

## **WUN Symposium cum Research Summit**

### Impacts of Grain Legume Research and Development in Developing Countries

Held at The Chinese University of Hong Kong

June 8-17, 2017

More than 100 participants from six continents gathered at The Chinese University of Hong Kong to attend the WUN Symposium cum Research Summit: Impacts of Grain Legume Research and Development in Developing Countries in June 2017.

It is a multi-national, multi-disciplinary, multi-level, and multi-purpose meeting which aimed to form international research collaboration networks among both established and young scientists in the field.

The Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Prof. Fanny M.C. Cheung, delivered an encouraging speech to welcome all young scientists to the Research Summit. (Full Opening speech: <http://csr.cuhk.edu.hk/legumes2017/welcoming-note/>) The event was kicked off by a series of multi-disciplinary mini-lectures and site visits tailored made for young scholars. The 50+ young scholars from different countries were divided into six groups to prepare research proposals for a young scholar competition. Three senior tutors, Dr. Brett Ferguson (Australia), Prof. Ndiko Ludidi (South Africa), and Dr. Nacira Munoz (Argentina) acted as mentors to guide the preparation of the research proposals.



Group Photos on Welcoming Ceremony of Research Summit, with 53 young scientist participants and honorable guests. (First Row from Right: Ms. Yvonne Heung, Dr. Lucia P.S. Liu, Ms. Shally Fan, Prof. Jerome H.L. Hui, Prof. Sai-Ming Ngai, Prof. Amos P.K. Tai, Prof. Fanny M.C. Cheung, Prof. Hon-Ming Lam, Prof. Ting-Fung Chan, Prof. Junxian He, Dr. Brett Ferguson, Prof. Jimmy H.M. Lee)

The 3-day WUN Symposium was a scientific meeting for high level scientific exchange. The Opening Ceremony was officiated by Prof. Joseph J.Y. Sung, Chair of the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN), and the Vice-Chancellor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (Full Opening Speech: <http://csr.cuhk.edu.hk/legumes2017/opening-remarks/>). Keynote speakers are research leaders in the field, including Dr. Brett Ferguson (Australia), Prof. Christine Foyer (United Kingdom), Prof. Junyi Gai (China), Prof. Scott Jackson (USA), Prof. Hon-Ming Lam (Hong Kong), Prof. Henry Nguyen (USA), Prof. Kadambot Siddique (Australia), and Prof. Rajeev Varshney (India). In addition, there are 27 short talks by other prestigious international scientists.

(See full program on <https://csr.cuhk.edu.hk/legumes2017/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/06/Program-Rundown-WUN-Legume-Symposium-cum-Research-Summit-June-2017.pdf>)





Opening Ceremony of International Symposium. (From Right: Prof. Kam-Bo Wong, Prof. Om Parkash Dhankher, Dr. Brett Ferguson, Prof. Kadambot Siddique, Prof. Joseph J.Y. Sung, Prof. Hon-Ming Lam, Prof. Junyi Gai, Prof. Henry Nguyen, Prof. Vara Prasad, Dr. Michael Considine and Ms. Lianne Ng)

One highlight of this event is a young scholar competition. Six groups of young scholars presented their research proposals, which were results of their hard works from their sleepless nights in Hong Kong, to a judging panel comprising of 15 Symposium speakers. Both the judges and audience asked probing questions, leading to a strong taste of scientific debates. While the winners got a cash prize, all young scholars gain friendship and invaluable experiences through scientific discussion with international peers.



Winners and Judges of the Young Scholar Competition.

Chaired by the local host Prof. Hon-Ming Lam, another highlight of this event is the discussion session that focused on the way forward. Prof. Christine Foyer, Prof. Henry Nguyen, and Prof. Hon-Ming Lam will co-edit a special issue in *Plant, Cell & Environment* dedicated to legumes. A joint review will be written to discuss on new perspectives of climate changes and the role of legumes. Several international collaboration initiatives were proposed and will be followed up by different groups.

The event was ended with an eco-tour to visit the Hong Kong Global Geopark. It gave the participants a chance to know more about the geography of Hong Kong, to cherish their friendship with new friends, and to continue their informal discussion of collaborations.

The chair of the organization committee of this event, Prof. Hon-Ming Lam on his Facebook, has shared his personal reflections:

- (1) The event has come to the end today, and today signifies a new start of our cross-territory and cross-disciplinary friendships and collaborations.
- (2) All physical barriers are man-made items. We are connected under the same sky and by our loves in science.
- (3) We have experienced hot sunny days, typhoon, and thunderstorm in this event. Just like the research life, we will treasure each moment we have been through, especially when friends are accompanying us.
- (4) We will have hot debates and arguments sometimes. When the disputes settled, we will laugh together again. It is life and it is science. For life, we just have to agree to disagree. For science, the data will speak for the truth.
- (5) When people are giving me all the credits for organizing this event, I must humbly admit that it is a result of the dedicated efforts of my team and the enthusiasm of all participants.



Group Photos with all young scientist participants, distinguished speakers and guests.

A **Facebook Page** (<https://www.facebook.com/WUN-Symposium-cum-Research-Summit-2017-747625438743278/>) has been set up, for all young and senior scientists to connect, and let the memories of the Symposium cum Research Summit stay fresh.

All photos have been uploaded to **photo albums** (<https://csr.cuhk.edu.hk/legumes2017/event-gallery/>) on the official website of this event. In addition, a **short video** capturing the memorable moment of this event is also available for public sharing. (<https://csr.cuhk.edu.hk/legumes2017/event-video/> or <https://youtu.be/Mb5ekHV5YMg>)