

SEED-Net *News*

Quarterly Newsletter of the ASEAN University Network/Southeast Asia Engineering Education Development Network



AUN/SEED-Net Secretariat

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Message from New Executive Director



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Prakrit
Tangtisanon

Succeeding the former Executive Director, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sucharit Koontanakulvong, I am very pleased to be appointed as Executive Director of the AUN/SEED-Net Secretariat and to take responsibility in maintaining this established engineering network of the ASEAN region.

Based on the paramount importance of human resource development in ASEAN region, the AUN/SEED-Net Phase II maintains its focus on the upgrade of higher engineering education. A regional network of intellectuals will be further expanded and strengthened mainly through the Graduate Programs. The network continues to play a leading role in transferring and disseminating knowledge of new technology to younger generations for the success of country development. It is important to note that under the AUN/SEED-Net Project, students are being provided with a good chance to be trained of advanced engineering education and making use of their technical knowledge and professional expertise for the sustainable development of their countries and the region.

With the aim of fulfilling AUN/SEED-Net's expected outputs of Phase II, students, faculty staff, Member Institutions, Japanese Supporting Universities, and JICA need to make devoted and concerted efforts. Collaborative studies and the exchange of cultural and academic experience among students and academicians from different universities will further strengthen the human network of AUN/SEED-Net for a better and brighter future of ASEAN. On this occasion, I would like to extend my appreciation for the commendable and continued efforts of all involved parties.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Prakrit Tangtisanon
Executive Director
AUN/SEED-Net Secretariat



AUN/SEED-Net Receives JICA Award

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) presented the JICA Award to the AUN/SEED-Net Project for outstanding contribution to human resource development in ASEAN countries during the five years of operation in Phase I. The award was announced in September 2008 at the JICA Headquarters in Tokyo and was given to the Project on November 6, 2008 in Bangkok.

On behalf of all Member Institutions, Dean of Engineering of Chulalongkorn University Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boonsom Lerdhirunwong, Vice President of King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruttikorn Varakulsiripunth, Deputy Dean of Engineering of Burapha University Dr. Charoen Chinwanitcharoen, AUN/SEED-Net Executive Director Assoc. Prof. Dr. Prakrit Tangtisanon, and Program Coordinators Mr. UMEMIYA Naoki and Mr. YAMADA Sakae, received the JICA Award from Mr. ONODA Katsuji, Chief Representative of JICA Thailand Office.

The JICA Award is the award for successful projects with outstanding results contributing to development of human resource, society, and economy as well as promoting mutual understanding and relationship between Japan and other countries. The awarding selection is made every five years from over 800 JICA projects around the world. For this round, AUN/SEED-Net is one of 22 projects awarded.

Master's and PhD Scholarship Programs open for application until Jan 30, 2009.
To apply, go to http://www.seed-net.org/application_form.html.



Regional Conference on Manufacturing Engineering 2008

Regional Conference on Manufacturing Engineering 2008 was organized by De La Salle University (DLSU) during November 24-25, 2008 at Manila, the Philippines. There were over 100 participants including 18 from member institutions, one self-financed from Nanyang Technological University (NTU), seven Japanese professors, one PhD student in Japan, one alumnus from Gadjah Mada University (UGM), faculty staff and students of DLSU as well as other local universities, and representatives of private companies. Presiding the conference were distinguished guests from the Philippines' Commission on Higher Education, Department of Science and Technology, Board of Investments and Manila Bulletin, as well as Executive Director of the ASEAN Foundation.

After paper presentations from Japanese professors, three parallel technical sessions took place in the afternoon of the first day, divided by collaborative research umbrellas: (1) Manufacturing Process, (2) Product Design and Development, and (3) Manufacturing System. As many as 30 oral presentations were made at the conference; 12 of them were from oversea delegates, 4 from current AUN/SEED-Net students, and one each from an alumnus and a PhD in Japan student.

At the conference the member institutions discussed about revision of research umbrellas/topics, about which University of Malaya (UM), the host of this field, expected for more feedbacks or additional research topics proposed from sending institutions until the end of December 2008. In an attempt to found an academic society for Manufacturing Engineering field, the member institutions agreed to start from annual or quarterly online journal. The journal could begin its first step by selection of papers among those presented in this conference.

The next regional conference in Manufacturing Engineering will be held in Indonesia by Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB) in 2009.



Students' Achievements



Dr. Huynh Ky Phuong Ha, PhD Sandwich graduate from De La Salle University and now faculty staff at Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology, was awarded the 2008 Outstanding Scientific Paper Award by the National Academy of Science and Technology of the Philippines (NAST). His paper on "Modeling and Optimization of Supercritical Carbon Dioxide Extraction

on Essential Oil from Lemongrass using Response Surface Methodology" was selected for the quality of content, contribution to science and technology, clarity of presentation, and thoroughness of documentation.

Mr. Muhammad Agung Bramantya's poster entitled "Experimental Analysis of Clustering Structures in Magnetic and MR Fluid by Ultrasound" won the Best Poster Prize at the 11th International Conference on Electrorheological Fluids and Magnetorheological Suspensions (ERMR2008), organized in Dresden, Germany, on August 25-29, 2008. Sent by Gadjah Mada University, Mr. Bramantya is now studying at Keio University after graduation from University of Malaya under the AUN/SEED-Net scholarships.



AUN/SEED-Net Staff Change



Mr. IWADATE Hiroshi, Program Coordinator, has resigned from the AUN/SEED-Net Project since July 2008, after many years of work with the Project.



Ms. Siriporn Laosang (left), Senior Program Officer in charge of the field of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) and Mechanical/Aeronautical Engineering (ME/AE), has resigned since November 2008. Her duties have been transferred to Ms. Namtan Siriboon (right), who newly joined the project as Program Officer in January 2009.





Souvenir from Manila

A special story by Asst. Prof. Dr. Paveena Chaovalitwongse
Industrial Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering,
Chulalongkorn University

The story I am about to tell you is the story of my unfortunate event in Manila caused by Suvarnabhumi airport closure. I know that this event might not be life-threatening but it did affect my life and others' who were with me at that time in some ways. At least, it was the best way to learn about ASEAN countries for me. My story begins here.

I went to Manila to join the 1st AUN/SEED-Net Regional Conference in Manufacturing Engineering. It was my first time to go to Manila as well as my first time to join AUN/SEED-Net conference as a delegate. Joining this conference, I experienced something different from other conferences I had been to. First of all, I was very impressed with the AUN/SEED-Net Office who helped me organized my itinerary. All I had to do was pack-and-go. As for Department of Manufacturing Engineering and Management at De La Salle University, they were great in organizing the conference to go as planned. Academics-wise, I was also astonished to see many professors from highly respected universities in Japan coming and sharing their excellent work with all delegates. The delegates also had an opportunity to share their work among themselves and Japanese professors. I knew that it was not easy to have delegates from all ASEAN countries and prominent Japanese professors in the same conference. I would say that this conference was successful and went very well.

However, the not-went-well part happened when I received a phone call from Bangkok telling me about Suvarnabhumi airport situation on the night before my departure. The next morning I shared my information to other delegates. We still assumed that we could go home as our schedule. Then the moment of truth came. About 15 minutes before the pick up time, the phone rang. That voice on the phone was still loud and clear in my memory: "Dr. Paveena, could you please come down to the lobby? We have a situation." I came down to the lobby and prayed that I could go home. My heart kept pounding. Every part of my body was numbed. Then Mr. Umemiya (AUN/SEED-Net Program Coordinator) told us that we might have to stay a little longer. We were instructed to stay in our rooms waiting for any update. Then I received another call notifying me that we had to stay at least another night and waited for any change. I started to get worried.

From one night, it extended to four more nights in Manila longer than what we planned. Every morning after breakfast most of stranded delegates gathered around the lobby to support Mr. Umemiya and Miss Karnkitti (AUN/SEED-Net Program Officer) who had worked very hard to arrange our trip home. I knew that everyone was stressed or might be depressed. Getting the flight home was not the only problem we had. When we had to stay longer than expected, we started to have consequent problems such as money and clothes. Most of us got new clothes from the department store across the hotel.

Even we were able to leave Manila finally, we could not find any way to go home directly from Manila. We could not wait until the reopening of Suvarnabhumi airport, so we did a little tour around ASEAN countries. After Manila, we stopped over Ho Chi Minh City for one night. The next morning we flew to Vientiane but had a brief stop in Phnom Penh. We arrived in Vientiane in the evening. I knew that I would be home in less than 12 hours, and it made me feel exhilarated. I could not wait to call my family. Before we left Vientiane by van, we stopped at Pha That Luang, the Golden Stupa to pay homage. When we were about to get back to the van, we saw the moon smiling at us (Earth Shine phenomenon or the smiley celestial face created by Venus, Jupiter and Moon). It was like a blissful moment to me. I was on my way home, I felt the blessing from Pha That Luang, and the moon was smiling at me.

After the long adventure, we arrived in Bangkok early morning of December 2. Totally we spent six more nights to find our way home from Manila. I cannot describe how happy I was to be home. From this experience, I have not only a story to share with my friends and family, but also the friendship developed among our delegates, Mr. Umemiya, and Miss Karnkitti during our difficult time. And it is the best souvenir from Manila for me.



The conference



Stranded delegates from Laos, Myanmar and Thailand with attentive DLSU staff



Second day in Manila



Third day in Manila



Sixth day on the way home: in Ho Chi Minh City

The 15th Steering Committee Meeting Marks Promising Start of Phase II

The AUN/SEED-Net Project celebrated its success in the first phase and began its second phase with high promise committed from ASEAN and Japanese delegates at the 15th Steering Committee Meeting and Year 2008 Annual Meeting, held on October 22, 2008 at the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Headquarters, Tokyo, Japan.

As the first meeting for the second phase, the 15th Steering Committee Meeting was organized to commemorate achievements of the first phase and the outset of the second phase, which has been kicked off on March 11, 2008. Apart from steering committee members and representatives of 19 member institutions in ASEAN, ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN University Network Secretariat, Japanese Supporting University Consortium, JICA, and AUN/SEED-Net Secretariat, the meeting specially invited high rank officials in charge of higher education from 10 ASEAN countries, representatives of 11 Japanese supporting universities, as well as delegates from Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan to get hold of their understanding and active support to the project. They appreciated the project's work and would look for support from political leaders and other organizations. During the meeting the 19 member

institutions also signed the Memorandum of Understanding for future collaboration as a step towards foundation of ASEAN - Japan graduate school consortium for the region.

Above: The Meeting

Below: The MOU signing ceremony



The Symposium

To publicize and promote the project to be the regional public goods, the Commemorative Symposium on the AUN/SEED-Net Project Phase II with a focus on strategic partnership on higher education between ASEAN and Japan was arranged in conjunction on October 23, 2008. It attracted almost 200 attendants from Japan and other countries that were interested in this largest project of JICA. Keynote speakers and panelists were prominent figures from both Japanese and ASEAN sides, such as Prof. Dr. KIMURA Tsutomu, President of National Institute for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation, Mr. TOKUNAGA Tamotsu, Director-General of Higher Education Bureau of MEXT, Mr. WATANABE Masato, Deputy Director-General of International Cooperation Bureau of MOFA, Prof. Dr. OHGAKI Shinichiro, Chairman of Japanese Supporting University Consortium, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Piniti Ratananukul, Executive Director of ASEAN University Network, and Prof. Dr. Rowena Cristina L. Guevara, Dean of Faculty of Engineering of University of the Philippines-Diliman. All of them admired the project's merits and wished for its further success and sustainability.



Upcoming Events

January 22 - 23, 2009	The International Symposium on Multimedia and Communication Technology 2009: Emerging Technologies in Multimedia and Communication Technology @ Bangkok, Thailand (http://splab.cs.kitami-it.ac.jp/ismac2009/)
January 22 - 23, 2009	The 1st Regional Conference in Chemical Engineering: Research and Development in Chemical Engineering among Academe, Industry, and Government in the ASEAN Region @ Manila, the Philippines
February 2 - 3, 2009	The 1st Regional Conference in Global Environment @ Manila, the Philippines
February 16 - 17, 2009	The 1st AUN/SEED-Net Regional Conference on Materials 2009: Leading the Path of Engineers @ Penang, Malaysia (http://aunseednet.eng.usm.my/rcm2009.htm)
March 3 - 4, 2009	The 1st Regional Workshop on Geo-Disaster Mitigation in ASEAN @ Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (http://mineral.eng.usm.my/geoenv2009.htm)
March 3 - 4, 2009	The 1st Regional Workshop on Information and Communication Technology: Information and Communication Technology for Ubiquitous Society @ Bangkok, Thailand
March 5 - 6, 2009	The 1st Regional Conference on Biotechnology: Biofuel @ Bangkok, Thailand
March 10, 2009	AUN/SEED-Net Open House @ Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
March 11, 2009	AUN/SEED-Net Open House @ Institut Teknologi Bandung, Bandung, Indonesia
March 12 - 13, 2009	The 1st Regional Workshop in New/Renewable Energy @ Bandung, Indonesia
March 12 - 13, 2009	The 1st ASEAN Civil Engineering Conference: Civil Engineering Innovations for Regional Development @ Pattaya, Thailand (http://conference.eng.chula.ac.th/index.php/accec2008)