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USM PhD STUDENT WINS YOUNG SCIENTIST AWARD AND BEST ORAL PRESENTER AWARD AT REGIONAL CONFERENCE



PENANG, May 2016 - A Ph.D student from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Heng King Sern, did the university proud when she won the Young Scientist Award and First place for Best Oral Presenter Award at the recent 3rd Regional Conference on Biosensors, Biodiagnostics, Biochips and Biotechnology (3rdRC4Bs).

The 24-year-old was selected as the winner for both categories among 40 oral presenters and 5 shortlisted candidates for the Young Scientist Award, in a 3-day conference held in AIMST University, Kedah.

Heng, who is in the final year of her Ph.D studies, presented her research on "Conversion of Rice Husks to Polyhydroxyalkanoate (PHA)", which highlighted the potential of agricultural biomass to be transformed into value-added products.



She specialises in Industrial Biotechnology and has been pursuing her Ph.D under the supervision of Professor Dr. K. Sudesh Kumar from the School of Biological Sciences.

"I am very grateful to have this opportunity to share my research outcomes with so many brilliant and distinguished scientists. Of course, I am very happy to win these awards, but the experience I have gained is invaluable.



"I am thankful to Prof. Sudesh for all his guidance and supervision throughout my Ph.D research, as well as to my course mates for their tremendous support," said Heng.

Sudesh said that Heng's project is part of an international research collaboration entitled "Development of Biorefinery based on Rice Straw", which involves Lund University, Sweden and Hanoi National University of Education, Vietnam and is funded by the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet).

“The collaboration has enabled Heng to perform some of her research in Lund University, as well as to participate in a workshop held in Vietnam,” added Sudesh.



The conference featured 2 keynote speakers, 13 plenary speakers, and 40 oral presenters from across the globe, including Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Morocco, Japan, and Denmark.

Text & Photo: Tan Ewe Hoe / Courtesy of Heng King Sern & Professor Dr. K. Sudesh Kumar



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Pusat Media dan Perhubungan Awam / Media and Public Relations Centre

Level 1, Building E42, Chancellory II, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 USM, Pulau Pinang Malaysia

Tel : +604-653 3888 | Fax : +604-658 9666 | Email : pro@usm.my (<mailto:pro@usm.my>)

Laman Web Rasmi / Official Website : [Universiti Sains Malaysia \(http://www.usm.my\)](http://www.usm.my)

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