Mahidol University Award winners for 2012 announced

Eight scholars won Mahidol University Awards for 2012 for their teaching and research excellence, Prof. Rajata Rajatanavin, M.D., president of Mahidol University announced on June 18, 2013.

The award winners, recognized for their contribution to academic development and the public, will receive the awards from H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn at Mahidol University's commencement ceremony on July 4, 2013 at Royal Thai Navy Grand Hall.

Each awardee will also be presented with a 200,000 baht cash prize.

The awards were established in 1975 to honor and provide moral support for university personnel who are dedicated to their work and attain excellence in their respective fields.

The winners for academic year 2012 in five categories—teaching excellence, research, invention, textbook excellence and service—are listed below.

**Teaching Excellence**

**Asst. Prof. Dr. Atitaya Siripinyanond**, Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science, for her outstanding teaching and encouragement of student participation. In her classroom, Dr. Atitaya motivates her students to ask and answer questions, and engage in learning and discussion. She has also successfully developed and applied laboratory analytical techniques for her research.

Dr. Atitya is a recipient of a Young Scientist Award from Foundation for Promotion of Science and Technology under the Patronage of H.M. the King, TWAS Prize for Young Scientists in Thailand in the field of chemistry, and a research fund from L’Oreal’s For Women in Science.

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pattarachai Kiratisin**, M.D., Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, for his dedication to teaching and nurturing humanity in medical students so they would be doctors for the benefit of mankind in the footsteps of His Royal Father, H.R.H. Prince Mahidol of Songkla, the university’s namesake.

Dr. Pattarachai, a former president of MU Medical Student Union, is the first Thai recipient of a Young Investigator Award from American Society for Microbiology and American Academy of Microbiology, a Best Pre-clinical Research Award, and other awards from his textbooks and research projects. He was formerly deputy dean for student affairs.
**Research**

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mathurose Ponglikitmonkol**, Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Science, for the research project titled “E6* Protein of Human Papillomavirus 16 Promotes Drug Resistance in Cervical Cancerous Cells”.

The research found that the protein of HPV 16, whose infection is a major cause of cervical cancer, can disrupt human genes, causing increased production of aldo-keto reductase enzymes by cervical cancerous cells and making them more resistant to certain anti-cancer drugs. The findings contribute to chemotherapy treatment of cervical cancer.

**Invention**

**Assoc. Prof. Sirichit Wongkamchai**, Department of Parasitology, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, for a rapid test kit for detecting lymphatic filariasis (elephantiasis). The test kit, which won a National Invention Award, has been patented with Intellectual Property Department.

The device can replace the more expensive imported counterparts. Simple to use and read, and providing results in 15 minutes, it is suitable for onsite testing, allowing medical personnel to prescribe drugs to those found infected with the disease on the spot.

**Asst. Prof. Dr. Zeng Lertmanorat**, Department of Electrical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, for a neuromuscular electrical stimulation system that helps drop-foot patients—those with central nervous system disorders who cannot raise the front part of the foot to accommodate a smooth gait.

When an individual equipped with this device swings his or her legs forward, heel rise triggers a microprocessor to send electrical pulses to the nerve that controls the foot, lifting it, and allowing the patient to walk smoothly.

With the size of a match box, the device is convenient to use and ten times cheaper than imported products.
Textbook Excellence

Assoc. Prof. Thanongchai Siriapisith, M.D., Department of Radiology, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, for *Cardiovascular Computed Tomography*, compiled for training programs for residents, general practitioners and interested physicians.

The textbook helps doctors understand CT scanning techniques, how to evaluate and interpret CT scans, and to make proper prescriptions. It also explains radiologic procedures and techniques and how to achieve best imaging results.

Service

Clin. Prof. Pornchai Mulpruek, Department of Orthopedics, Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital, for founding Pediatric Orthopedics Unit and introducing ultrasound screening for dislocation of the hip in newborns. Highly praised by patients and their families, he was recognized as a “Best Rama Person” for 2011.

During Thailand's massive flood in 2011, he joined in the efforts to provide health advice, e.g. necessary medications to be included in an emergency kit, and medical information for the public.

Assoc. Prof. Pradit Somprakij, M.D., deputy dean for finance, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, for his leadership in developing a process to link the hospital’s finance and drug administration, and a prescription and drug delivery system for inpatients.

He was also instrumental in the faculty's replacing cash accounting with accrual accounting, and adopting Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Management Data Warehouse, which support effective financial policy making decisions.