



Thoughts on TMDU's overseas satellite offices as a LACRC graduate



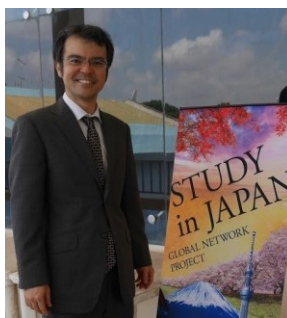
Greetings to everyone, my name is Takuya Okada. I was assigned to LACRC from 2013 through 2015, and I returned to Japan almost five years ago. It's been a long time since I've written for this newsletter. Since August of 2019, I have been involved in promoting the globalization of TMDU as a member of the Institute of Global Affairs faculty, and as director of the International Health Care Department of the Medical Hospital from a multifaced perspective that encompasses education, research and medical care.

TMDU has three overseas satellite offices: our South American center in Chile, our Asian center in Thailand and our African center in Ghana. Each of these centers has become a base for deepening ties between TMDU and the nations of their respective locations, on the basis of a mutual understanding founded in a long history of cooperation and exchange. At each of these centers, we conduct research in collaboration with local medical and dental facilities and accept TMDU students for overseas study programs.

My first overseas mission after joining the Institute of Global Affairs was a trip to TMDU'S Ghana office in November 2019. There, I had the opportunity to exchange ideas on promoting future activities with the members of the Ghana office, and was able to participate in the Study in Japan Fair held in Ghana, with the aim of boosting TMDU's presence and recruiting students to study here. The flight from Tokyo to Ghana's capital, Accra, took close to 20 hours, and while I had grown accustomed to traveling long distances during my time in Chile, it was quite the journey.

Currently, Takaya Hayashi, a Specially Appointed Junior Associate Professor, is on dispatch to the Ghana center, where he is engaged in research and personnel training at the Noguchi Memorial Institute of Medical Research regarding viruses that cause tropical diseases. Thanks to Professor Hayashi, my trip went off without a hitch. We had lively conversations about our shared experiences working at a TMDU overseas satellite office, and the opportunity to talk about issues we both experienced, as well as the research and training of our project semester students, was truly invaluable. I hope that Professor Hayashi remains safe and sound for the remainder of his sojourn in Ghana.

As was the case in Chile, in Ghana also, you will rarely be exposed to danger if you stick to the right places, the right times and the right methods of transport, and the Japanese people living there seem to do so without issue. During my trip, I met individuals from the Japanese embassy who told me that as a relatively stable country in a continent not known for stability, Ghana offers great prospects for mutual development through academic exchange. For both Chile and Ghana, the lack of information available in Japan means that an established image of these nations may take precedence in people's minds. However, I believe we can invigorate these centers' activities through mutual understanding and student exchanges, and by raising awareness of the virtues of each country to those who may be unfamiliar with these nations.



Takuya Okada, Specially Appointed Junior Associate Professor, Institute of Global Affairs



LACRC TMDU
IN CHILE
Latin American Collaborative Research Center
Santiago de Chile



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PRENEC Progress Report

Here are the latest developments in the Prevention Project for Neoplasia of the Colon and Rectum (PRENEC).

The PRENEC screening program was initiated in Concepción, in addition to the six cities of Punta Arenas, Santiago, Valparaíso, Valdivia, Osorno and Coquimbo. Due to management issues in Valparaíso and Concepción, where the project had only just been set in motion, the program has currently been suspended in these two cities. Hopefully these issues can be swiftly resolved and PRENEC work can be resumed. A pilot study of PRENEC undertaken in Paraguay is now complete and preparations are underway for the full-scale launch of this initiative.

PRENEC lectures



Lecture participants pose for a commemorative photograph.

While an agreement was signed with “Leonardo Guzmán” Regional Hospital in Antofagasta in 2016 regarding serving as a hub for the PRENEC program, the hospital was unable to obtain funding for this venture from the state government, and progress stalled. Since then, ongoing appeals to the state government and awareness-raising efforts targeting local citizens have led to the hospital being expected to obtain the necessary funding in 2020, and a two-day lecture course on the PRENEC program was held at Clínica Las Condes (CLC) for doctors and nurses from Guzmán Hospital on November 11 and 12, 2019. The course centered on equipment briefings, management procedures and data handling protocols required for participation in the PRENEC program.

Assistant Professor Tomoyuki Odagaki of LACRC gave a presentation on endoscopic therapy and training in endoscopic procedures that is involved in PRENEC, which attracted strong interest from the participants.

Assuming preparations in Antofagasta go smoothly, screening is expected to commence in January 2020.

Research Conference in Osorno

As a follow-up to the event held last year, PRENEC leader Dr. Francisco López, CLC Nurse Alejandra Ponce and Dr. Odagaki were invited to attend a research conference on PRENEC in Osorno, one of the PRENEC hubs.

At the conference, reports were given on PRENEC program progress in Osorno, while Dr. López and Nurse Ponce gave briefings on the overall progress of the initiative, including problems that have been encountered and its prospects for the future.

Dr. Odagaki gave a presentation on training in colonoscopy procedures and endoscopic therapy provided through PRENEC.

The conference served as a meaningful forum for future developments.



Participants pose in front of a giant colon model.

Project Semester

Two fourth-year medical students dispatched to the University of Chile in June for their 5-month internship abroad program (Project Semester) gave their final presentations at the Dr. Luis Calvo Mackenna Hospital on October 30. This year, in addition to the Department of Infectious Diseases, which accepts students from TMDU every year, one of our students was accepted by the Cognitive Neurosciences Research Laboratory. The students from both fields received high praise from their professors for their achievements.

Student Greetings

Mr. Yoshihiro Sawaguchi *Department of Infectious Diseases, University of Chile*

This will sound clichéd, but now that they're over, the last six months seem to have flown by. Finding the words to summarize my internship abroad has been hard, but I've decided to discuss my studies of the Spanish language, which have been truly meaningful to me throughout my time here. The good news is that having arrived without being able to speak a word of Spanish, I can now have simple debates in the language! I'd like to tell you about the two things I kept in mind during this process.

The first was my decision to "learn both the culture and the language." I actively participated in gatherings of Chilean people, refusing to quit simply because we didn't understand each other. Thanks to that, my understanding of the culture behind the language has deepened and I have been continuously able to enjoy conversation with others, which is after all, the real purpose of language.

The second was my decision to "stop worrying about failing." Having acknowledged that since I'm Japanese, my inability to speak Spanish is only natural and so I simply strung together the words I knew and threw them out there. The wording may be a little off, but you can get the meaning across, and there are people who'll be kind enough to teach you the correct expression. They might just give you Spanish lessons for free!

My internship abroad helped me to grow, not only in terms of my language abilities, but also as a person. I would like to express my gratitude to my laboratory professors, to everyone at LACRC who helped me figure out day-to-day life, and to the many friends I made who've welcomed me with open arms.

Mr. Taiki Harada *Department of Cognitive Neuroscience, University of Chile*

It's early November, and here the weather is finally starting to warm up. Yet somehow, it feels as if I arrived in Chile just yesterday. In my final month here, I had the honor of participating in the XV Annual Meeting of the Chilean Society for Neuroscience. While my sojourn in Chile has been less than six months, I have achieved some results. Through my participation, I was able to show these results on a poster that I presented many times to people I'd never met before. This experience was very good practice for me. The conference was held in La Serena, which is six hours north of Santiago by bus. The opportunity to attend lectures and discussions in such a beautiful coastal location at what was my first formal academic conference left me deeply moved. The situation in Chile is currently highly unstable, and there was some danger involved in my traveling, but it also gave me a chance to consider the country more deeply. The conference included several discussions on the current political situation, I thought that everyone had a firm grasp of the issues and a much deeper interest in politics than people do in Japan. By exposing me to a variety of societal elements, including research, politics, culture and human relations, this internship abroad program has broadened my horizons and deepened my insights into our world.

I would like to finish by extending my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported me during my time here. Chao!



My lab members.



My nametag for the neuroscience conference (@La Serena).

LACRC Activity Report

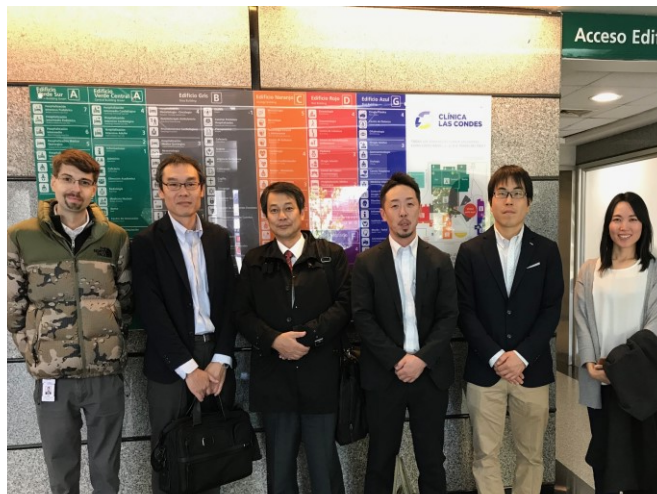
A visit to CLC by Panasonic Corporation

A delegation from the Panasonic Health Insurance Organization came to Chile to select a medical institution capable of treating resident Panasonic employees.

Since a visit to CLC was also on the agenda and it was a delegation from Japan, we gave the group a tour of CLC facilities while accompanied by the CLC's public relations officer. Although this was a short visit, we had the opportunity to introduce the delegation to LACRC activities.

LACRC does not provide assistance or interpretation services to Japanese residents in Chile who require medical treatment, but we can refer people to translation companies and provide assistance during official visits, like this one.

In this way, we hope to continue contributing to the healthcare of Japanese residents in Chile.



(From left to right) Mr. Urrejola (administrative assistant), Mr. Ishihata, Mr. Hatanaka, Dr. Murano, Dr. Odagaki, Ms. Hayakawa (administrative assistant).

A hospital visit by Santiago Japanese School students



Students pose for a commemorative photograph at the heliport.

We received a request from the Santiago Japanese School for a tour of the hospital as part of students' social studies program. On November 22, students from the school were given a tour of CLC facilities. Eleven students joined the tour with their teachers: six sixth-year elementary school students and seven from junior high school.

With the cooperation of Dr. Zarate, a CLC physician who we work closely with, the students visited the CLC Emergency Department, the Colonoscopy Department and the laboratories.

After the tour of CLC facilities, Dr. Odagaki visited the Santiago Japanese School where he gave a talk on the differences between the medical systems in Chile and Japan and the activities of TMDU in Chile.

Through these activities, we hope to give the next generation a better understanding of healthcare and the many factors that affect its provision.

Dr. Odagaki joins a conference in Viña del Mar

Dr. Odagaki was invited to lecture at the 2nd International Conference of Endoscopic Surgery, held on October 5-6, 2019 in Viña del Mar and attended by physicians from Spain, Brazil and Colombia.

The conference included presentations and case studies on the latest topics in therapeutic endoscopy and endoscopic ultrasound.

Dr. Odagaki gave a presentation on endoscopic submucosal dissection (ESD) in the treatment of gastric cancer based on his experience in Chile.



A commemorative photograph with staff from Clínica San Borja who participated in the conference.

Supporting endoscopy treatment in Valparaíso



Dr. Ferrada and Dr. Odagaki.

At the request of hospitals in Chile, Dr. Odagaki of LACRC lends his support in cases where it is difficult for local doctors to perform endoscopy treatment alone.

On October 5, Dr. Odagaki assisted in a gastrointestinal endoscopic mucosal resection (EMR) of a colorectal polyp at the request of Dr. Ferrada of Clínica Valparaíso, who had previously received training in endoscopic procedures from Dr. Odagaki.

Through these activities, LACRC continues to contribute to improving the skills of endoscopy physicians in the Chile region.

Editor's Note

On October 18, a demonstration protesting a rise in the price of a ride on the capital's metro system ignited mass protests and rioting in the streets, which spread throughout the country.

Fortunately, there was no damage to CLC or the TMDU offices, but the protests led to the postponement of scheduled seminars and the cancellation of examinations and treatment procedures at Clínica San Borja, and had some impact on PRENEC activities as well.

We continue to pray that the protests will subside with the coming of a new year. (Miki Hayakawa, LACRC)

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