



**HARNESSING INTERDISCIPLINARY
EDUCATION IN BIOCHEMISTRY
AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY**

**NOVEMBER 13-15, 2019
THE MANILA HOTEL
MANILA, PHILIPPINES**



IUBMB Education Conference 2019
International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

46th PSBMB Annual Convention
Philippine Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

ASBMB Education Feature

Harnessing Interdisciplinary Education in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology – an IUBMB Education Conference

Janet Macaulay, Monash Biomedicine Discovery Institute, Monash University

The Education conference, Harnessing Interdisciplinary Education in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, was run by the International Union of Biochemists and Molecular Biologists (IUBMB) and the Philippine Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (PSBMB) on 13–15 November 2019 in Manila, the Philippines. The conference included keynote and plenary presentations and parallel sessions. The parallel sessions consisted of short talks followed by round table discussions to give attendees the opportunity to have in depth discussions with the presenters and other attendees. Jessica Gibbons, Monash University, won the Best Education Poster Award.

Biochemistry and molecular biology are studied by students in programs ranging from science to health sciences, medicine and agriculture. As many of us know, when teaching in these varied programs, we can face a range of challenges as well as those issues specific to teaching students at various levels from K–12 through to postgraduate. Hence the conference was themed around program disciplines and levels and also included continuing education in industry. Talks and discussions covered many interesting topics and the broad international representation (attendees came from 22 countries) gave insights into the varied challenges facing educators around the world. There were over 400 attendees at the conference, including 20 winners of IUBMB Tang Travel Bursaries.



Fig. 1. Conference co-chairs Gracia Fe Yu (left; Chair of FAOBMB Education Committee, University of the Philippines) and Janet Macaulay.



Fig. 2. Panel discussion speakers, from left: Philip Poronnik (University of Sydney), Xiaoyun Lu (Xi'an Jiaotong University, China), Anat Yarden (Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel) and Joseph Provost (University of San Diego, USA).

Researching and sharing our knowledge and understanding of education should be a core component of what we do as educators. The IUBMB journal, *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education (BAMBEd)*, which aims 'to enhance teacher preparation and student learning in Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and related sciences' such as Biophysics and Cell Biology, facilitates the worldwide dissemination of educational material and scholarship. Hence, one of the conference parallel sessions was 'Publishing in Education' and included Phillip Ortiz, Editor in Chief of *BAMBEd*. All conference speakers were invited to contribute to a *BAMBEd* special issue, based on conference presentations, which will be published in 2020.

As well as gaining much from our wonderful discussions on education, we enjoyed the beautiful historic Manila Hotel conference venue and the excellent organisation and hospitality of our Filipino hosts. The conference dinner included wonderful food and a fascinating display of traditional culture and dance.

The IUBMB is committed to supporting education and training in a number of ways, including through an ongoing program of collaborative biannual education conferences in varied geographical regions. This was the second conference; the first was held in 2017 at the Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel. Plans are in progress for the 2021 conference, which will be

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run in conjunction with the American ASBMB. The proposed topic is 'Big Data Science to Unify Teaching and Research'. Details of other opportunities are available on the IUBMB website and include funding for educational activities and education and research fellowships. You can also join the [Friends of IUBMB](#) to hear what's going on.

This report, written by Janet Macaulay, was published in the April 2020 issue of the *Australian Biochemist* and is reproduced with her permission.

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From left: Grace Yu (Conference co-chair and FAOBMB Education Chair), Andrew Wang (IUBMB President), Janet Macaulay (Conference co-chair and IUBMB Education Chair), William Padolina (keynote speaker and a Past President of the National Academy of Science and Technology, Philippines) and Frank Heralde (PSBMB President).



Grace Yu giving instructions and assignments to Tang Bursary recipients.



Assembly of participants at opening of conference.



The IUBMB Tang Bursary recipients with Grace Yu, Janet Macaulay and Frank Heralde (seated centrally).



Cultural presentation at Fellowship Night during the conference.