



CHIBA
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LEADING GRADUATE SCHOOL NEWS LETTER

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LGS
LEADING GRADUATE SCHOOL
AT CHIBA UNIVERSITY

LGS GRADUATE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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A Message from Program Coordinator

The COVID-19 pandemic starting at the end of 2019 shows no signs of ending, even with mRNA vaccines that were successfully developed at an unprecedented speed. Genetic mutation, which is one of the survival strategies of the virus, and the human antiviral immune system have been waging a long battle.

As for the impact of the COVID-19 on our LGS program, face-to-face interactions with domestic and overseas researchers have been severely limited. As a result, we could not invite eminent lecturers to our symposia and seminars to exchange information and opinions directly.

In the last two years, we could meet only with a limited number of people such as family members or colleagues. Therefore, the first-year students of 2020-2021 had few opportunities to make new friends at school. Under such conditions, students were challenged to not only use various means in communicating with their peers but also to consider deeply and reflect on how they communicated. Personally, I am amazed and encouraged by the high ability of our students to adapt to new means of communication.

Although the COVID-19 is an exogenous forcing factor, I hope you will see it as an opportunity to open up the new era and make a great leap forward. Please take time to deliberate and act with conviction. I believe you have the ability and environment to overcome the difficulties before you. Above all, you have wonderful friends.

Professor Shinichiro Motohashi
Program Coordinator



9th Year Members



Due to the complexity of clinical medicine, a qualified doctor needs to master the clinical knowledge and read widely to cover various fields. Being an LGS member, I received invaluable opportunities to attend lectures and visit some top research institutions, all of which allowed me to learn new things and visit unknown places. This experience opened a new prospect to my mind. By becoming an LGS member, I met many interesting people and exciting things, which inspired me to be a clinical scientist in the future.

Jiaqi Zhang, Department of Gastroenterology

If there is something more exciting than learning from a real expert, that is learning from many experts working in different fields. LGS gave us the opportunity to learn the most advanced technologies and theories from many specializations. It is essential to broaden my horizons to focus on my research with a lot of knowledge and thoughts. I sincerely hope that my research will help patients and their families get rid of their diseases in the future.



Boshi Zhang, Department of Neurological Surgery

2021 Forum for Graduate School Educational Reform

The Forum for Graduate School Educational Reform organized by Osaka University and the company "Leaveanest" was held online to avoid the spread of COVID-19. This year's theme was "surpassing barriers." As future researchers, it is essential to understand our research's objective, identify the "barriers" that will appear following that goal, and finally acquire communication skills to collaborate with other experts. These concepts will allow us to create a project rather than just doing one. In other words, "if the conditions are not ideal, create them yourself." However, our journey will unexpectedly begin several months before.

On October 30th, graduates from all around Japan studying in diverse fields participated in a pre-training where we had our first contact with each other. By the end of the day, everyone should identify the obstacles towards our goals, recognize our passions, and describe the actions necessary to overcome them. We were randomly grouped and asked to write about an overview of our research theme, the motivation of the study, and the barriers we encountered. After that, each group rearranged the groups according to the latter. The resulting rearrange were the ones that would participate in the workshop. One month before the forum, graduates presented their posters in a video uploaded on YouTube. We were asked to explain it briefly and simply for people without any background to understand. I believe I am not the only one who never imagined entering the YouTube world for an assignment. On January 8th, 2022, the directors started the main event on Zoom with a welcome speech. Then, the program coordinators introduced two examples of the program's activities at the university. During that time, on another interactive platform called oVice, students presented their posters to their peers and organizers. All participants learned about other laboratories' experiments. Moreover, even some were able to do networking. After a lunch break, the program divided the Leading



Graduates and WISE Program students and opinion exchange on the one hand and the workshop on the other. During the latter, the groups formed in October discussed what they could do regarding one of the three main challenges:

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collaboration between institutions with different specialties, the gap between society and academia, and social issues. With limited time to discuss, my group focused on healing the souls of elders with the power of music. For that, we proposed to form a community where elders could learn how to play an instrument, regardless of their physical condition.



At the end of the evening, the coordinators announced the poster's and workshop's winners. Even though our proposal was not the winner, it reached the final with satisfactory surprise. The night finally concluded with a brief speech from the committee.

This experience provided me with the opportunity to reflect on the challenges during the long journey of the doctoral course and learn how to work with fellow students with entirely different backgrounds, expertise, and ambitions. Having the desire to meet them in person, I was lucky enough to have exchanged contact information. In the future, with any luck, we might fulfill our common goal to work together towards forming the music community we once planned during the workshop.

Alejandra Kanashiro
8th year LGS student

Winter

In a different condition from previous years, the 8th Winter Camp was held on February 5th, 2022. Due to the spread of the coronavirus infection, this year's event was held entirely online for the second consecutive time. Interestingly, it was held jointly with students from the iMeC-WISE.

We discussed various business plans based on a specific theme in previous years. However, this year, no particular one was set in advance as a new approach. Each team gave a presentation based on the original idea of Winter Camp, which was to design a business plan to resolve a medical issue. A total of three groups were assembled. LGS students formed one team, while iMeC-WISE students formed two. Each group worked intensely for several months to precisely design their business plans.

Similar to last year, the spread of the coronavirus infection made it difficult to have a lively discussion. For example, the first and second-year LGS students rarely met, as most classes were held online. I only exchanged a few words with one of them after he enrolled. It was the first time since then that we discussed the business plan for the Winter Camp. Initially, the program was organized as a face-to-face meeting.

Unfortunately, it was decided to be conducted online days before the event. During that time, Japan was in the middle of the sixth wave of coronavirus infections, with the number of patients rising rapidly. Due to this sudden change, various concerns about conducting the workshop online emerged. One was the problem of communication. Since online sessions depend on radio wave conditions, if the signal environment is poor, both the presenters and the audience will not be able to discuss smoothly. The other problem is the time lag. When many audience members ask a question simultaneously, we usually make eye contact to decide whom to answer. However, we cannot do that online. Moreover, there is a possibility that no one speaks for a time, which will create a time lag.



Despite all these concerns, the day of Winter Camp arrived and started with warm words from Professor Motohashi. The first half of the day was chaired by me, and the second half by Mr. Sasaki of the iMeC-WISE. Our team gave the first presentation. We proposed a

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robot named Chapi that watches over people with a vital sign confirmation system to increase communication. He could be a solution to prevent unattended deaths and early detection of diseases. The next presentation was by Group A of the iMeC-WISE, which proposed an original rehabilitation system using VR. Finally, Group B of the iMeC-WISE presented a novel matching system between patients and doctors. After each presentation, the participants asked plenty of questions and made thoughtful comments. Fortunately, all the worries about communication problems and time-lag issues barely happened, and the discussion went smoothly. After all the presentations, the Director of the iMeC-WISE Program, Doctor Nakaya, gave kind words of encouragement, and Professor Miki concluded the session.

Instead of taking a group photo, which we used to do every year, all participants were asked to show their faces on the zoom screen and took screenshots. Students from LGS and the iMeC-WISE gathered strengths and briefly introduced their research presentations on the following day. Later, the Winter Camp award was announced. As a result of the judging, "Innovation in patient matching" from Group B was selected as this year's winner. All business plans were designed with the ultimate purpose of running a company in the future. However, professors highlighted that we have not contemplated deep enough about the financial aspects. For example, the required amount for an initial investment, the targeted investors, and the people to whom we would be presenting our business plans. Based on this Winter Camp's experience and the keen remarks from the listeners, I hope that next year's Winter Camp will be even better.

In this year's gathering, we needed to adapt to many new circumstances, such as a completely online event and the fact that the key topic was not previously announced. However, it was an essential and invaluable experience for people from different professions, backgrounds, and native languages to work together towards the same objective. It was another step for us to become leaders of diverse groups in the future.

Keita Ogawa
8th year LGS student

Advanced Presentation Seminar

In the Advanced Presentation Seminar, native speakers from outside the school gave classes in interactive communication. There were eight sessions in total, all in English. Each class focused on all aspects of the presentation, from the opening to the Q&A. In the course, we set our presentation theme, then planned according to a topic selected by the lecturer.

Based on our interests, we chose the issues such as Kindle (electronic device), blood test for a brain tumor, and Libre Office (computer software). Then we researched in detail beforehand. In addition to the presentation, the lecturer gave



us detailed instructions on effective voice inflection, intonation, and spacing between words, which helped us understand it from a more practical perspective.

Regarding the flow of the

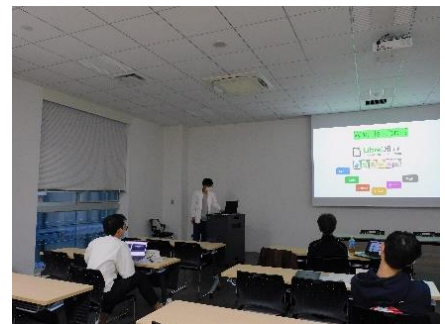
presentation, the lecturer suggested that the presenter should summarize the content briefly at the beginning of the presentation to attract the audience, proceeding to the main topic and stating the conclusion.

Finally, he should summarize and confirm the content again at the



closing. I felt that what I learned in this class was highly practical and helpful and could be applied to any other subject. In the last part of each class, we had the opportunity to demonstrate to the audience immediately what we had learned. After the feedback given to each of us at the end of the first try, we were able to improve the

following exposition. In the last two classes, we prepared for the TOEIC exam. I learned about the characteristics and got some useful advice on how to get a high score, which I thought I could use for future tests. There were many opportunities to speak up, and the instructor gave precise and constructive advice each time. Since there were only three students, we had a lot



of time communicating with the lecturer and took advantage of it. Therefore, I was fulfilled with the course.

Hiroshi Kikuchi
8th year LGS student

Thesis Dissertation

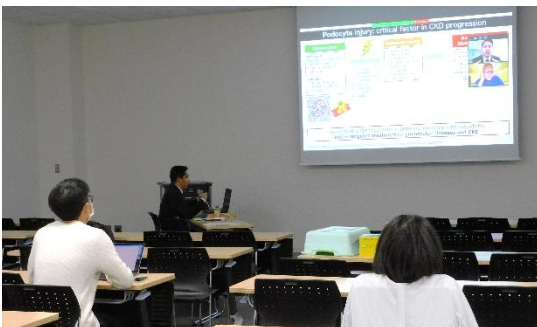
This January, I successfully defended my doctoral dissertation, which is one of the degree requirements of the Leading Graduate School (LGS) Program. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the oral dissertation defense was held virtually this year. I regret not having the opportunity to meet the dissertation defense committee members in person and, therefore, not having a traditional face-to-face discussion. The oral defense committee consisted of three faculty members from Chiba University and one external committee member, Dr. Steven F. Ziegler, Director, Immunology Research Program, Benaroya Research Institute, USA. Thesis Dissertation Newsletter Vol.14 Chiba University, Inohana Campus To become an LGS graduate, students must defend their dissertation in English. However, I was not worried because the LGS program has provided many skill-developing courses and training. One example I recall was the course "Presentation Seminar," where we learned presentation skills in English.

On top of that, the "Overseas Training" in San Diego (CA, USA) gave me the golden opportunity to interact with the researchers in the University of California San Diego, La Jolla Institute for Immunology, and three renowned biotech industries. Each of these events boosted my confidence in expressing my opinions in English.



In addition, while I was preparing for the "Winter Camp" with my LGS colleagues, I learned how to solve problems and overcome challenges. During the defense, all these experiences enabled me to communicate the results of my research effectively and answer the queries from Dr. Ziegler. The oral defense of my dissertation and the preparatory period was a genuinely enriching, sometimes challenging, but undeniably rewarding experience. During the last four years, I have continuously grown as a researcher, where LGS nurtured my foundation as a young scientist and enabled a wide range of opportunities to learn from them. With all these skills that the program granted me, I will continue my next journey as a post-doctoral researcher unveiling the mechanism(s) involved in cellular aging and their association with detrimental human diseases.

Sudip Kumar Paul
6th year LGS student



Message from Graduates



I am proud to be a member of the Chiba University Leading Graduate School Program. Joining this big family was an excellent opportunity to share knowledge with the most exemplary mentor and graduate students in diverse fields. I also had a lot of good opportunities to participate in overseas and domestic training in some prestigious institutes and companies. All these experiences helped me broaden my horizons in many aspects. I believe that the knowledge I gained from the program will play a key role in my future professional life and will lead me to a brighter future.

Yikelamu Alimu, Division of Bio-resources, Medical Mycology Research Center

The LGS program has provided me with various opportunities to interact with the top minds from different fields. During the last four years, I have grown as a researcher and learned a lot of valuable lessons as a Ph.D. student. With the knowledge and expertise I have acquired throughout the program, I promise to work in the name of science and humankind. Now I am ready to explore my full potential, and I am willing to expand my knowledge for the next academic adventure. I believe I came out stronger than ever. I appreciate all the support and cooperation from LGS.



Paul Sudip Kumar, Department of Regenerative Medicine

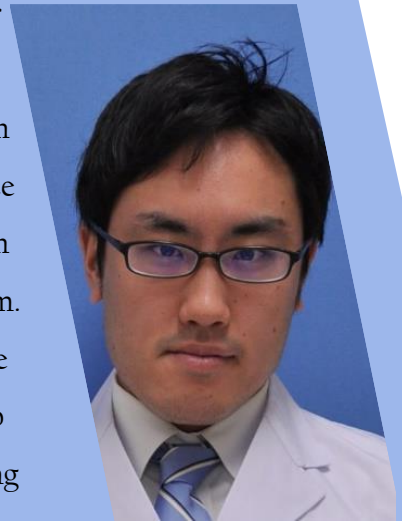
Message from Graduates



The LGS has provided me with the experience to learn from the wisdom of various science fields beyond Ph.D. research. It helped me to take a 30,000-foot view throughout this challenging journey. I would like to thank the professors, friends, and staff in the LGS who made this happen. Our time together will be a memory that I will always cherish. I wish you all the best in life.

Maulana Antiyan Empitu, Department of Nephrology

The LGS program gave me many valuable experiences that other graduate students could not have. In particular, practicing presentations in English and having discussions in English with classmates from different countries was an excellent experience for me. I am sure that I would not have been able to have such an exciting experience without participating in this program. I am very grateful to Professor Tetsuichiro Saito and all the teachers involved in this program, and I would also like to thank the staff at LGS. I want to thank all of you for giving me such an opportunity.



Kazuma Iida, Department of Allergy and Clinical Immunology

Editor's Note:

In the COVID-19 era, we were forced to adapt and face multiple challenges. Thankfully, we managed to surpass them. I hope this issue reflects our endurance.



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