

Opening of “CU-TMDU Research and Education Collaboration Center” in Thailand

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CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY (CU) and TMDU agree to establish a TMDU overseas office at CU which will serve to promote academic collaboration and scholarly exchange more actively between the two institutions. On Nov. 23, 2009, a signing ceremony for the establishment of the “CU-TMDU Research and Education Collaboration Center” was conducted at the Head Office Building of CU, Bangkok, Thailand.

CU and TMDU have worked together for one year in order to prepare for the establishment of the center. The center was set up on the 11th floor of the Dental Faculty Building in CU. The center room (52m²) was divided into four areas: The reception desk, TMDU introduction area, meeting function area and office area. Dr. Atiphan Pimkhaokham was appointed as the center coordinator. He completed his PhD program at TMDU and is currently the Assistant Professor and Vice Dean for Planning, Development and IT, in the Faculty of Dentistry, CU.

On Nov. 22, 2010, prior to the opening ceremony, President Takashi Ohyama and TMDU delegates visited the Japanese Embassy to report on the establishment of CU-TMDU center. They introduced center's mission and role to Seiji Kojima, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Kingdom of Thailand. In the evening, a commemorative dinner was held at the Novotel Hotel and many guests were invited to celebrate the establishment of the new center. CU and TMDU members from both medical and dental faculties talked about their future collaboration

The mission of the CU-TMDU center is to support the following activities

- >Support collaborative research based on the needs of the respective countries and regions.
- >Supply information on research and education at TMDU and on studying in Japan.
- >Provide continuing education opportunities in medicine and dentistry to TMDU Thailand alumni.
- >Establish a medical and dental care network for Japanese nationals in Thailand.

projects in research and education.

On Nov. 23, 2010, just one year after the signing ceremony, the opening ceremony of the “CU-TMDU Research and Education Collaboration Center” took place in the hall in front of the center. About 100 delegates and honorary guests attended the ceremony.

The opening ceremony was conducted with the guide of Dr. Chalida Nakalekha. Professor Yoko Kawaguchi explained the background, purpose and expected roles of the CU-TMDU center. CU President Pirom Kamolratanakul and TMDU President Takashi Ohyama subsequently delivered commemorative opening speeches. Ambassador Seiji Kojima and Torajiro Ohashi, President of Thai Japanese Association, also made the speech to congratulate the construction of and to outline expectations for the CU-TMDU center on behalf of Japanese nationals who live in Thailand. The last speaker was Dr. Suonta Chareonvit, a representative of the TMDU alumni. Distinguished guests, such as deans of other Thai dental universities, and the representatives of governmental, academic and private institutes attended the ceremony. More than 20 TMDU alumni, who are currently academic staff at CU, also participated in the ceremony.



At the Embassy with Ambassador Seiji Kojima



Ribbon-cutting ceremony by both presidents



Dr. Atiphan Pimkhaokham, Coordinator of CU-TMDU center and Prof. Junji Tagami, Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry, TMDU

Past main academic collaboration projects between CU and TMDU

- 1992-1994 Training program for young dental professionals in CU
- 1993 Symposium on dental materials in CU
- 1993-1995 Research project on maxillofacial disorders
- 1998 Dental students' seminar between CU and TMDU
- 1996-2005 Japan/Thailand core university program in dentistry (JSPS)
- 2004 Dental public health training for Southeast Asia (JICA)
- 2009-2010 Young researchers' exchange program in medicine and dentistry (JSPS)

Both presidents performed a ribbon-cutting ceremony together in front of the entrance, after which all participants entered the room and observed the center facilities. Soon after the opening ceremony, all participants enjoyed a commemorative lunch prepared by CU and TMDU.

TMDU invites many international students who aspire to enter such an academic environment to further explore the possibility of studying in Japan. For these prospective students, CU-TMDU center will supply information on available programs and the admission process. Also, it will provide a suitable meeting place between prospective students and TMDU faculty who visit Thailand. Now, over 100 TMDU international student alumni work in Thailand, helping to advance and develop research and education in the country. This center will support these alumni by distributing information and connecting them to TMDU faculty members for further collaboration.

At present more than 44,000 Japanese nationals live in Thailand. In most cases, these Japanese nationals reside with their families. As a university that concentrates on research and education in the areas of health care and health science, TMDU would like to supply useful health-related information to Japanese nationals through the center. Useful information, such as a listing of dental clinics where patients can receive dental care from Japanese-speaking Thai dentists, will be available online from the center website.

CU and TMDU have a long history of friendship, and have formed a close mutual cooperation over the past 20 years since the academic collaboration agreement between the CU Faculty of Dentistry and TMDU Faculty of Dentistry was signed in 1991. Through a long history of close mutual cooperation in the dental field, Wacharaporn Tasachan, Associate Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry, CU, kindly offered us space for the center office on the 11th floor of Dental Faculty Building, in order to further strengthen ties through friendship and academic collaboration.

The CU Faculty of Medicine and the TMDU Faculty of Medicine signed their own academic collaboration agreement in 2002. At present the collaborative research project on colorectal cancer is in progress, and academic collaboration and scholarly exchange programs have also been started between CU and TMDU. At the beginning, collaboration activities between CU and

Report of Visit to CU-TMDU Research and Education Collaboration Center

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Discussion in CU-TMDU Center



Seminar in CU-TMDU Center



TMDU alumni, who are currently academic staff at CU



Ambassador Seiji Kojima, Torajiro Ohashi, President of Thai Japanese Association, presidents and deans of CU and TMDU



Assoc. Prof. Wacharaporn Tasachan, Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry, CU and TMDU President Takashi Ohyaia

TMDU were mainly in the field of dentistry, but now medical and bio-material projects have also commenced and collaboration between the two universities has been increasing.

CU-TMDU Research and Education Center is

the first overseas office in the Southeast Asian Region. We hope this center will contribute to the establishment of medical and dental health care networks, as well as an international research and education hub in Southeast Asia.

FOUR STAFF MEMBERS and one student from the Institute of Biomaterials and Bioengineering (IBB) at TMDU visited Chulalongkorn University (CU), during Dec. 6 to 9, 2010, to negotiate future research exchanges. The members of this visit were: Professor Kimihiro Yamashita, who is a director of IBB, Professor Kazuo Takakuda, Professor Takao Hanawa, Suguru Yamato, who is administration head of IBB, and Ryota Kondo, a Ph.D. course student. The members mainly discussed "dental and medical materials for treatment and regenerative medicine." Professor Yamashita, Professor Takakuda, and Professor Hanawa conduct research on bio-ceramics, membrane and scaffold materials, and metallic biomaterials, respectively.

We first visited Wacharaporn Tasachan, Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry, on December 7, and discussed the possibility of and types of collaboration. Then, we finally visited the new and elegant room to be used as the CU-TMDU Research and Education Collaboration Center, which was established in 2010. We visited just one week after the opening ceremony of CU-TMDU center. The room was well furnished and equipped with office desks, a meeting table and chairs, PCs, In-



Visit to Wacharaporn Tasachan, Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry

ternet, audio visual equipment, and displays on TMDU.

After lunch organized by Dean Tasachan, we held a seminar that was joined by five faculty staff members of CU and six graduate school students from Faculty of Dentistry and Engineering. In the seminar, we had a lively discussion on the presented research subjects and possibility of starting future collaborations. These discussions were even continued to the next day.

We left Bangkok late in the evening on December 8, but Mr. Kondo stayed in CU until December 27 in order to start his collaboration research.

This visit is really significant for starting collaboration between TMDU and CU. In 2011, we have further plans for a few faculty staff members to visit CU and discuss other fields of research.

Participants from CU

Dr. Atiphan Pimkhaokham, Vice Dean in Planning & Development and IT Faculty of Dentistry, Dr. Prasit Pavasant, Associate Professor, Faculty of Dentistry, Dr. Viritpon Srimanepong from the Faculty of Dentistry, Dr. Yuttanant Boonyongmaneerat from the Faculty of Engineering, Dr. Boonrat Lohwongwatana from the Faculty of Engineering, and six graduate students from the Faculty of Engineering.

The seminar program

- "Biofunctionalization of metals for biomedical use" by Prof. Takao Hanawa
- "Bulk metallic glass-a new class of strong and easy-to-form material for dental application by Dr. Boonrat Lohwongwatana
- "Fundamentals and applications of polarized bioceramic materials" by Prof. Kimihiro Yamashita
- "Hydrophilic property of titanium activated by UV" by Dr. Viritpon Srimanepong
- "Optimum design of implant device for tissue regeneration" by Prof. Kazuo Takakuda