

INTRODUCTION

The National Institute for Basic Biology (NIBB), a government-supported, basic research institute, was established in 1977. As a center of excellence, NIBB promotes the biological sciences by conducting first-rate research on site as well as in cooperation with other universities and research organizations. Researchers at NIBB investigate cell structure and function, reproduction and development, neuronal and environmental biology, gene expression and regulation, and molecular evolution of eukaryotic organisms.

In 2000, the Center for Integrative Bioscience (CIB) was established as a common center for interdisciplinary research among the NIBB and the other institutes in Okazaki. CIB consists of the Department of Development, Differentiation and Regeneration, the Department of Strategic Methodology, and the Department of Bio-environmental Science (formerly a part of NIBB). The Director-General of NIBB currently acts as the head of CIB. Two professors in the Department of Development, Differentiation and Regeneration have been nominated and will join the Center soon. To accommodate this new center together with the existing three common centers, i.e. the Research Center for Computational Science, the Center for Experimental Animals, and the Center for Radioisotope Facilities, a new campus space called the E-area was transferred from the Aichi University of Education to the Okazaki National Research Institutes. Construction is scheduled to be completed by the end of March, 2002.

In March, Professor Taisei Iguchi was appointed Professor of the Center for Bio-environmental Science. In April, all the members of the Center for Bio-environmental Science were reassigned to the Center for Integrative Bioscience. In July, Associate Professor Mitsuyasu Hasebe was promoted to Professor of the Division of Speciation Mechanisms II. Drs. H. Watanabe, M. Hayashi, Y. Sakai and T. Kiyosue were appointed as Associate Professors of the Center for Bio-environmental Science, the Division of Cell Mechanisms, the Adjunct Division of Cell Proliferation and the Adjunct Division of Biological Regulation, respectively. Adjunct Associate Professors Y. Ozeki and K. Owaribe departed NIBB.

We would like to congratulate Associate Professors Kaoru Itoh and Hiroshi Shibuya on their promotions to Professor at Nagoya University and Tokyo Medical and Dental University, respectively. Three research associates (equivalent to assistant professors) were promoted to associate professors of other universities. In addition, we replaced 2 research associates, 8 institute research fellows and 3 technicians with 2 research associates, 11 institute research fellows and 1 technician. The total number of personnels working at NIBB including graduate students and post doctoral fellows has been kept at 300 for several years.

As an international center for biological research, NIBB is responsible for conducting research projects in



H. Mohri

cooperation with various research groups. As a part of such cooperative activities, NIBB hosts International Conferences. In March the 43rd NIBB International Conference was sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture and entitled "Mechanisms of Neural Network Formation" (Professors T. Yamamori, H. Fujisawa and F. Murakami, organizers). The 44th NIBB International Conference entitled "Evolution and Development. Generality and Diversity of Development in Animals and Plants" (Professors M. Hasebe and K. Agata and Dr. H. Tsukaya, organizers) was also held in March. In addition, NIBB continues to sponsor interdisciplinary symposia and study meetings on current topics by inviting leading scientists from around the world to the Institute. NIBB also provides a training course in biological sciences for young investigators. To assess our continuing improvement, the activities and future plans of two professors who have spent 10 years at NIBB were subjected to peer review by international scholars in related fields. We always welcome any suggestions concerning the research activities of NIBB.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Professor N. Murata for being awarded the Terry Galliard Medal from the International Association of Plant Lipid Research. Mr. T. Kirisako received the Nagakura Award. He is the fourth graduate student from NIBB to win the Award.

Hideo Mohri, D.Sc.
Director-General