

Secretary's Report for September 2000 -- August 2001

Dear Fellow ICAAS Members,

For ICAAS, the year 2001 has been a very active one indeed. A summary is provided below.

The year began with the collaboration of the ICAAS and the Singapore National Library Board to launch a public lecture series on Life Sciences. The series was the result of an inspired suggestion by ICAAS member Dr. Hing Yan Lee and taken up enthusiastically by ICAAS President Mr. Raymond Kwok. It was planned to response to Singapore's national effort to build biomedical sciences into a new pillar of our economy. The series consisted of monthly talks on life sciences and related technologies given by prominent researchers in Singapore. ICAAS member Associate Professor Wong Limsoon, gave the fourth talk of the series and the subject was the extremely hot topic of the "marriage of computer science and molecular biology", better known as "bioinformatics." The series was launched on the 16 January 2001 by Mr. Philip Yeo, Chairman of Singapore National Science and Technology Board. We have organized 6 talks since January and each was attended by well over 100 members of the general public. We have lined up a further 6 talks to the end of the year. These talks also received the generous sponsorships of the Singapore Genomics Program (January -- June 2001) and the Singapore Economics Development Board (January 2001 -- December 2001). The details of the first series of talks are recorded below:

16/ A/Prof. Kong Hwai Loong 1 Director, Singapore Genomics Program	What the Human Genetic Revolution Means to You
20/ Dr. Eric Yap 2 Director, Defense Medical Research Institute	Genes, Germs and Galaxies
20/ Dr. Ng See Kiong 3 Principal Investigator, Data Integration & Datamining Group, Kent Ridge Digital Labs	Decoding the Book of Life
17/ A/Prof. Wong Limsoon 4 Director, Bioinformatics, Kent Ridge Digital Labs	Marriage of Computer Science and Molecular Biology
15/ Dr. Prasanna Kolatkar 5 Chairman, Research Council, NUS BioInformatics Council	Lead Actors in the Dance of Life
19/ Dr. Tan Ene Choo 6 National University Hospital & Defense Medical Research Institute	Not by Gene Alone

The second major effort undertaken by ICAAS was the collaboration with the Singapore National Library Board on a second series of public lectures, this time on information technology. This series was launched on 27 March 2001 by Ms Ngian Lek Choh, Acting Chief Executive of the Singapore National Library Board. The series consisted of monthly talks by

prominent researchers and entrepreneurs in Singapore. ICAAS member Professor Wu Jian Kang, delivered the second talk of the series and spoke on the subject of "digital watermark and protection of digital assets." We have organized 3 talks since March and each was attended by nearly 100 members of the general public. We were particularly pleased that the inaugural talk of this series, which was on "search engines," was attended by a large contingent of professional librarians from all over Southeast Asia! Six talks would have been delivered by September and a further six talks have been planned after that. The second six talks received the generous sponsorship of Defense Science and Technology Agency. The details of the talks given so far are listed below:

27/ Dr. Leong Mun Kew 3 CTO, BigontheNet.com	1500 Search Engines on the Web! Which One's Right for Me?
24/ Prof. Wu Jiankang 4 MD, Trustcopy Pte Ltd	Digital Watermark---Protecting Your Digital Assets
22/ Chua Koon Beng 5 VP, Earth9.com	Getting Organised Over the Web
26/ A/Prof. Liu Bing 6 NUS School of Computing	Mining useful knowledge from databases
24/ Dr. Tan Ah Hwee 7 Senior Member of the Research Staff, Kent Ridge Digital Labs	Personal Content Management---The Life after Search

A third major effort was instigated by our active Youth Wing members, which lead to the formation of the Imperial College Alumni Feedback Group (ICAF) this year. The purpose of the ICAF, lead by ICAAS member Captain Fred Chew, was to provide an organized framework within which returned IC graduates could share views on society issues at large. So far, the group had already discussed the process and impact of globalization on Singapore at a closed-door meeting moderated by Mr. David Lim, Minister of State for Defence and Minister of State for Information and the Arts. On 7th July, the Group discussed issues of engaging the young Singaporeans at a closed-door meeting moderated by Mr. Matthias Yao, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office.

Another major effort worth mentioning was the collaboration of ICAAS and the MIT Club of Singapore to organize the Annual Most Outstanding Science Student Award. The best science student in Singapore secondary schools and junior colleges would be chosen to receive this award every year. The most attractive part of the prize was the trip to attend the Nobel Prize ceremony in Sweden. The credit for organizing the ICAAS-MIT Award and securing a seat at the ceremony annually went to ICAAS founding member Prof. K. K. Phua, and the cost of the annual trip was also contributed by his company, World Scientific Publishing. A very well-attended gala dinner was also held on 1 September 2000 to present the prizes to the winners.

Besides the events mentioned above, ICAAS also had lighter moments. At every second Tuesday of the month, the ICAAS regulars would meet at the SAFRA Town Club at the fashionable Orchard Road for drinks and chats. The regulars also had a very tasty "loh heh," or prosperity meal, during Chinese New Year. Several ICAAS members also had an opportunity to breakfast

with Sir Richard Sykes, the new Rector of Imperial College when he was in Singapore on 28 September 2000. Over 30 people also enjoyed the excellent bowling competition with other alumni clubs on 21st July organized by the Youth Wing headed by Mr Lee Hiang Meng.

Coming up soon on 23rd August will be ICAAS AGM. In conjunction with the AGM will be the IC Nite, jointly organized by ICAAS and ICSS. Credits for the success of this very important event will go to the team comprising ICAAS Vice President Leong Yim Sing and several hardworking members of the ICAAS Youth Wing and ICSS.

Lastly, there will be a gala dinner on 25 September 2001. This event is titled "IC Master Class on Entrepreneurship" and will feature an expert lecture given by Prof. Sue Birley from the Imperial College Management School. ICAAS member Dr. Lee Hing Yan is the major driving force behind this event. Supporting him are ICAAS President Mr. Raymond Kwok (and his ``girls") and other ICAAS members Mark Wong, Timothy Toh, Lee Hiang Meng, and Jayson Goh.

Report prepared by
Limsoon Wong (Computing'88)
Honorary Secretary, Imperial College Alumni Association of Singapore
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