

MESSAGE
FROM
THE PRESIDENT

Educating Medical Professionals and Researchers with an International Perspective

Takashi Ohyama
President



Vol. 5, March 2013

C O N T E N T S

Message from the President	2
Medical Education Alliance Agreement with Harvard University	6
TMDU International Collaboration Centers Ghana/Chile/Thailand	8
TMDU International Exchange Center	14
Letters from Overseas Alumni	18
Reports on Study Abroad Programs	26
Press Releases	35
Campus Information	38

Our school embraces three educational principles under our mission of “Cultivating Professionals with Knowledge and Humanity”: 1) To provide students with a broad education and a rich sensibility; 2) To educate creative people capable of diagnosing and solving problems independently; and 3) To train health care professionals with a rich international quality. Our world today is globalizing in every area. All over the globe, people are sharing knowledge, techniques and their way of life with others. Indeed, globalization is strongly seen in every health care field. It is also a universal truth that the 7.1 billion people who live in the world’s 195 countries need medical care in one way or another. We, as health care providers, are now expected to provide the best health care that is available to all of these individuals, regardless of their nationality or economic condition.

Therefore, teachers and researchers at a medical institution need to not only help provide the best health care they can, but also control the cost of this

care to the greatest extent possible. At TMDU we pursue these goals by fulfilling our mission to advance research and development and train health care professionals with the knowledge, techniques and cost consciousness necessary to be members of the international community. In recent years, we have thus redoubled our efforts to educate medical professionals and researchers with an international perspective.

In 2009 we reorganized our “International Student Center,” which had focused on serving our international students by giving them the support they needed to succeed in studying at TMDU and living in Japan, into the “International Exchange Center,” which has a much broader scope of responsibility. Until we made this change, we were not able to efficiently gather and manage information about the experience that our students had abroad or the experience that international students and researchers had in Japan, nor could we measure the quality or outcomes of such international efforts.

TMDU currently has agreements for academic or student exchange with 72 universities and research institutions in 26 countries/regions. However, until 2009 these agreements were managed at the faculty level. As a result, we often lost contact with international graduates who understood our school and Japan well, and who played active roles in their health care communities abroad. To be sure, maintaining a long and continuous relationship with a partner institution as well as the individuals involved is a very important aspect of international exchange. Therefore, we are relying on the International Exchange Center to help us construct a network between TMDU and our international students and graduates, who are precious resources for us, as well as to centralize the keeping of records of personnel exchanges with our partner institutions.

TMDU aims to train health care professionals who can advance the state of education, research and clinical practice on the basis of Japanese culture in our globalizing world. The sayings, “If you wish to



be an internationalized person, you need to be a good citizen in your country” and “You can be a true citizen of the world only if you know your own country” should be kept in mind. Taken together, these maxims mean that one must be an intellectual person who behaves according to one’s own philosophy while keeping Japanese-style moderation. Accordingly, we provide various overseas research and training support programs for our students so they can experience research and training in another culture after studying Japanese culture as much as possible in our College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Concretely, we send 13 students to various countries every year, with respect to their wishes and their teachers’ advice, under our new Short-term (a few weeks to 6 months) Overseas Training Program. Furthermore, we send many students to our three international collaboration centers: 6 medical students are dispatched yearly to the Ghana-TMDU Research Collaboration Program on Emerging and Reemerging Infections at the Noguchi Memorial Institute of Medical Research, which was founded in 2009 in Ghana; another 6 medical students are dispatched yearly to the Latin American Collaborative Research Center (LACRC), which was founded in 2009 in Chile; and 2 medical students are sent for five months, and 10 dental students for two weeks, to the Chulalongkorn University-Tokyo Medical and Dental University Research and Education Collaboration Center, which was founded in 2010 in Thailand. The students may stay overseas only a short time, but they gain invaluable life and research experiences with the TMDU researchers who work at these centers, as well as with the other international colleagues they meet while abroad. The programs are designed to give our young students motivation to develop their future selves as global citizens by observing how our resident researchers work overseas and make international contributions, find pleasure in doing collaborative research, and derive satisfaction from training local professionals.

In addition, 8 sixth-year medical students had clinical internships at Harvard University and 4 fourth-year medical students went to Imperial College London on research-based internships. On our side, we accepted 4 students from Imperial College for research-based internships at TMDU. In all, approximately 60 of our 275 undergraduate medical students, some at private expense, experience some type of study abroad experience during their undergraduate days.

We began to send students to Harvard University based on a cooperation education agreement in 2004, and the total number of students dispatched on this program reached 64 by 2012. We are proud that the participating students, who once thought and acted passively, transformed themselves through their experience into positive students who search out knowledge with energy and confidence. Additionally, these newly active students encourage their juniors to become more international. We believe that our dispatched students will play an important, central role in helping us realize our goal of developing global education.

Harvard University Medical School’s curriculum, known as “New Pathway,” sets a good example for us to practice global education. To begin with, we sent some of our professors to Harvard so they could understand the curriculum in depth. Two years later we gave our students the opportunity to go to Harvard for clinical training. During this entire process we had several discussions with participants, and the teachers and students involved shared many ideas with us. It was a good opportunity for us to discover our core goals for the program. Overall, the best result was that we realized the possibility and necessity of continuously improving our medical education.

Upon their return, the students wrote a report entitled, “Proposal for medical education at TMDU and an action guidance for each actor in medical education,” which was based on their experience at Harvard University, and in which they gave their ideas on how TMDU should change its medical education. The novel ideas in this report are reflected in our new curriculum, which is managed by the Center for Interprofessional Education.

By now there have been approximately 130 participants; professors from the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Dentistry, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, who have participated in the Leadership Course and Faculty Development tutorial at Harvard. While there, these professors actively discussed how we could realize our mission. Importantly, they were able to exclusively focus on this activity during their particular visit. In Japan, it might be difficult for these professors to get together or devote an extended amount of time to a discussion as they have so many other demands upon their time. Fortunately, participating in the tutorial gave them the opportunity to discuss educational goals and strategies intensively and holistically, and they

were also able to share their knowledge and gather many ideas from each other. After they returned to Japan, we conducted extensive discussions based on their reports. Needless to say, feedback from the participating students was included in these discussions. As a result of this process we developed our interprofessional education curriculum. Further, we established the aforementioned Center for Interprofessional Education to evaluate and improve our medical education on a continuous basis.

As for our graduate students, we initiated the Overseas Research Supporting Program to enable up to 8 students a year to study overseas. Three students studied abroad under this program in 2011.

As shown above, we vigorously support overseas training and study for young researchers and students through the programs we have recently initiated.

TMDU has student exchange agreements with many universities. The school also has many international students. As of May 2012 there were 210 international students in total at TMDU. 188 are in a graduate program; 7 are undergraduates; 12 are research students who are preparing to enter a graduate program; and 3 are studying Japanese language in preparation for graduate-level study. 89 of these students are Monbukagakusho Scholars (i.e., they are studying thanks to a scholarship offered by the Japanese government), and 121 are supported privately. As for nationality, more than 90% of our international students are from Asia. A large number of the international students in Japan who study in interdisciplinary medical/dental and engineering fields are at TMDU.

Our graduate international students who have returned to their own countries play an active part in education, research, health care and administration of health policy. They also contribute to health care professional training and collaborative research in Japan as well as in their respective countries through close interaction and exchange of information with us.

In addition, we have held the “International Summer Program (ISP)” every year since 2009 to promote excellent young researchers and students, primarily from Asia. Every year we set a research theme and invite students from overseas to apply. We typically receive 80 to 90 applications and select approximately 25 invitees. The invited participants attend lectures and a symposium, visit laboratories, talk with potential advisors, and learn about the possibilities of studying at TMDU. After conducting in-



terviews with interested participants, we accept up to 4 students who are very keen to pursue graduate study at TMDU. We offer these students a special scholarship. At this time, more than 10 ISP alumni, including those who received a Monbukagakusho Japanese government scholarship, are enrolled in our graduate school.

We are also glad to report that the Japanese government has acknowledged our international strategy. In 2012, two large projects, the “Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development,” which focuses on sending undergraduate students to developed countries, and the “Re-inventing Japan Project: Inter-university exchange program toward medical and dental networking in Southeast Asia,” which focuses on exchanging students and researchers with partner universities in Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam, were approved by the Japanese government. These two projects will help us advance our internationalization efforts. In being awarded these two projects, it is recognized that all TMDU members will work toward our internationalization goals. In another words, by accepting these awards we are also accepting the responsibility to meet the Japanese government’s high expectations regarding these projects and their outcomes.

It is thus important for all of us at TMDU to understand that we need to develop our international strategies continuously and collaborate in our efforts to expand and improve TMDU’s international exchange and cooperation activities.

Takashi Ohyama

Takashi Ohyama, President