

Voice of the International Students

VIS

医学研究院
国際連携部門だより

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What is VIS ?

The International Relations Division of the Faculty of Medicine issues VIS to send out the live messages from International Students of Graduate School of Medicine, Graduate School of Biomedical Science, and School of Medicine, and to promote the exchange of intercultural information. We hope VIS helps to cultivate intercultural communications and boost international exchanges.

VISの発行の目的は、医学院・医理工学院・医学部医学科の留学生の生の声を発信することと、異文化間の情報交換を促進することです。VISが異文化間のコミュニケーションを養い、国際交流を実行していくうえで役立つことを望みます。

CONGRATULATIONS ON GRADUATION

Hokkaido university, a journey in my second home

There is a saying that university is the second home, and that it should be a true for everyone who studies at the Hokkaido University. Time flies so fast, since I entered the university as master course student. It was amazing experience for me and a lovely study life, enjoyment, freedom, and friendship. I am graduating from the university with a lot of sweet memories that can not be forgotten.

I would like to thank everyone in the university for warm welcoming I got since the beginning of my study journey in Hokkaido university. This journey started in October 2016 when I was accepted as a master student at the at Graduate School of Medicine, the Department of Orthopedic Surgery. With great support of my supervisor, advisor and students, I completed my master course in two years and decided to continue my study and to enter PhD course. Although it was very challenging for me, the environment in our laboratory due to the management of our professor encouraged me to accept this challenge and to proceed with this journey. I am always grateful to my professor and advisor for their support and help that make the students very confident and productive in excellent environment for research and study.

In this journey, I could make a lot of friends from different nationalities who are students studying in this university and we keep meeting each other when we have time. I also could make friends of these who are working in the university, and they helped me a lot in the

preparation of Japanese documents I needed to submit to administrative office during my study. I remember when I was presenting my results in the final exam, friends who attend told me that you are not alone we are supporting you and standing as a team to reach your own goal. I appreciate them and I won't forget the memories with my friends.

This journey granted me experiences that I cannot forget. After four years I spent in my PhD course, I have published my research in high impact factor journal (Nature Communications) and I had a great honor to receive the 18th Otowa Hirotsugu Scholarship award. Moreover, I have been selected as a representative student to receive my PhD certificate at the stage during the graduation ceremony of our university. I am proud that I was selected as a valedictorian of the doctoral course of the Graduate School of Medicine. These make me confident to build my resume and start a job hunting for my future. Thank you everyone in our university for warmth and hospitality, you make me feel strong and safe as home.



Hend Terukawa (Japan)

Completion: Master & Ph.D. in 2022
Department of Orthopedic Surgery
Period: October 2018–September 2022



CONGRATULATIONS ON GRADUATION

Boys, be ambitious!



An Ning (China)

Completion : Ph.D. in 2023
Department of Immunology
Period: October 2018–March 2023

Finally, I got relief because everyone said that the Ph.D. is a purgatory, and today I can graduate! I am very grateful to my lab members, family, and friends who have helped me during this period, my success is inseparable from your spiritual and material support.

I have dreamed of being a great doctor since I was a child, who can cure various diseases through superb medical knowledge and skills. During my undergraduate clinical internship, I witnessed that many cancer patients still cannot receive effective treatments, and the options are still very limited. Therefore, in order to learn cutting-edge knowledge and explore novel molecular mechanisms in the cancer immunotherapy field, I decided to study abroad at the Kobayashi Lab of Hokkaido University in 2018 October.

In the first two years, I always failed and felt lost due to a lack of experience in experiments. Failure was caused by various aspects: misunderstandings with my supervisor because of the language barrier, different thinking and expressing styles; lack of knowledge of the project; operation not accurate enough, and so on, which made me feel anxious and doubt myself every day. Later, through chatting with seniors, I gradually realized that the supervisor's job is just general guidance of macro-control, Ph.D. students should read more literature to generate new ideas, and optimize experimental conditions step by step by themselves. Ph.D. is like a monk, who needs to pursue a goal and have to get used to being alone. Research means "re-search", there will be a solution or answer if you continuously search deep enough. From the third year onwards, my project has gradually been on the right track, and meaningful data started to accumulate, this made me feel I've grown up, solid, and excited.

Looking back at these extraordinary years, all the efforts are worthwhile; these will become the medals in your twilight years. The purpose of studying abroad is not only about obtaining a degree but more about the impact on the diversification of a young person's values from different directions, which in turn affects the judgment of the future. Undoubtedly, every Ph.D. has bitter tears, but no pain no gain. At the best age, brave guys should be like Dr. Clark said, "Boys, be ambitious."

Congratulations to graduation – we did it!

When I knew that I was nominated as representative of graduate students in commencement ceremony, I was filled with a mix of emotions – pride, joy, excitement, and perhaps a touch of sadness as we bid farewell to this chapter of our lives.

Graduation is a momentous occasion, one that marks the end of a journey and the beginning of a new one. Looking back on the past few years, I am overwhelmed by the lessons I have learned, the friendships I have made, and the experiences that have shaped me into the person I am today.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to the faculty and staff of my department, who have dedicated themselves to providing us with an excellent education and the tools we need to succeed in life. Your passion, wisdom, and guidance have been invaluable, and I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to learn from you.

To my fellow graduates, I am humbled by your talent, your ambition, and your determination to succeed. It has been an honor to share this journey with you, and I look forward to seeing the incredible things you will achieve in the years to come.

As we prepare to embark on the next chapter of our lives, I would like to leave you with a quote that has inspired me throughout my time here: "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts." (Winston Churchill)



Let us approach the future with courage, resilience, and a commitment to excellence. I have no doubt that we will continue to achieve great things and make a positive impact on the world around us.

Thank you for the memories, the friendships, and the knowledge that will stay with us for a lifetime. Congratulations to graduation – we did it!



Jin Zhiping (China)

Completion : Ph.D. in 2023
Department of Neurosurgery
Period: April 2019–March 2023

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Mahidol University, Thailand

During my two-week exchange program, I am glad I decided to visit Hokkaido University Hospital. The medical personnels here welcomed me with open arms and took good care of me. They would drop by to chat when I was alone and sometimes would invite me to lunch.

The schedule at the Cardiovascular Medicine department included visiting the Catheter and Electrophysiology lab, Echocardiology, and OPD clinic. I have the opportunity to enter the catheter room. Since I mentioned that I am interested in cardiovascular medicine, the staff walked me through how to do PCI and how to read intraoperative imaging and CAG.

I also received a mini-lecture on how to interpret basic echocardiography images, along with performing Echocardiography firsthand. On OPD day, I observed normal clinics that treat common diseases such as heart failure as well as specialized clinics like the LVAD clinic whose patients were in-queue for heart transplantation.

At Gastroenterological Surgery II, I spent the majority of time staying in the OR. The procedures I observed in the OR consisted of SSPPD, esophagectomy which were performed by exploratory, laparoscopically or robotic-assisted.

Some days after work, staff would take me to the nearby restaurant and have dinner together. They are friendly and fun to talk to. However, there will be some extent of a language barrier but they will help you as much as they can to communicate with you!

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to Cardiovascular Medicine, Gastroenterological Surgery II, and all the staff that help make this possible. I consider this as an unforgettable experience and a priceless opportunity!



Phuris Tangjitpakorn

Department of Cardiovascular Medicine
Department of Gastroenterological Surgery II
Period: April 10–May 2, 2023

First of all, I would like to thank all of the staff at the Hokkaido University Hospital for such warm welcomes and excellent experiences in Hokkaido University Hospital.

I had chosen to participate and observe in the Department of Gastroenterological Surgery, both the 1st and 2nd. It was an unforgettable experience since the professors and staffs were very kind and generous. Despite my low proficiency in understanding Japanese, the staff was dedicating large amounts of time explaining the cases and operations in Japanese and English. They even wrote illustrations explaining how operations work to get a better picture. During elective periods, the operations focused on the Digestive and Hepatopancreatobiliary systems gave me a basic idea to approach and manage the diseases in the mentioned system. Some operation was unique and in-detailed that only a few surgeons could perform. My favorite operation is Robot-assisted distal Esophagectomy because this operation needs three teams of surgeons to conduct, which shows how much talent each team has in common.

Furthermore, the workplace and environment in the Hokkaido University Hospital are very welcoming. The convenience store and vending machine are located near the hospital, which gives easy access to healthcare workers and patients. The environment and surroundings around the hospital were beyond my expectation, which gave me many positive feelings toward Sapporo and Hokkaido prefecture.

Lastly, I enjoyed the time during my elective courses in Sapporo, Hokkaido. Overall, I am very fond of Hokkaido prefecture's places and its people; if I have the opportunity like this in the future, I will not hesitate to come and visit here for even more experiences from all of the professors, staff, and fellow medical students.



Thanannop Woonwiryakit

Department of Gastroenterological Surgery I & II
Period: April 10–May 2, 2023

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Mahidol University, Thailand

My medical exchange program at Department of Radiology and Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Hokkaido University in Japan during April 9th - May 2nd, 2023 was marvelous for me. It not only provided me valuable academic knowledge but also impressive cultural experience I have never forgot.

Hokkaido University was my first choice for elective studies as I had been in Hokkaido two years ago and had been impressed with scenery and cultural environment here.

First of all, the assistance of staff at the office of international affairs was very helpful to make my elective so smooth from the beginning till the end of my placement. In academic aspect, I was very well taken care of during my actual rotation. Right from the start of my placement, I was impressed with the kindness and hospitality given to me. In addition, English interpretation throughout my period was also most highly appreciated. Without assistance in this aspect, my elective program may not be worthwhile. I have to say thank you for their efforts.

The placements were very well organized. I was given suitable timetables both for Department of Radiology and Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Nevertheless, if something very interesting in particular, the professors and teams were willing to introduce me to the areas. One of the highlights beyond my schedule was my visit to the Medical AI Research and Development Center of the Hokkaido University Hospital. The Center has been performed on international standard and recognized globally. Views and ideas on future AI developments were exchanged. They were topics of my interest.

During about two week time, highlights in Radiology involved reading lecture, catheter insertion stimulation, student reading files, interventional radiology observation and nuclear radiology observation. Moreover, some highlights in Obstetrics and Gynecology included in-patient ward round, morning conference, ultrasound performance, suture technique, out-patient examination and observation, caesarian section observation, gynecological surgeries, robotic surgery stimulation and vaginal delivery stimulation.

It was a precious opportunity for me to observe gynecological and obstetrical operations to gain better knowledge and understanding on operation procedure for my future endeavors.

In conclusion I can say that my exchange program at Hokkaido University gives me amazing experience and make me strongly intend to come back again on my further clinical studies. I recommend everyone to come. You will be impressed and appreciate to be here.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to every doctors and residents for the memorable welcome and support. Thank you so much for your kindness and great assistance in giving impressive knowledge. I truly appreciate everything all of you have done for me over this 4 weeks. My experience here is the best time of my life that I enjoy every minute. Thank you with deepest thanks and gratitude.



Saranrut Phetkong

Department of Diagnostic Imaging
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Period: April 10–May 2, 2023

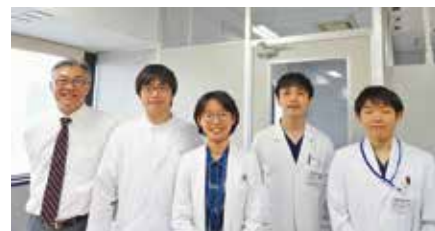
From Taipei Medical University, Taiwan

It's been such an unforgettable experience here in Gastroenterological Surgery I in Hokkaido University!

Although I couldn't understand Japanese, all the doctors, students, and staff were willing to help me so that I didn't feel confused. I learned about several diseases, such as Hirschsprung's, triploid syndrome, and Behcet's, in terms of meetings, ward rounds, and outpatient clinics.

Last but not least, it's great to have the opportunity to experience the beauty of the campus.

I would like to thank the friendly and hospitable atmosphere in the medical school, which made my one-month stay so enjoyable!



Kuo Chuan-Ying

Department of Gastroenterological Surgery I
Period: May 8–June 2, 2023



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