joined us in 2012, including Dr. Theeranun Siritanon and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vinich Promarak (Chemistry), Dr. Seksit Chumnansilpa (Biochemistry), Dr. Ayut Limphirat and Dr. Nuanwan Sanguansak (Physics), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sineenat Siri and Dr. Pongpun Prasankok (Biology).

Events

The members of the School of Physics were quite busy and held various programs of events throughout the year, starting from the *Second CERN School Thailand 2012* in April, followed by the *Thirteen PANDA Grid Workshop* and the *Third AliEn Developments Week* in May, then the *Second Sino-Thai Symposium on High Energy Physics, Astrophysics and Beyond* in July in which Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn came to preside over the opening ceremony, and finally the *Eight Asian Meeting on Ferroelectrics (AMF-8)* in December. In addition, we were chosen by the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ) to organize “*You are Galileo! Workshops in Thailand*” with the financial support from UNESCO. The aim of the workshop was to train school teachers in basic astronomy and to use telescope to observe objects in sky at night. There were eighty eight teachers from fifty schools around Nakhon Ratchasima and neighbor provinces joining the workshop. Each participating school received a Galileoscope similar to the one used by Galileo in 1610, except with higher quality. Prof. Dr. Kazuhiro Sekiguchi from NAOJ said “*our target group is school teachers so they can use their experiences to teach more and more students.*”

New building

After the completion of the new academic building (I would say completion by contract), we started to move in. The dean’s office and a couple small schools

like Sport Science and Remote Sensing moved first before Songkran holidays and the rest were followed. Many facilities still do not function properly. As I started to write this report after returning from the New Year break, the lift was broken for five days. However, on the fourth and the fifth floors, we have got a superb view of SUT itself and beyond. Few were regret due to the loss in space of the new office compared to the old one.

We held several events for our institute members. We used the lawn in front of Surawana house twice, at the beginning and the end of last year, to celebrate our faculties receiving awards and honors. We held the annual meeting on campus and in Wang Nam Keow in September. Many members joined the meeting more than ever.

Finally, the present institute website has initiated a lot of discussion during the annual meeting. We all need a user-friendly website for our institute/schools that can offer us an easy way to update our information on the website. At the moment, Asst. Prof. Dr. Worawat Meevasana has contacted a person who can create a quality website for us. Thanks to Dr. Worawat and for the financial support from the School of Physics. We will see the first look of the website soon, hopefully within February 2013. All comments will be welcomed then.

As we enter 2013, the institute is engaged in finalizing the five-year plan that will lead us toward silver jubilee of the institute. We do so within the framework of SUT and do what the institute likely needs and challenges us over the longer term.

Happy somewhat belatedly New Year!

Prapun Manyum

The background picture was taken at Koh Samaesan, Sattahib, Chon Buri during the New Year break.