

# #UMTsohor

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# 17<sup>th</sup> UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA TERENGGANU CONVOCATION CEREMONY



16 - 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019





# *Congratulations*

to all UMT graduands attending the  
17<sup>th</sup> Convocation Ceremony 2019

**16 - 18 November 2019**

*We're proud of you*



# UMT AND OUC AGREE TO SET UP ACADEMIC CENTRE

UMT and a long-time partner Ocean University of China (OUC) have agreed to jointly set up a centre in UMT campus. UMT Vice Chancellor Professor Dato' Dr Nor Aieni Mokhtar said the agreement is intended to strengthen educational collaboration between UMT and OUC. The centre will be named UMT-OUC Joint Academic Centre for Marine Studies.

The respective Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed on 24 October at UMT. Professor Nor Aieni signed the document on behalf of UMT, while OUC President Professor Dr Yu Zhigang signed on behalf of OUC. Several principal officers from UMT and OUC were also present during the event.

Professor Nor Aieni said the centre will manage the programmes and activities jointly organized by UMT and OUC. These include staff and student exchanges; joint conferences and workshops on related fields such as Marine Biotechnology, Microbiology, Aquaculture, Oceanography, and Engineering; collaborative projects; joint expeditions; joint publications in high-impact journals; and joint applications for international research grants in related fields.

According to Professor Nor Aieni, OUC has agreed to provide funding for the programmes and activities



at the centre, while UMT will contribute by providing laboratory space and high-impact research equipment. After the MOA signing, UMT and OUC held the first joint workshop on Aquatic Sciences. Prominent scholars from UMT and OUC conducted the workshop that covered topics on Ocean and Environmental Studies, Aquaculture, Aquatic Microbiology, and Immunology. Professor Dr Mai Kangsen of OUC was the workshop moderator.

UMT and OUC have had a synergistic relationship since 2016. In November of that year in Qingdao, UMT and OUC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for collaborations in the fields of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Oceanography and Marine Science, Nautical Science, Environmental Science, Marine Natural Products, and Fundamental Science and Management. These collaborations further led to UMT's involvement in OUC-ASEANFEN Presidential Forum and China-ASEAN Young Scientist Training Programme in 2017. In addition, the close ties between UMT and OUC have led to the appointment of Professor Nor Aieni as OUC Honorary Visiting Professor and Professor Dr Yeong Yik Sung, Director of the Institute of Marine Biotechnology, as OUC Visiting Professor.



Source - [mok.jye@umt.edu.my](mailto:mok.jye@umt.edu.my)





# UMT RESEARCHER WINS L'OREAL-UNESCO FELLOWSHIP



UMT researcher Associate Professor Dr Wan Iryani Wan Ismail has been awarded one of the three Malaysia L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science National Fellowships for 2019. She and the other two winners were presented with the awards in a ceremony on 17 October.

Additionally, Dr Wan Iryani aims to expose the harmful effect of fake honey to health when consumed. In her previous experiments on rats, she found that pure honey could reduce obesity biomarkers. On the other hand, fake honey led to obesity in rats and caused other toxicities.

L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Fellowships are awarded annually all around the world by L'oreal, who has partnered with UNESCO. This programme aims to provide funding to young women scientists everywhere to undertake promising research projects. In Malaysia, the programme started in 2006, in partnership with Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO, Malaysian Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Higher Education, and Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. Fellowship applications are judged by a group of international scientists. The three main criteria used during the selection of the recipients are research plan, project significance, and methodology.



As one of this year's fellowship recipients, Dr Wan Iryani received RM30,000 grant money from L'Oréal to fund her research project.

After her research is completed in two years' time, Dr Wan Iryani will market local pure honey with medicinal grade globally, stop production of fake honey, and offer simple, cheap, and effective solution for obesity control.

For her application, Dr Wan Iryani proposed a research project that will help her to understand how fat cells in human bodies can react with pure honey and subsequently trigger weight loss. She will use honey from both stingless bees and stinging bees to observe the molecular mechanism at the insulin signalling pathway, which is a key regulator in human metabolism. She hopes her research will make people more inclined to consume pure honey as a supplement to healthy daily diet.

Dr Wan Iryani is currently attached to the Faculty of Science and Marine Environment as Senior Lecturer. She has a PhD in Chemical Pathology (Pharmaceutical Biotechnology: Cell Signalling).

Source - [waniryani@umt.edu.my](mailto:waniryani@umt.edu.my)





# UMT'S JOURNAL AWARDED CREME POTENTIAL 2019

UMT's Journal of Sustainability Science and Management (JSSM) has been accorded Crème Potential 2019 award by the Ministry of Education (MOE). JSSM current editor-in-chief Prof. Dr Mhd Ikhwanuddin Abdullah accepted the award during 2019 the Malaysia's Research Star Award and Jurnal Crème Recognition on 5 November.

A total of 27 Malaysian journals received Jurnal Crème Recognition 2019 for excellent performance at the international level. Four journals received the awards for the category High-performance Journals Indexed in Web of Science (WoS), 17 for the category High-performance Journals Indexed in SCOPUS, and six for the category Crème Potential.

The Ministry of Education has presented Jurnal Crème awards since 2015 to recognize locally published academic journals that have achieved excellent performance. These journals have met the criteria set by the Malaysian Citation Centre, through its partnerships with two popular indexing agencies, Clarivate Analytics and Elsevier Science.



Professor Mhd Ikhwanuddin said that the recognition given to JSSM despite its young age may be attributed to UMT's continuous efforts in producing high quality



journal and using successful strategies to increase the journal's visibility at the global level.

The next target for JSSM is to obtain the Web of Science (Main Collection) recognition next year for Core Collection. Another target is to have the journal included in the Potential Science Citation Index for this year and in Full Citation next year.

JSSM is an open-access and peer-reviewed journal that publishes scientific articles related to sustainable science, including the interaction between natural sciences, social science, technologies and management for sustainable development and wise use of resources. The journal is indexed in the Web of Science (Zoological Record), SCOPUS, MyCite, Google Scholar, Chemical Abstract, ASEAN Citation Index, and SClmago.

JSSM Editorial Board members include scholars from University of Canberra, Australia, Louisiana University, United States of America, Sun Yat-Sen University, China, Queensland University of Technology, Australia, and Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, France.

Source - [ikhwanuddin@umt.edu.my](mailto:ikhwanuddin@umt.edu.my)





# JOINT HOSTING OF BIOTECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR (BIS) 2019



The Institute of Marine Biotechnology (IMB) has collaborated with Ghent University, Belgium, to jointly host the first Biotechnology International Seminar (BIS) 2019. The seminar was held at UMT on 24 October.

The goal of the seminar was to bring together experts in biotechnology-related fields to share novel findings from their research. A total of 11 prominent researchers were invited to present significant outcomes of their research in specific fields including Bioinformatics, Aquaculture, and Molecular Biology.

One of the invited speakers was UMT researcher Professor Dr Tg. Sifzul Tg. Muhammad, who is currently the Director of the Centre for Research and Information Management (CRIM), and a renowned figure in Molecular Biology. Professor Tg Sifzul presented his research "How to Heal a Broken Heart? A Molecular Biologist's Perspective".



Another invited speaker with close connection with UMT was Emeritus Professor Dr Patrick Sorgeloos of Ghent University, holder of UMT Sultan Mizan Professorial Chair since November 2016. An



expert in Aquaculture, Professor Sorgeloos presented his research "Sustainable Intensification of Aquaculture: Need for Integrated Systems".

The other invited speakers were Professor Dr Yves Von de Peer (Bioinformatics) from Flemish Institute of Biotechnology, Belgium; Professor Dr Victor Kuwahara (Physical Oceanography) from Soka University, Japan; Professor Dr Wang Min (Aquatic Virology) from Ocean University of China, China; Professor Dr Hans J Nauwynck (Animal Health) from Ghent University, Belgium; Professor Dr Tatsuki Toda (Aquatic Sciences) from Soka University, Japan; Professor Dr John Benzie (Genetics) from World Fish; Associate Professor Dr Elfahmi S. Si (Phytochemistry) from Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia; Professor Dr Nurhadiani Ismail (Natural Products) from Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia; and Associate Professor Dr Subha Bhasu (Molecular Biology) from Universiti Malaya, Malaysia.

UMT and Ghent University have been involved in several collaborations in the past. In December 2016, UMT and Ghent University signed a Memorandum of Understanding for staff and student exchanges and joint international grants.

Several professors from Ghent University have been invited to UMT as visiting professors. In addition, its researcher Emeritus Professor Dr Patrick Sorgeloos has held UMT Sultan Mizan Professorial Chair since 2016.

Source - [thiru@umt.edu.my](mailto:thiru@umt.edu.my)



## URBAN FARMING WORKSHOP FOR THE DISABLED



A team of 12 UMT researchers have taken an initiative to help the disabled become independent and achieve financial stability in life. They organized a two-day urban farming workshop for 30 disabled participants on 3-4 November.

The workshop was part of their project under the Knowledge and Technology Assimilation Grant (KTAG) Scheme 2019. It was also one of the corporate social responsibility activities for UMT Master of Business Administration (MBA) students. A total of 17 MBA students taking the Business Ethics and Corporate Administration subject were involved.

During the workshop, the participants were introduced to an urban farming technique, hydroponics, which can be turned into a source of income. They were also taught several elements of business administration, including business ethics, administration, operations, marketing, financial management, and urban farming business plan. The workshop involved in-class and hands-on sessions.

KTAG project leader Associate Professor Dr Hafiza Aishah Hashim said that having the proper business knowledge will help the disabled start their

own businesses, which will give them means to financially support themselves.

The 30 participants who attended the programme are members of the Association of the Disabled of Terengganu (POKUAT).

One of the participants, Mariam Mohamed, spoke highly of the workshop. She was thankful that the team organized the workshop that not only taught her about hydroponics technique but also how to be successful in business. After losing her left leg in a horrific accident, Mariam has been making Malay traditional dessert and snack foods.

The workshop received supports from several agencies including Terengganu Incorporated Sdn Bhd, Sultan Mizan Royal Foundation, Terengganu Department of Agriculture, Terengganu Farmers' Organization Authority, DIY Hydroponic, Noor Arfa Batik, and Scout Inn Resort who contributed through their corporate social responsibility programmes.



Dr Hafiza said that her team will continue to monitor the progress of the participants' businesses and be ever ready to provide expertise and consultation if needed.

Source - [hafizaashah@umt.edu.my](mailto:hafizaashah@umt.edu.my)



# About UMTSOHOR ENEWSLETTER

UMTSohor eNewsletter is a monthly online newsletter, published as one of the platforms to let the public know more about Universiti Malaysia Terengganu. In each issue, we highlight some of the significant and memorable events happening recently at UMT.

UMTSohor is a term coined by the top management as a branding strategy. Since UMT is located in Terengganu, befittingly a local word "sohor" is added to the university's

acronym. "Sohor" means renowned in English. So UMTSohor in essence means UMT is renowned, famous. And if UMT is not already is, it is certainly working towards achieving that stature.

We hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter, and subsequently marked the calendar for the release dates of future issues, so you can be constantly updated.

