



OUR MISSION IS TO BE THE LEADING ORGANIZATION IN THE FIELD OF CLINICAL CHEMISTRY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE WORLDWIDE

eNewsLetter



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## November\_December 2010 issue

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## Editorial from Graham Beastall, IFCC President: Reflections on 2010 and Thoughts on 2011



Graham Beastall

This is the time of year for reflection on the past year. For IFCC it has been another year of steady progress.

Our membership of Full Member national societies has reached a record 84 and at the time of writing we have another application out for voting. Despite the consolidation in the diagnostics industry we have also increased our Corporate Members to 41. Put together this means that IFCC is the global organization for >30,000 of the most senior medical doctors and scientists working in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine.

The IFCC Executive Board has made good progress with the implementation of its strategic plan. Highlights include signed working agreements with the World Association for Societies of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine (WASPLM) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Co-operation (ILAC). We also concluded partnership agreements with two of our Regional Organizations – the Asian and Pacific Federation of Clinical Biochemistry (APFCB) and the European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFCC).

One of the IFCC events that will live in the memory of many was the General Conference in Corfu in April. This was planned to be the highlight meeting of the IFCC 'family' with ~200 people coming together to discuss good practice and plan the future. In the event it coincided exactly with the 'volcanic ash cloud' incident and many colleagues (including me) were stranded 'en route'. Those that did get to Corfu had a positive experience but many then had problems getting home. We can conclude that despite advances in technology we cannot control nature!

There were some excellent conferences during the year. The Bergmeyer Conference on 'New Biomarkers' was a landmark event bringing together all stakeholders for an in-depth consideration of the need for and process of bringing new biomarkers into practice. The APFCB Congress in Seoul, Korea was a meeting of the highest scientific quality, organised with great attention to detail.

During 2010 Mauro Panteghini stood down from being Chair of the Scientific Division. IFCC is grateful to Mauro for service and leadership of the highest quality over many years. Lisa Ionescu also left the IFCC office. We will miss her knowledge of IFCC operation and her always cheerful outlook on life.

At a personal level the year has also been very busy. Another 10,000 emails and enough travel to go around the world three times. However, at the end of every email and every journey are friends and colleagues who are doing a great job in promoting the contribution of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine to healthcare. As I constantly remind people we contribute towards ~70% of all clinical decisions.

Looking forward to 2011 the highlight will undoubtedly be the IFCC WorldLab congress in Berlin in May. This promises to be a hugely important event for both scientific and professional reasons. The IFCC Council meeting will be held immediately prior to the congress and the Executive Board for the next three

years will be elected. We will also learn the venues for the 2015 EuroMedLab congress and the 2017 WorldLab congress.

Other highlights for 2011 will include the IFCC OCD Conference in February on 'Pregnancy Related Disorders: Present Perspectives and Emerging Challenges' and the Latin American (COLABIOCLI) congress in November in the Dominican Republic. We will also launch our new website, which should make it easier for everyone to keep IFCC activities and news right up to date. Mention of the website reminds me to tell you that if you have a query about anything to do with IFCC then [www.ifcc.org](http://www.ifcc.org) should be your first port of call. Alternatively, you can email me at [president@ifcc.org](mailto:president@ifcc.org)

I should finish with a sincere vote of thanks to everyone who works for and supports IFCC. We achieve a great deal with very limited financial resources. This is only possible because of the skill and dedication of the ~200 people who work directly for IFCC and the many more who support and encourage our work. May you all have a peaceful and relaxing festive season and may 2011 prove to be a stimulating and prosperous year.

## *News from Regional Federations and National Associations*



M. Joseph Lopez received the Distinguished Service Award during the 12<sup>th</sup> Asian-Pacific Congress of Clinical Biochemistry. This award underlines his significant contribution to the Federation in terms of its visibility and its impact on the profession of clinical biochemistry worldwide.

Joseph Lopez



Joseph Lopez receiving the award from Professor Chris Lam

***APFCB Activities, 2004–2010 in Education, Science and Laboratory  
Management,***

***Contributed by Joseph Lopez, Immediate Past President of the APFCB***

Once every 3 years, the APFCB President reports to the Council Meeting on the activities of the preceding 3 years of the federation. This meeting is traditionally held on the opening day of the Asian–Pacific Congress of Clinical Biochemistry (APCCB).

There are 16 ordinary and 15 corporate members and 1 affiliate. The new ordinary members admitted during the period of reporting were the Philippines (PAMET) and Nepal (NAMLS), both admitted in 2008. The new Corporate Members admitted were all companies from our region; they were PM Separations (Australia, Nov. 2007), Beijing Wantai (China, 2008) and Agappe (India, 2010).

The following is the summary of the activities in education, science and laboratory management from Oct. 2007 to Oct. 2010.

**Educational Activities**

*Travelling lectureships:* The main educational activity of the APFCB consisted of the 3 regular travelling lectureships that are organised by the Education Committee. Dr Leslie Lai (Malaysia) concluded his stint as APFCB Travelling Lecturer with a plenary at the 11<sup>th</sup> APCCB in Beijing in October 2007. Dr Samuel Vasikaran of Australia who was the TL 2009 and 2010 concluded his series of lectures on interpretative commentary of laboratory results with a plenary at the 12<sup>th</sup> APCCB in Seoul.

The IFCC Visiting Lectureships to the APFCB region are a collaborative effort among the IFCC, the APFCB (C–Edu) and the national societies that are IFCC and APFCB members. The IFCC provides the speaker and covers travel costs, the APFCB arranges the itinerary of the speaker and national society play host and provides local arrangements. Professor Mauro Panteghini (Italy) visited the

region twice in 2008 and 2009 as the Visiting Lecturer to speak on cardiac biomarkers.

We also organised travelling lectureships in conjunction with our corporate members. Speakers for the APFCB–Beckman Coulter Symposium lectures were Dr Sunil Sethi (Singapore) in 2007 and 2008, and, Professor Gunther Weiss (Austria) in 2009. The APFCB–Sekisui Lectureship of 2008 was undertaken by A/Prof Shinji Kihara (Japan) who spoke on adiponectins undertook a one-off lecture tour of 3 countries.

*Webinars:* The APFCB–Siemens webinars are a new activity that was organised by the APFCB Education Committee. The first session that was conducted by Dr Ken Sikaris of Australia on 23rd July, was on Uncertainty Measurement.

### **Scientific and Laboratory Management Activities**

The APFCB Scientific and Laboratory Management committees (C–Sci and C–LM) undertook a number of projects during the period of reporting.

*HbA<sub>1c</sub> (C–LM):* The project to assess the proficiency of HbA<sub>1c</sub> testing in the Asia–Pacific region that was concluded in 2007. The project, organised by Professor Shu–Chu Shiesh (CACB, Taiwan), used samples sent out from Taiwan. The results of the 3 annual surveys held since 2005 were published in Clinical Chemistry. Sponsorship for this activity was received from Bio–Rad and Dade Behring.

*Asian Study on Reference Intervals (C–Sci):* The 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Study on Reference Intervals was completed. Papers on the study are under preparation for publication. Preliminary results were presented at meetings held in Osaka in September 2009 and at the 12<sup>th</sup> APCCB in Seoul in October 2010. The IFCC collaborated in this study. The 4<sup>th</sup> study that will cover a larger area of the Asia–Pacific region is at planning stage. IFCC has expressed its support for this study that has attracted interest outside our region.

*Interpretative Comments Education Programme (C-LM):* This project was undertaken in 2008, 2009. It examined the proficiency of participants to provide interpretive comments on laboratory results. About 50 participants in all from within and outside APFCB region registered for the project. Three chemical pathologists provided expert comments, and those of the participants were compared and scored. The results of 2008 have been published.

*QA Workshop (IFCC, C-LM and ACBSL):* As part of the IFCC's efforts in assisting developing countries and the APFCB's educational activities in laboratory management, a workshop on quality assurance was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 4-5 April 2009. It was organised jointly was IFCC (EMD), APFCB's C-LM and the Association of Clinical Biochemists of Sri Lanka.

*WG on Mass Spectrometry:* Scientists from Hong Kong and Australia, under the C-Sci, formed a Working Group on Harmonisation of Mass Spectrometry (testosterone), following the conference on mass spectrometry that was held in Hong Kong in January 2010. The WG held its first meeting in Seoul during the 12<sup>th</sup> APCCB, during which, terms of reference and action plans were formulated and will be implemented in the near future.

### **APFCB Scientific Publications, Presentations**

It is the practice of the APFCB to share our findings when a scientific project has been successfully completed. In keeping with this premise the following scientific publications emerged during the period of reporting from the APFCB's scientific activities:

1. Ichihara K, Itoh Y, Lam CWK, et al. Poon PMK, Kim J-H, Kyono H, Chandrawening N, Muliaty D and the Science Committee for the Asian-Pacific Federation of Clinical Biochemistry. Sources of variation of commonly measured serum analytes in 6 Asian cities and consideration of common reference intervals. Clin Chem 2008; 54: 356-65.
2. Shiesh S-C, Hsiao-Mei Wiedmeyer, Kao Jau-Tsuen, Vasikaran SD, Lopez JB and the Laboratory Management Committee for the Asian-Pacific



Federation of Clinical Biochemistry. Proficiency Testing of HbA1c: A 4-year experience in Asian and Pacific Region. Clin Chem 2009; 55: 1876–80.

3. Vasikaran SD, Lai LC, Sethi S, Lopez JB, Sikaris KA. Quality of interpretative commenting on common clinical chemistry results in the Asia-Pacific region. Clin Chem Lab Med 2009; 47: 963–70.

The results of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Study were presented at a symposium at the 12<sup>th</sup> APCCB in Seoul in October.

### *12<sup>th</sup> Asian-Pacific Congress of Clinical Biochemistry*



From left to right: Prof. Wha Soon Chung, Prof. Won-Ki Min, Dr Graham Beastall, Prof. Ho-Hun Kwon, Prof. Jin Q Kim, Joseph Lopez, Prof. Ki-Sook Hong, Prof. Junghan Song.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Asian–Pacific Congress of Clinical Biochemistry was successfully held from October 3 to 7, 2010 in Coex Center, Seoul, Korea under the theme of “Challenges in Future Diagnostics”. The Korean Society of Clinical Chemistry (KSCC), the key organizing Society was supported by the Korean Society for Laboratory Medicine (KSLM), the Asian and Pacific Federation of Clinical Biochemistry (APFCB), the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC, the Korean Medical Association (KMA), the Korean Academy of Medical Sciences (KAMS), the Korean Association of Medical Technologists (KAMT), the Korean Association of Quality Assurance for Clinical Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) and the Korean Agency for Technology and Standards (KATS)

Participants and visitors to the total of 1,952 came from 49 countries.

A variety of stimulating and informative scientific programs were organized to cover the wide range of clinical biochemistry and laboratory medicine. There were 5 plenary lectures, 79 presentations from 26 symposia, 32 presentations from 8 society–sponsored symposia, 20 presentations from 11 industry symposia and 7 presentations from 3 pre–congress workshops. In addition, special workshops of IFCC TF–YS workshop and KSLM were organized. Finally, 38 oral presentations and 293 posters were presented. Altogether, 483 research results from 67 sessions were presented during the APCCB 2010.

The APCCB 2010 organizing committee offered scholarships and awards to support the participation of young fellows and scientists. The APCCB 2010 Young Scientist Scholarships were presented to 6 winners (each USD 2,600), APFCB/Siemens Young Scientist Scholarships were presented to 5 winners (each USD 2,600) and Roche/IFCC Travel Scholarships were presented to 8 winners (each EU 1,250~2,250). Furthermore, the organizing committee presented 19 Research Awards to the best presenters (5 oral and 16 poster presenters, each USD 500) and 37 Travel Awards (each USD 500). In total, 19 scholarship winners and 56 award recipients were selected.

Forty-two companies as well as 7 academic societies (AACC, APCCB 2013, Asian Quality Assurance Survey, Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute, College of American Pathologists, IFCC, and The Korean Society for Laboratory Medicine) presented exhibits that were well attended.

A variety of exciting social programs comprising the opening ceremony and welcome reception, the exhibition tape cutting ceremony and the Presidential dinner completed the program.

According to the survey conducted by the APCCB 2010 Organizing Committee, the meeting was a very successful in terms of the scientific program and the organization, For further information, please visit our congress website at [www.apccb2010.org](http://www.apccb2010.org)

### *APFCB Office-Bearers, 2010-2013*

The Executive Board was elected at the Council Meeting in Seoul on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2010, while the chairs of the 4 standing committees were appointed by the EB in November, based on nominations by APFCB member associations.

The office-bearers will serve until the next Council meeting expected to be held in November 2013, in Bali, Indonesia.

#### Executive Board

President	Leslie Lai (Malaysia)
Immediate Past President	Joseph Lopez (Malaysia)
Vice-President	Sunil Sethi (Singapore)
Secretary	Endang Hoyaranda (Indonesia)
Treasurer	Elizabeth Frank (India)
Corporate Representative	Martin Fuhrer (Siemens)

## Chairs of Committees

Communications (C-Comm)

Praveen Sharma (India)

Education (C-Edu)

Samuel Vasikaran (Australia)

Laboratory Management (C-LM)

Tony Badrick (Australia)

Scientific (C-Sci)

Kiyoshi Ichihara (Japan)

## *Name Changes at the APFCB*



The APFCB Council Meeting held in Seoul on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2010, voted to change the name of the federation from the Asian and Pacific Federation of Clinical Biochemistry to the *Asia-Pacific Federation for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine*.

This was done to accept societies of laboratory medicine as members in countries did not have national societies of clinical (bio)chemistry. We also took our cue from the IFCC that has “Laboratory Medicine” in its name. The abbreviation *APFCB*, however, will still be retained.

The congress of the APFCB will no longer be called the Asian-Pacific Congress of Clinical Biochemistry (APCCB). Recognising that there was always confusion between the abbreviations of the federation and that of the congress, the Council decided that henceforth, it would be called the *APFCB Congress*. The name would also enhance the APFCB brand. The 13<sup>th</sup> APFCB Congress will be held in Bali in November 2013.

## ***The 6<sup>th</sup> EFCC Balkan region Symposium and the 17<sup>th</sup> Serbian Congress of medical biochemistry and laboratory medicine***

***Contributed by Professor Dr. Nada Majkić-Singh, President of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia and the Scientific Committees of the Congress and Symposium***

From the 4<sup>th</sup> till the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2010, Belgrade was the host of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine with international participation organized by the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia and the Institute of Medical Biochemistry of the Clinical Centre of Serbia. As part of the Congress, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2010, the 6<sup>th</sup> EFCC Symposium for the Balkan Region took place, organized separately under the title *Implementing Laboratory Automation, Quality and Efficiency*. Symposium coordinators were Professor Nada Majkić-Singh on behalf of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia and Professor Victor Blaton, Former EFCC President, on behalf of the European Federation for Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine. The Congress and Symposium were held under the auspices of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC), European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFCC) and the Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF), as well as the Ministry of Science of the Republic of Serbia.

During the Opening ceremony, Professor Victor Blaton received an Honorary Diploma from the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia, the highest recognition awarded by the Society, for his contribution to the development of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine in Serbia and the Balkan region and for promoting these disciplines in Serbia and the global professional community.



Professor Victor Blaton receiving the Honorary Diploma from Professor Nada Majkić-Singh, President of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia.



The Participants on the Opening Ceremony 6th EFCC Symposium for Balkan Region and XVII Serbian Congress, in the middle from left to right: S. Ignjatović, D. Goldberg, N. Majkić-Singh, V. Blaton, O. Janković

Celebration of the 55<sup>th</sup> jubilee anniversary of the founding of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia coincided with the Congress. On this occasion, Professor Nada Majkić-Singh evoked the achievements and activities of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia since its establishment up to this day, by presenting the Historical Background, Aims of the Society, Society Organization, and Professional, Publishing, Congressional and other Activities.

Professor David Goldberg from Canada gave the Opening lecture on “Wine and Health: A Paradigm for Alcohol and Antioxidants” explaining the relative contributions of ethanol and the polyphenolic antioxidants of red wine by considering their potential to inhibit atherogenesis and the mechanisms involved. Other plenary sections of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine were dedicated to the latest findings on biochemical markers for various diseases and states and their application, primarily the *Detection and Clinical Significance of Free Radicals in Circulation* describing the complexity of free radical metabolism in human erythrocytes (M. Spasić), the diagnostic and therapeutic significance of oxidative stress parameters in children (M. Bajčetić) and the application of electron paramagnetic resonance as a powerful tool of medical biochemistry in discovering mechanisms of disease and treatment prospects (I. Spasojević).

The *Thyroid Disease Diagnostics* section included the following lectures: “Diagnosis of Thyroid Disease” (M. Žarković), “Genetics of Thyroid Cancer” (S. Damjanović), “Measuring Thyroglobulin Concentrations in Patients with Differentiated Thyroid Carcinoma” (S. Savin) and “The Importance of Hormones and Proteins Determination in the Material Obtained by Fine Needle Aspiration Biopsy” (B. Trbojević).

Latest Knowledge about the “Clinical Value of Lipopolysaccharide-Binding Protein in Infection and Sepsis” (D. Schmidt), “The ESR Test: An Old Test with New Concepts” (M. Plebani and E. Piva), “D-Dimer in the Management of Venous Thromboembolism” (G. Le Gal) and “Point-of-Care D-Dimer Testing” (J. Antović), “Sensitive Cardiac Troponin Assays: Myth and Magic or A Practical Way

Forward?” (D. Gaze) and “Diagnostic and Prognostic Information Provided by a High Sensitivity Assay for Cardiac Troponin T” (J. Jarausch) were all presented in the section *New Biochemical Markers*. The *Biochemical Markers of Kidney Diseases* section was devoted to “Serum and Urinary Biomarkers Determination” (V. Ležajić), “Cardiovascular Biomarkers in Chronic Kidney Disease” (M. Đerić), “Urinary NGAL as a Novel Biomarker for the Early Detection of Acute Kidney Injury” (KM Schmidt–Ott) and the “Importance of KIM–1 Determination in Tissue and Urine of Patients with Different Kidney Diseases” (S. Simić–Ogrizović). Very important sections dealt with *Protein Analysis at the Molecular Level: from fundamental research to the application in medicine*, providing insights into “Individualized Therapy and Role of Thiopurine S–Methyltransferase Protein and Genetic Variants” (S. Pavlović), “A Possible Role of MARP Protein Family in Molecular Mechanism of Tumorigenesis”, and the “Role of rRNA Methyltransferases in Resistance to Antibiotics”. *The Significance of Genetic Polymorphism as a Marker for Proneness to Disease Formation* (I. Novaković), e.g. in relation to the “Genetic Epidemiologic Approach” (T. Pekmezović), “Genetic Predisposition to Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus” (K. Stankov) and “The Role of GSTM1 Polymorphism in Patients with Renal and Urinary Bladder Tumors” (T. Simić) were also discussed.

In the course of the *6<sup>th</sup> EFCC Symposium for Balkan Region* prominent foreign and local experts introduced to the participants the means for achieving full automation and laboratory consolidation with the goal of adhering to the philosophy of Lean and Six Sigma laboratory efficiency. Experts from Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Belgium revealed their experiences along with distinguished local scientists. The following lectures were presented: “Implementing Laboratory Automation, Quality and Efficiency” (Svetlana Ignjatović and Nada Majkic–Singh), “Medical Errors: Preanalytical Issue in Patient Safety” (Mario Plebani), “Preanalytical Workstation as a Tool for Reducing Laboratory Errors” (Giorgio Da Rin), “Progressive Automation – the Solution of Choice for Improving Lab Efficiency” (Jan–Michel Valid), “Centralization, Consolidation and Automation in a Local Hospital Network” (Gerd Hafner), “Concepts for Lean Laboratory Organization” (Gabriele Halwachs–Baumann) and



“Automation, Lean, Six Sigma – Synergy in Tactics to Improve Lab Efficiency” (Davide Villa), “Concepts for an In vitro Diagnostic Organization: Consulting Services to Develop Customized Economical and High Quality In Vitro Diagnostic Solutions” (Gerhard Wirl) and “Lean and Six Sigma Sample Analysis Process in a Microbiology Laboratory” (Vojislav Stoiljković).

The topics selected covered in a multidisciplinary fashion the field of laboratory medicine and other medical sciences. A number of experts in various areas actively took part by contributing their work, which further accentuated the multidisciplinary character of the Congress. Like in previous years, this Congress has, therefore, made it possible for the latest scientific and expert results to be presented to clinical chemists from Serbia and the Balkan region and has served as a place for exchanging experiences in order to promote contemporary laboratory practice. During the closing ceremony, Professor David Goldberg gave a very interesting and important lecture entitled “Science at the Crossroads: Fact or Fiction?” in which he examined the direction contemporary science took a while ago and offered some valuable advice.

Round table discussions on the topics presented served as the basis for reaching Conclusions and Guidelines in this area of laboratory medicine, with the aim of achieving the best possible treatment results for the benefit of patients. A permanent exhibition of equipment and reagents was on display during the Congress and Symposium. A number of companies organized well-attended high-quality scientific workshops.

Organization of the National 17<sup>th</sup> Serbian Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine and 6<sup>th</sup> EFCC Symposium for the Balkan region was the result of engagement and effort by the coordinators and all members of the Scientific and Organizing Committees. More than 450 participants from Serbia and other Balkan countries were actively engaged in the Congress and Symposium, and we can only hope that the program we had to offer met their expectations and that through such an exchange of experiences they were able

to enrich their knowledge, which will doubtlessly be useful in everyday laboratory practice.

We also sincerely hope that Belgrade, our ancient city upon two rivers, was recognized as a kind and interesting host that the Congress participants will carry in their hearts for a long time.

All lectures are published in the national journal of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia – *Journal of Medical Biochemistry* 2010; 29: 131–230, and 29: 231–492 ([www.versita.com](http://www.versita.com)).

***The 10<sup>th</sup> EFCC Continuous Postgraduate Course in Clinical Chemistry: “New trends in classification, diagnosis and management of thrombophilia”***

*Contributed by Ana-Maria Simundic, Zagreb, Croatia  
EFCC, WG-Conferences and Postgraduate Education*



Dubrovnik

The EFCC Continuous Postgraduate Courses in Clinical Chemistry have been established by the Committee for Education and training (C-ET) of the European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFCC) and during the past years co-organized by the Croatian Society for Medical Biochemists (<http://www.hdmb.hr/>), Slovenian Association for Clinical Chemistry (<http://www.szkk.si/>) and Inter-University Centre (<http://www.iuc.hr/>) in Dubrovnik. These courses aim to address current concepts and new trends in classification, diagnosis and management of various conditions, such as diabetes mellitus, kidney, cardiovascular, autoimmune and thyroid diseases, etc. EFCC is proud to offer this high level postgraduate education on an annual basis to more and more participants in Europe. Moreover, each year course organizers are able to grant travel fellowships to a number of young participants, particularly from less developed parts of Europe.

This 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary event aimed to provide an overview on the pathophysiology, epidemiology and clinical and molecular characteristics of thrombophilia and was organized in collaboration with the European Thrombosis Research Organization (ETRO; <http://www.etro.eu.org/>), in accordance with EFCC's strategy of fostering stronger links and collaborations with clinical scientific organizations in Europe (for EFCC's strategic plan, please visit [www.efcclm.eu](http://www.efcclm.eu)).

Sixty participants attended the course and 14 outstanding invited speakers delivered the lectures. Course lectures covered the broad range of topics related to hypercoagulable states, platelet structure and function and screening for thrombophilia. Some specific entities like pediatric thrombosis, hyperhomocysteinemia and the role of coagulation markers in cancer were also covered. A whole half-day session of the course focused on the methodological shortcomings of genetic association studies in thrombophilia research as well as benefits and disadvantages of pharmacogenetics-guided anticoagulation therapy. The course was highly interactive, and gave participants an opportunity to examine and discuss in more depth some current issues and controversies in thrombophilia. For the first time we will deliver expert reviews

covering the topics of the course in a special issue of the journal of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine, scheduled for publication in December 2010.

We do hope that participants have enjoyed their visit to this course for its scientific content, but also because of the beauties of Dubrovnik. The extraordinary location and charm of this city touched many individuals, such as George Bernard Shaw, whose infamous phrase after first visiting Dubrovnik was: "Those who seek paradise on Earth should come to Dubrovnik".

The 11<sup>th</sup> EFCC Continuous Postgraduate Course in Clinical Chemistry (22–23 October 2011) will deal with the topic of INFLAMMATION. We are looking forward to meeting you in Dubrovnik next year!

### ***News from the Paraguayan Biochemistry Association***

#### ***Theoretical and Practical Seminar of EBM: Make decisions based on evidence: Evidence in action***

Contributed by Prof. Dra. M. G. Montserrat Blanes, President of the Paraguayan Biochemistry Association., Chair WG IANT, Editor RIA/DIV. (CPD,IFCC), Corresponding member EDC (EMD,IFCC) [mblanes@ips.gov.py](mailto:mblanes@ips.gov.py); [fquimicos@click.com.py](mailto:fquimicos@click.com.py)



Montserrat Blanes

This activity was sponsored by the IFCC Education and Management Division (EMD) with the co-sponsorship of the National University of Asunción, Faculty of Chemical Sciences (FCQ in Spanish), Faculty of Medical Sciences (FCM in Spanish), Institute of Health Sciences Research (IICS in Spanish) the Ntra Sra de la Asunción University and the Itapúa National University. Dr. Esperanza Martínez from the Ministry of Public Health and Social Services of Paraguay declared this activity of interest for the Public Health of Paraguay. COLABIOCLI, 7 societies members of the South

American region, 14 scientific societies of Paraguay, 4 medical colleges and 5 scientific biochemical societies of Argentina supported this 3-day workshop. A record-setting of 90 participants registered for this EBLM workshop!



From left to right: Dr. Robert Christenson, Dr Wytz Oostehuis, Dra. Montserrat Blanes, Dr. Sverre Sandberg, Dr. Hernan Fares Taie



From left to right: Graciela Velazquez, Esteban Ferro, Montserrat Blanes, Stella Raymondo

Dr Robert Christenson delivered a pre-workshop lecture at the Asunción National University to an audience composed of approximately 250 students and 30 faculty members from the biochemistry department, the faculty of veterinary medicine and other disciplines. The talk was enthusiastically received.

The lecturers for the 3-day workshop were: Dr Robert Christenson who gave lectures on varied subjects such as: Appraising diagnostic accuracy and prognostic studies, Clinical and Economic Outcomes, Formulating and grading recommendations: Development of Laboratory Medicine Best Practices (LMBP), Laboratory Medicine Best Practices: Reporting Critical Values, Reducing Blood Culture Contamination; Dr. Wytze Oostehuis who addressed Which study will answer my question best?, How to conduct a systematic review, Critical appraisal of guidelines, Implementation and practice of Evidence Based Laboratory Medicine; Dr. Sverre Sanberg who talked on Statistics in diagnostic test evaluations. Dr Hernán Fares Taie moderated all of the feedback sessions in Spanish and optimized participation by the attendees.

Five additional interactive sessions allowed the attendees to complete a prepared task included in the handout materials. The participants were assisted in these exercises by EBLM-trained local Spanish and English speaking facilitators. Each interactive exercise was followed by a plenary feedback session, during which the faculty went through and discussed the prepared tasks with participants and responded to questions and comments. Participants were expected to bring the information and the materials back to their respective organizations for dissemination. Lectures, interactive exercises and feedback sessions all received excellent ratings.

The collaboration of Index SACI through his representative, Abbott Diagnostics, was invaluable in setting up and in advertising this event.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to the IFCC Educational and Management Division and the Visitor Lecturer Program for supporting us again in this great event.

***News from the Mexican Society of Clinical Biochemistry  
The 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Quality.  
A get-together reunion of experts from Latin America***

*Contributed by Dra. Rosa I. Sierra-Amor, PhD IFCC National Representative.*



Rosa I Sierra Amor



Laboratory professionals attending the experts meeting, with the QSD members / BIO RAD Latin America, main sponsor of the event in Cancun, Mexico from June 30– July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010.

During the summer of 2010, prior to hosting the 5<sup>o</sup> International Conference on Quality, a get together of 50 scientists took place in Cancun, Mexico. Colleagues from 10 different countries from Latin America traveled to Quintana

Roo State, in the south of Mexico to attend the conference and to participate in the first meeting of its kind in the region, to discuss quality topics on different issues, such as how to achieve total quality in laboratory medicine, the effective control on the examination phase, education as a foundation of laboratory quality, establishing the risk assessment and the critical role of patient care, and preparing laboratory to handle crisis.

In representation of the Minister of Health of Mexico, Juan C. Azueta Cardenas, Minister of Health of Quintana Roo, who was accompanied by Silvia Perez-Sevallo, Federal deputy, Secretary of Communication in Healthcare, Maribel Lopez-Martinez, Executive director of the Mexican Accreditation Entity, and Octavio Zendejas, Director of BIO RAD Latin America, opened the meeting.

Representatives from 10 countries, whose expertise was highly recognized by their country peers, directed the roundtable discussions. Dra. Rosa I Sierra-Amor, IFCC National Representative, Hugo Baez, BIO RAD Latin American Quality System Division manager, and Max Williams, BIO RAD Global Scientific and Professional Affairs manager, Quality Systems Division from the US gave the welcoming messages. Dr. Graham Beastall, President of IFCC also welcomed and congratulated the audience on behalf of IFCC through the magic of the teleconference.

During one and a half day of discussions, the 50 experts enthusiastically discussed and summarized the needs and requirements of total quality, integrating the latest concepts on quality systems. At the end of those sessions, and to initiate the 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Quality, the chairs of the 5 round tables presented the summaries of their discussions.

The first topic, presented by Gabriel Migliarino from Argentina, bore on how to achieve appropriate and adequate quality in laboratory medicine; James Westgard from the US followed and addressed the effective control of the examination process; Rosa I. Sierra-Amor from Mexico, then spoke on education as the foundation for laboratory quality; Greg Cooper from the US



introduced the concept of the risk assessment in the laboratory and the critical role of laboratories to patient care. Leverton Ortiz from Chile concluded the series of conferences and reported on how to prepare laboratories to handle crisis, taking Influenza HN1 as an example to follow up in the clinical laboratories. A document, issued from these discussion panels, will be assembled to serve as reference for updating national regulations, university programs in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine, and establishing accreditation based on ISO 15189.

The 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Quality began immediately after to the expert meeting. All sites through the region were linked by Internet connections. This year, the number of sites and the attendance increased substantially reaching 1772 participants from 35 sites in Latin America: Peru, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina (Buenos Aires, Cordoba and Bariloche), Ecuador (Quito and Cochabamba), Panama, and Dominican Republic. In Mexico, Twenty-four sites extending from north to south of the country, including two in Mexico City ,were participated in conjunction with universities, associations, and hospitals.

The 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Quality was held under the auspices of IFCC, and IFCC National societies: the Mexican Association of Clinical Biochemistry; the Ecuadorian Society of Clinical Biochemistry, National and the affiliated Pichinca; the Paraguayan Association of Biochemistry; the Association of Biochemistry of Uruguay. Several other organizations from Mexico also joined this effort: the Mexican Ministry of Health, the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the Mexican Federation of Clinical Pathology and the Mexican College of Clinical Chemists. This event was well sponsored and had the total support of BIO RAD Latin America, and the Quality Systems Division / Mexico (QSD).

**Roche/IFCC Travel Scholarships**  
**Reports from the Young Scientists awarded in 2010**



**Roche/IFCC Travel Scholarships**  
**Reports from the Young Scientists awarded in 2010**

**Pradeep Kumar Dabla**

*Clinical Biochemistry, Batra Hospital & Medical Reserach Centre, Delhi, India*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: AACC 2010 Annual Meeting - 25-29 July 2010 - Anaheim, US



To attend the AACC annual meeting 2010 was an experience of its own kind which involved thousands of peers at one place in Anaheim, California, USA. There were delegates from all over the US and all across the world. This meeting presented networking opportunities related to problems or challenges as a clinical laboratorian and solutions related to it. It was the biggest clinical laboratory exhibit in the world. It had a record breaking number of booths on the floor (over 2000) and the exhibit floor was busy with latest equipments and informative lectures related to

quality, management and latest tests in the field of laboratory medicine.

The AACC annual meeting involved hundreds of parallel educational sessions to include topics of everyone interests. There were plenary sessions, over 70 varied symposia and short courses, over 80 brown bag sessions and more than 900 posters on display. The meeting was full of outstanding speakers and recognized leaders from the research, clinical practice and business to present topics on various issues related to clinical laboratory medicine.

Chronic diseases especially diabetes and metabolic syndrome remains the topics of interest and the biomarkers related to it. Diabetes is the major cause of endstage renal disease (ESRD) both in the U.S. and around the world which affects kidney in stages. Cystatin C may play a role in detection of association between renal and heart disease in etiology of pre-diabetics as it correlates more closely with isotopic GFR than the CG or MDRD equations in subjects with mild renal impairment. The lipids, hsCRP, iron & ferritin along with newer markers such as VitD, Ca<sup>2+</sup>, Mg<sup>2+</sup>, IL-10, A-FABP has promised a novel approach towards diagnosis of metabolic syndrome.

Topics related to quality where they have shown the importance of Lean, Six-Sigma in improving laboratory operations towards excellence with Laboratory-Leadership emphasizing the conflicts, resolutions, their styles (transformational, transactional, Laissez-Faire) from Millenials and Traditionilist to Boomers and Xers. The approach towards protein measurement by LC-MS/MS instead of immunoassay has the given idea of importance of Targeted-MS technique. In all, I give my sincere thanks to Prof. J. Hicks (Past President-IFCC) who has given me opportunity to broaden my horizon about the latest research and techniques in area of laboratory medicine.

**Wang Houfang**

*Dept. of Laboratory Medicine, Beijing United Family Hospital, Beijing, China 100015*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: AACC 2010 Annual Meeting - 25-29 July 2010 - Anaheim, US



I am very lucky to be awarded a Roche/IFCC Travel Scholarship to attend the AACC Annual Meeting, which was held in Anaheim (USA) from July 25 to 29, 2010. This was my first time to attend AACC Annual Meeting. I was very impressed that the congress was so well organized that I couldn't believe that in fact thousands of attendees from all over the world came together for this meeting.

The Plenary Sessions of 5 days brought me some state-of-the-art topics from changing and challenging healthcare, cardiovascular prevention, impact of biomarkers on the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease to pluripotent stem cell utilization in human health and even to P4 (predictive, personalized, preventive and participatory) medicine. I had never heard of P4 medicine before this meeting. The P4 topic let me think about current healthcare from a different angle.

The contents of symposia were really colorful and attractive. Sometimes it was difficult for me to determine which topic I should take part in because several interesting talks were held at the same time. By attending symposia I updated my knowledge about hCG variants and use in diagnostic workup on normal and abnormal pregnancies, laboratory testing as added value resource, new criteria for diagnosis of diabetes using HbA1c, standardization of assessing vitamin D status and immunomodulatory effects of vitamin D, appropriate eGFR for adult&pediatric populations and drug dose adjustment, infectious disease testing, markers of cardiovascular risk and best practice of laboratory medicine and so on. There was a little pity that I couldn't find any topic relevant to maternal serum screening for down syndrome and trisomy 18 because I did have some questions about it and hoped to communicate with some specialists.

I spent my lunch time on visiting the Expo. All kinds of automatic work station attracted my eyes. And I found some good rapid diagnostic reagents my lab need such as H.polri Ag, E.coli O157, Leginella Ag, Mararia Ag etc from Meridian and Binax booths. Furthermore, I communicated the problems I met with Nycocard Reader manufacturer. In addition, the workshops sponsored by manufacturers also presented us the clinical use of their new products.

I really appreciated IFCC to award me the travel scholarship. From above you can see I did benefit greatly from this precious opportunity. I got about 20 CE credits and even purchased one latest handbook of laboratory medicine at the AACC bookstore. I believe the handbook will help me a lot in my future career.

**Amin A. Aqel**

*Faculty of Medicine, Mu'tah University, Al-Karak, Jordan*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: APCCB 2010 - 3-7 October 2010 - Seoul, South KR



It was my pleasure to attend the APCCB 2010, this big scientific congress with about 1000 participants from 50 different countries around the world.

First of all I would like to appreciate very much the Roche/IFCC travel Scholarship which gives us, the young scientist, from different developing countries the opportunity to attend such big scientific events and conferences.

Special thank for Roche Diagnostics company which always support such events in cooperation with the IFCC to offer the young scientists the chance to be a ware of the latest development

in fields of biochemistry and laboratory medicine.

I would like also to thank my local society the Jordan Society of Medical Laboratory the full member of the IFCC for the trust that they gave me and for their support to in order to obtain the Roche/IFCC Travel Scholarship.

The congress was a multidisciplinary event in term of scientific issues with plenary sessions, oral presentations, industry symposium, workshops, medical exhibition and posters presentations. The congress also had a special events like around table discussions and meting the expert with very interesting subjects to discuss like the innovations in biochemistry and laboratory medicine.

The medical exhibition was more than excellent, well known companies like Roche Diagnostics, Bioneer Corporation, Bio-Rad Laboratories, Seegene, Abbott, Beckman Coulter, etc., and many other international and local medical companies were promoting their machines and kits. The industrial symposium was conducted by some companies for explaining the advantages of their machines and tests in field of laboratory medicine. Other scientific societies also were presenting their activities and future conferences and workshops.

The most interesting thing was the lab tour, to visit some of the best laboratories in Korea. The tour was held every conference day afternoon. We got an idea about the work flow of the biggest reference laboratories in Seoul with the concentration on the automated systems that analyzing samples with no much human interfering which is time saving process with low contamination.

A special workshop was arranged by the IFCC Task Force for Young Scientists Workshop: facing and shaping, we got the information needed to build up our knowledge in laboratory medicine specially how to improve our abilities in the field, how to serve the health system better, and which laboratory practice is most suitable for planning a successful career.

By attending this very impact scientific congress, I got more experience in my academic and professional career; it helped me become more experienced in fields of molecular biology, biochemistry and laboratory medicine. I got an overview of medical sciences future breakthroughs from key leading international scientists and I met renowned professors and researchers, CEOs of industrial groups, I gain more prospective in my research, with new ideas and/or protocols. I had the opportunity to learn advanced laboratory techniques that can be utilized in my future research activities and scientific life.

Finally; I exchanged and networked with other Fellows and peers, coming from around the world and I shared the same interest for medical laboratory Sciences. Also I was very fascinating and inspirit of the Korean culture and tradition.

**Miswar Fattah**

*Research & Esoteric Laboratory, Prodia Clinical Laboratory, Jakarta, Indonesia*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: APCCB 2010 - 3-7 October 2010 - Seoul, South KR



It was an honor for me to receive this Scholarship from IFCC conducted with Roche to attend The 12th APCCB held in Seoul, South of Korea. I appreciate this program can help and increase knowledge for young scientist. I realized this program can motivate and increase self confidence young scientist like us to do more research and share our experience to another young scientist in our country. I was so excited that I could meet with much of greatest researcher in Laboratory medicine. I'm very lucky meet and attend to Dennis YM Lo presentation about Circulating DNA. Much of his paper I cited in my

paper. In this congress I presented my paper in oral presentation about Circulating DNA and LOX-1 in obstructive sleep apnea. Its first time I presented in international congress. First of all, it made me feel much more confident in that my research is interesting and useful for the laboratory medicine.

Plenary lecture by Narry Kim is a very valuable presentation. they provide a great orientation about recent research in regulation of microRNA gene.

MicroRNA regulate by them self and other factors interference in maturation of microRNA. Its very interesting for me. I hope some day, I can join with their research.

I attended in meeting of Young scientific task force. Discuss about opportunity for young scientist in laboratory medicine and how to motivate them. I also attended in discussion about collaborate research in reference interval with Prof Kyoshi Ichihara.

I think this congress very informative and much new experience, scientific experience and Cultural experience is very interested in South of korea.

In this congress we were promote Indonesia (Bali) as a host of 13th APFCB Congress. I used traditional Bali dress in our booth. Very enjoyable. Wellcome new young scientist in Bali at 2013.

Finally I would like expressing my gratitude to IFCC, Prof. Jocelyn MB Hicks for giving me chance to enrich my knowledge. Thank you very much for Ms Silvia Cattaneo for your hospitality.

**Kenneth K. Kimengech**

*Department of Laboratory Medicine, Kenyatta National Hospital, Nairobi, Kenya*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: APCCB 2010 - 3-7 October 2010 - Seoul, South KR



It was such a wonderful, long trip to the APCCB 2010 and Seoul Korea at large. Well, first and foremost I would like to appreciate and much thanks to IFCC and Roche for the travel and scholarship they gave me. It was a great honour to my continent (Africa), my country (Kenya), Kenyatta National Hospital where I work and not to forget clinical chemistry association of Kenya (CCAK) I could not imagine that one day I would travel this far (asian continent). But IFCC and Roche have made my dream true for awarding me the scholarship as a young scientist. May god bless you richly and in abundance as you continue to uplift

young scientists and the profession of clinical chemistry at large.

Well, I am also very proud to have had an international exposure on oral and poster presentations and exhibitions by scientists from all over the world and more so interacting and making super friendship with them. Another wonderful recalling moment is the awarding ceremony of the certificates, organized by IFCC and Roche at Coex Centre Seoul Korea, whereby we had American breakfast with the past IFCC president and being the first lady to occupy such a big office none other than; Prof. Jocelyn M.B. Hicks and also being the chair of the Roche and IFCC Committee. We were received warmly by Silvia Cattaneo and Paola, both IFCC staff, Prof. Jocelyn encouraged me to persue with my profession studies until Phd. level. she also told me that she was a medical technologist long time ago and now she is a Professor. Thank you Prof. for such a blessing encouragement. And I promise by God will, that I will have my Phd one day.

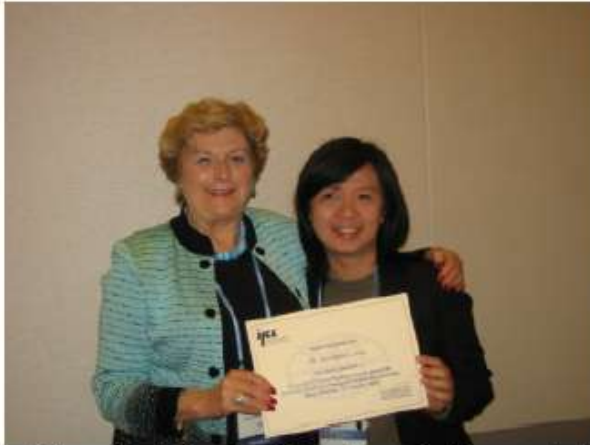
On the other hand is my experience at Seoul Korea, through lab tour organized by APCCB 2010. From Coex through the town of Seoul all the way to Asian medical center, whereby I could not believe such a big hospital with sophisticated ultra modern technology and the way it is set up more so and many other things that I am unable to elaborate, but have borrowed an idea from them and take it all the way to Kenya, Kenyatta National Hospital.

I appreciate also to the Koreans for their spirit of hospitality at large. Keep it up and god bless you for what I encountered and experienced in Seoul, Korea.

**Yusmiati Liau**

*Molecular Diagnostic Lab. Prodia Clinical Laboratory, Jakarta, Indonesia*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: APCCB 2010 - 3-7 October 2010 - Seoul, South KR



I have learnt about the IFCC-Roche Travel Scholarship for several years now, and this year, with a plan to submit an abstract about my research, I sent an application to attend the 12<sup>th</sup> APCCB in Korea. From the scientific agenda, I saw a lot of molecular diagnostics topics, and it was very interesting, especially for me who just started a career in this field. And no need to mention, I was very excited when I received an email from Ms. Silvia Cattaneo, with an acceptance letter from the IFCC President, Ms. Jocelyn Hicks.

The 12<sup>th</sup> APCCB had the theme of "Challenges in Future Diagnostics",

and it consisted of various interesting scientific presentations, social activities, as well as industrial exhibitions and symposiums. The organizing committee reported that participants come from 52 countries, with exceeding 1000 participants, so more than just a scientific meeting, this is a chance to establish colleagues and friends from around the world.

The first plenary lecture was given by Dr. S Vasikaran, who shared about the importance of interpretative commenting in certain diagnostic laboratory service, also about when and how to deliver it. And after that, a welcome reception was held with the attractive performance of modern dances and Korean Traditional dances by the Korean Youth.

One of the sessions I attended is the applications of Pharmagenomics for personalized medicine, which shared about the genotype-guided warfarin dosing. In the plenary lecture about gene-environment interaction in chronic-inflammatory processes, an interesting picture about the decreasing prevalence of infection diseases vs increasing chronic inflammation diseases in recent years was presented, indicating a likely connection between them. I also attended the session about Predictive Medicine and the perspectives of Medical sequencing, which shared about the development from Sanger Sequencing through the next generation sequencing and in the future, the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation, the single molecule sequencing. With the decreasing cost, it appears to be a part of diagnostic service in the future.

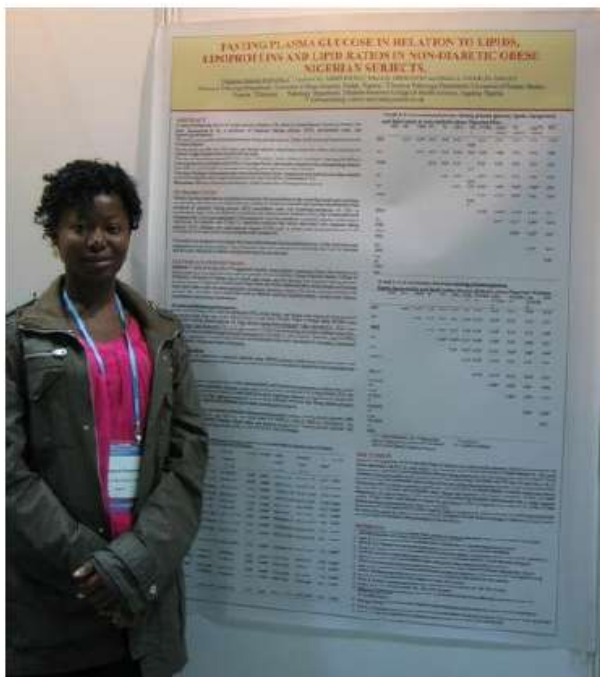
But what I feel to be the most interesting session I attended was the plenary lecture given by V. Narry Kim from Korea who shared about the research she conducted together with her team in revealing the biogenesis and regulation of microRNAs. The essence here was not only the scientific content, but also the inspiration about what can be done by young scientists.

In between the scientific agenda, I also had the chance to attend the publications meeting held by IFCC where I learnt about various programmes of IFCC-Publication division, in order to give benefits to its member, as well as some knowledge about publication ethics, such as plagiarism. I also participated in the cultural experience held by the organizing committee and had the chance to wear the Korean traditional dress, Hanbok.

**Popoola Omolara**

*Chemical Pathology Department, University College Hospital, Ibadan, Nigeria*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: APCCB 2010 - 3-7 October 2010 - Seoul, South KR



First, I want to appreciate IFCC/Roche for the scholarship and wonderful experience in Seoul, Korea. It was an event that exposed me to novel things in medical science and research. The exposure is an unforgettable experience that has left an indelible mark and a great impact on my professionalism as well as being a huge stepping stone for my future achievements. I want to admit I am a changed person as far as clinical chemistry is concerned. Interacting with people from different regions of the world especially the Asia-Pacific region has re-shapened my vision in clinical chemistry. I was updated on areas varying from how to write good papers, acute coronary syndromes, molecular studies to clinical chemistry testing, recent developments in automation and standardization issues just to mention a few. The presence of the various companies and their exhibition as well as their symposia was amazing.

I want to thank the organizers of APCCB 2010 for putting together such a wonderful programme and also the people of Korea who were very hospitable. The city of Seoul is amazing and adorable and I am pleased to have visited the city.

Once again I say thank you to IFCC/Roche for this wonderful and unforgettable opportunity to upgrade myself. Definitely, IFCC/Roche is building lives and I am pleased to have benefitted from it. More Power to you. Long live IFCC and Roche.



**Maria Teresa T. Rodriguez**

*College of Medical Technology, Trinity University of Asia, Quezon City, Philippines*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: APCCB 2010 - 3-7 October 2010 - Seoul, South KR



A Journey To Remember. The 12<sup>th</sup> Asian-Pacific Congress of Clinical Biochemistry in Seoul, Korea was one of the remarkable gatherings that I had attended. It is where multi-nationality of biochemists, medical technologists as well as doctors of various disciplines convened to discuss relevant issues in laboratory medicine and healthcare. Topics concerning standardization of laboratory tests, new biomarkers for certain diseases, molecular pathology, organ transplantation and pharmacology, were all explicitly discussed and introduced. Similarly, the product presentations of the different diagnostic companies were truly informative. And

also not to forget, the people behind the APCCB 2010, for a very organized Congress and for the warm reception they gave to all the participants.

Hence, it is such a wonderful experience to be a part of the APCCB 2010. The opportunity accorded to me by the Roche Diagnostics and International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC), as a recipient of their Travel Scholarship Grant and likewise, as one of the Young Scientist Scholarship Awardees, allowed me to present my study on the clinical significance of serum beta 2-microglobulin as an early renal marker. It brought me immense joy and honor when I was chosen by the APCCB organizers, to be one of the oral presenters during the Congress, for it is the hope of every researcher to share the result of his study. This great privilege given to me by Roche and IFCC will always remain in my heart, and surely will inspire not only the medical technologists and researchers in my country, the Philippines, but most importantly my students in the College of Medical Technology-Trinity University of Asia. All the knowledge that I gained from attending the different symposiums in the Congress, specifically those concerning clinical chemistry, would be to the utmost benefit of my students, because they are the foremost recipients of this meaningful journey.

Again, thank you very much to Roche and IFCC, to Prof. Jocelyn Hicks, past president of IFCC, for the warm welcome she gave to all the recipients of the travel grant during our meeting, and to the IFCC staff, especially Ms Silvia Cattaneo, for her kind assistance. May Roche and IFCC continue to help future scientists realize their dreams. More power to all of you!

**Minh Hieu Ta**

*Center for Gene-protein Research, Hanoi Medical University, Vietnam*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: APCCB 2010 - 3-7 October 2010 - Seoul, South KR



I am Minh Hieu Ta, researcher of the Center for Gene-protein Research at Hanoi Medical University and one of the eight young scientists awarded the Roche IFCC Travel Scholarship to attend the 12th Asian-Pacific Congress of Clinical Biochemistry (APCCB 2010). I found myself very lucky to have a chance to attend such a great congress as APCCB 2010. Attending APCCB 2010 offers me an opportunity to get access to latest research results of the clinical biochemistry.

In fact, this was the first time travel overseas to attend an international congress. Therefore, at first, I was so

nervous and stuck with worries about how to make effective contributions to the Congress and how to make the best of this valuable opportunity. However, quickly all my confusions went away when I was warmly welcomed by the organizing committee and witnessed a really scientific spirit among attendants. After 5 days being in the APCCB2010, I realized that I did enjoy the Congress. Through the workshop "How to Write Good Papers" I have learnt the difference between a good student and a researcher and how to write my ideas in a right way to get accepted by the reviewers. This kind of workshop is very useful for all the young scientists like me. I was especially attracted by the latest information and developments in the field of clinical genetic tests, particularly by Professor Yuk Ming Dennis Lo's plenary lecture. His discovery of the presence of cell-free fetal DNA in the plasma of pregnant women has turned the idea of non-invasive prenatal diagnosis into reality. He proved that instead of using invasive method which might be risky to the fetus, the fetal DNA can be extracted directly from maternal blood and be applied in numerous prenatal diagnoses. In my country (Vietnam), nowadays most hospitals still use the old-fashioned invasive method for the prenatal diagnosis of diseases related chromosome disorder. The presentation of Professor Lo has inspired me to incorporate his discovery into a project in which non-invasive prenatal diagnosis will be a nuclear method. I was also interested in poster presentation area where I could discuss directly with the authors in the same field as mine or even other fields of my interest. New ideas, technical solutions arise from here. Friendship and collaborations obviously can be established by attending scientific activities like that. I also gained valuable experience from the organization of APPCCB2010. Everything was well prepared from the first to the final day of the Congress. I think not only me but also many other people were impressed with the gala dinner which was full of color and joy brought by the traditional Korean music.

It is often said that the first time is always the most special time of your entire lifetime. Attending the APPCCB 2010 will definitely be one of my most special memories. Finally, I want to express my sincere thanks to IFCC for giving me a chance to attend the APCCB 2010.

## Jun Zhang

*Clinical Lab, Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital, Medical School of Zhejiang University, China*

Awarded a Travel Scholarship to: APCCB 2010 - 3-7 October 2010 - Seoul, South KR



With the award of Roche/IFCC Travel scholarship, I attended the XII Asian Pacific Congress of Clinical Biochemistry, which held in Seoul from October 3 to 7, 2010. During the meeting, Prof. Jocelyn M Hicks, the IFCC immediate Past President held a meeting with all the scholarship winners, she told us about the goals and function of IFCC, the reason of setting up the scholarship, encouraged us to promote knowledge by telling her own story of hard work and study experience.

In fact, this was my first time to attend such an international congress, everything was attractive to me, and I

would attend all the symposiums. However, I had to choose some of them because the schedule's overlap. I took the lectures about new tests or markers for tumor and cardiovascular-renal diseases, quality control, how to write good papers, how to set up the reference range of a test, POCT management, hormone testing standardization, molecular tests and so on. It was really "a big DINNER" for me.

The slogan or main theme of APCCB2010 is "Challenges in Future Diagnostics". After the congress, I felt it as follows: 1. development of full automation and POCT; 2. development of personalized diagnostics; 3. Development and use of molecular technology; 4. Development and use of more accurate method such like LC/MS/MS. 5. work cooperatively and international. .... For most developing countries, there will be a long time to apply those facilities, but it would be in the future.

More than 30 clinical biochemistry companies took part the congress, and most of them showed their latest generation of Machines and products such like Cobas 8000 Modular Analyzer series and the use of multiplex technology. Organizations like IFCC, AACC, CAP and APCC 2013 also showed their future and current plans in exhibition. APCC 2013 will be held in Bali, a beautiful island which I visited 3 years ago. It would be wonderful if I can attend the APCC 13 and visit scenic places again and meet the new friends whom I just made here.

In addition to symposiums, the APCCB2010 also provided Lab tours. I visited the Korea University Guro Hospital. The room of the Lab was not big, but the lab runs high efficiency with the aid of full automation systems and modern facilities. It may be a model for future clinical lab in the developed country.

During the stay in Seoul, I also experienced the culture of Korean and the beauty of the modern city. There are a lot of similarities in culture between China and Korea. I also like the people there, they are kind with guests and serious in work.

In last, I'd like to say thanks to Prof. Jocelyn M Hicks and IFCC for giving me the opportunity, and Miss Silvia Cattaneo for help of making the trip true. I did learn a lot of information from the congress, the experience in APCCB2010 would benefit my future career definitely.

### *Forthcoming meetings*

1<sup>st</sup> EFCC-BD European Conference on Preanalytical Phase: Preanalytical quality improvement- from dream to reality. 1-2 April 2011, Parma, Italy. <http://www.preanalytical-phase.org/>.

The 11<sup>th</sup> EFCC Continuous Postgraduate Course in Clinical Chemistry. New Trends in Classification, Diagnosis and Management of Inflammation. 22-23 October, 2011 Dubrovnik, Croatia. Secretariat: [sandra.berzenji@gmail.com](mailto:sandra.berzenji@gmail.com)