# Prince Mahidol Award Newsletter

**Volume 4, Issue 1 Bangkok Thailand**

**December 2002**

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It is indeed a pleasure for me to be presenting the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2001 today. I should like to thank the Board of Trustees and all concerned who have done good work to honour His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla, so that his accomplishments are more widely recognized by people of the world.

It is well-known to all that success in any research for the advancement in medical science is not easily obtained, as it is time consuming and requires great perseverance. Furthermore, the results of such achievement is not meant for any individual benefits but for the benefits of all mankind. For this reason, people who are involved in this field of work must possess strong and unwavering determination as well as great compassion for his fellow human beings so as to persist until success is finally achieved. I, therefore, extend my heartfelt congratulations to Sir David John Weatherall, Doctor Barry James Marshall and Professor Lam Sai Kit, who have been chosen to receive the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2001, following the results of their significant achievements and devotion, both physical and mental, to the study and research in their respective fields which eventually benefit the world population at large. I am thus confident that the good examples which all three of them have set will inspire others to follow in their own quests to further promote the development and progress in the fields of medicine and public health.

I should like to extend to all of you my best wishes for your happiness and success. May you be blessed with good health, physical and mental as well as intellectual capability, so as to be able to contribute further to the well-being of people the world over. I also wish all of you who are gathered here today great happiness and prosperity.
คุณราชบัณฑท์

สมเด็จพระกนิษฐาธิราชเจ้า
สมเด็จพระบรมโอรสาธิราช
ในพิธีพระราชทานรางวัลสมิตน์เจ้าฟ้าพิศาล
ประจุปี พ.ศ. ๒๕๔๔
ในวันที่ ๒๔ ธันวาคม ๒๕๔๔
ณ พระราชอิมแพ็คท์พระนคร

ขอแสดงพระเมตตาของสุจริตพระบาทสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัว

ซึ่งคงจะมีการประกอบการวุฒิวิชารวมถึงเรื่องที่เดิม
เจ้าพิศาลในปัจจุบัน ที่ทรงมีการเรียนรู้อย่างยิ่ง เริ่มต้นมาด้วย
ผลงานของพระบรมราชาภิเษกสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัว และได้ทรง
ประสานความสัมพันธ์ที่ดีด้วยการปฏิบัติหน้าที่ด้วย

ราชกากรแพทย์

เซอร์ เดวิส จอนนี่ เซอร์เวทเวลล์ ชาวอังกฤษ แพทยศาสตร์
ปัจจุบันศาสตราจารย์ของมหาวิทยาลัยวิทยาลัยสุขภาพ
เซอร์ เดวิส จอนนี่ เซอร์เวทเวลล์ เป็นผู้มีบทบาทในการวิจัย
ในการสำรวจทั่วโลกในหัวข้อการวิจัยในพื้นที่ต่างๆ ทั้งหมดใน
สาขาวิทยาการแพทย์และวิทยาศาสตร์แพทย์และวิทยาศาสตร์

ผู้ป่วยโรคธาลัสเซี่ยม รวมทั้งประเทศไทย

การบริการการจัดการการให้เป็นผู้ได้รับการพระราชทาน
รางวัลสมิตน์เจ้าฟ้าพิศาล ราชกากรแพทย์ ประจำปี ๒๕๔๔

เซอร์ เดวิส จอนนี่ เซอร์เวทเวลล์

Royal Speech

by

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn

on the Occasion of

the Presentation Ceremony

of the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2001

on Thursday, 31st January, B.E. 2545 (A.D. 2002)

At the Chakri Throne Hall

May it please Your Majesty,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Prince Mahidol
Award Foundation, as well as the Privy Council, the Cabinet,
Diplomats, and distinguished guests who are present in this
Throne Hall, I feel deeply grateful to Your Majesty for Your gracious
presence in presiding over the Presentation Ceremony of the
Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2001, today.

May I now ask for Your Majesty’s Permission to read the
citations and call upon the Awardees who have been selected
by the Board of Trustees for having done excellent works of great
benefit to all mankind to receive the Prince Mahidol Awards for
the Year 2001 as follows:

In the field of Medicine

Sir David John Weatherall, from the United Kingdom,
received his M.B. and Ch.B. with honours from the University
of Liverpool and is currently Emeritus Regius Professor of Medicine
at the University of Oxford.

Sir David John Weatherall was the pioneer researcher in
molecular genetics, haematology, pathology, and clinical medicine.
His outstanding discovery of the molecular basis for the
thalassaemia has been most beneficial to the diagnosis,
prevention, and treatment of millions of thalassaemic patients
throughout the world including Thailand.

The Board of Trustees has deemed it appropriate for
Sir David John Weatherall to receive the Prince Mahidol Award
for the Year 2001 in the field of Medicine.

Sir David John Weatherall

☆☆☆☆☆
In the field of Public Health

Doctor Barry James Marshall, from Australia, received his Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB; BS) from the University of Western Australia, and is currently professor of microbiology at the University of Western Australia.

Doctor Marshall and his colleague were the first to identify and culture a novel microorganism, called Helicobacter pylori, and demonstrated in scientific way that it was one of the cause of gastritis and peptic ulcer diseases which could be cured with antibiotics.

This discovery transformed therapy in peptic ulcer from interminable consumption of antacids to a short term highly effective course of antibiotics, resulting in great benefit to the health of hundreds of millions of people in the world.

Professor Lam Sai Kit, from Malaysia received his Bachelor of Science from the University of Western Australia, Master of Science from the University of Queensland, and Doctor of Philosophy from the Australian National University. He is currently a professor and also chairs the Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya in Malaysia.

Professor Lam Sai Kit has been one of the most influential figures in Medical Virology in Southeast Asia. During the recent outbreak of illness in pigs in Malaysia and Singapore, which also had the adverse effect on the health of the people in those countries, Professor Lam's hard work lead to the discovery and isolation of a new virus, called Nipah virus, including the study of its epidemiology, which eventually result in the control of this outbreak.

The works of Doctor Barry James Marshall and Professor Lam Sai Kit have yielded tremendous benefit to the health of mankind, and thus deserve the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2001 in the field of Public Health.

Doctor Barry James Marshall
Professor Lam Sai Kit

★★★★★
The Prince Mahidol Award Foundation

The Prince Mahidol Award Foundation was established on January 1st, 1992 in commemoration of the centenary of the birth of His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol. The Foundation is under Royal Patronage, with Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn as President.

The Award

Two Prince Mahidol Awards are conferred annually upon individuals or institutions which have demonstrated outstanding and exemplary contributions to the advancement of medical, public health and human services throughout the world. Each Award consists of a medal, a certificate, and US$ 50,000.

Nomination

An individual or group of individuals or an institution may be nominated by national medical or health authorities or by individual or group of individuals as candidates for the Award. Nominations should be submitted to the Secretary General of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation before May 31st each year.
Sir David John Weatherall

Sir David John Weatherall received his medical degree from the University of Liverpool in 1962. He was Professor of Haematology at the University of Liverpool from 1971 to 1974. Since 1974 he was appointed Professor of Clinical Medicine at the University of Oxford until 1992. Since his retirement in 2000, Professor Weatherall has held the title Regius Professor of Medicine, Emeritus at the University of Oxford.

Professor Weatherall is the outstanding British clinician-scientist of his generation. He has accomplished pioneering research in molecular genetics, haematology, pathology and clinical medicine. The results of David Weatherall’s laboratory and clinical research on thalassemias has helped to explain the molecular pathophysiology and causes of phenotypic variability of these disorders. These findings have provided the basis for antenatal diagnosis and genetic counselling aimed at preventing these abnormalities and have improved the clinical management of inherited blood disorders.

Thalassemias as a group are the most common single gene inherited disorders in man. They arise from pathologic alteration in globin genes, resulting in defective production of hemoglobin and inherited anemia ranging in severity from asymptomatic to a devastating syndrome of profound anemia, inanition, high output congestive heart failure and death at an early age. The severe forms of the disorder affect millions of individuals representing many areas of the world. Thalassemias are particularly common in the Mediterranean basin, regions of Asia and Africa, certain Pacific islands, and some parts of the Middle East. The best available care, accessible in only a few regions of the world requires complex life-long support of measurement such as blood transfusion, the use of an iron chelating agent, bone marrow transplantation, and agents that attempt to alter the patterns of hemoglobin synthesis.

Professor Weatherall has drawn global attention to the challenge of caring for the increasing numbers of thalassemia sufferers who now survive beyond childhood. In a broader sense, his discoveries have demonstrated understanding of molecular genetics can be applied to design practical strategies for disease prevention, control and alleviation.
Doctor Barry J. Marshall

Doctor Barry J. Marshall obtained degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB.; BS.), at the University of Western Australia in 1974. After graduation he became an Intern and Registrar in General Medicine, Haematology, Gastroenterology and Microbiology in Teaching Hospitals of the University of Western Australia. From 1985-86 Professor Marshall received the NH & MRC Research Fellow, Department of Gastroenterology, Royal Perth Hospital. He was a Research Fellow, Associate Professor and later Professor with tenure at the Department of Medicine, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, USA. Presently, Professor Marshall is Burnet Fellow, Professor of Microbiology at the University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia; Professor of Research in Internal Medicine, Independent Research Faculty, University of Virginia, and President Helicobacter Foundation, Charlottesville, USA.

Professor Marshall reported with his colleague the identification and culture characteristics on a novel microorganism that was found to colonize the human gastric, central and upper duodenal mucosa in cases of gastritis and gastric/duodenal ulcer. Later he recognized that the new bacterium now identified as Helicobacter pylori caused severe gastritis and that it was sensitive to particular antibacterial drugs. Professor Marshall's self-infection experiment showed that delivery of the organism to the stomach caused acute gastritis due to colonization of the normal stomach with the organism. Diagnostic tests were developed for both detection and eradication of the organism. This discovery transformed therapy in peptic ulcer from consumption of antacid and/or H1 receptor antagonists, or radical gastric surgery, to a short highly effective course of multiple antibiotics.

The impact of the discovery of the infectious cause of peptic ulcer has been momentous. From the early 1990s there were over 300 scientific publications annually on Helicobacter pylori and the number increases steadily. Research is progressing towards development of a prophylactic vaccine. It is expected that reduction of the burden of infection worldwide will influence the incidence of gastric cancer in many parts of the world.
Professor Lam Sai Kit

Professor Lam received his early education in Malaysia before proceeding to Australia. He completed his MSc and PhD degrees under Australian Fellowships at the University of Queensland and at the Australian National University respectively.

Professor Lam is one of the most influential figures in Medical Virology in Southeast Asia. His research in dengue is recognized worldwide as well as by the World Health Organization. In recent years, his involvement in emerging diseases has led to the discovery of new viruses in the region, and the isolation of Nipah virus and Tioman virus has made his team internationally recognized.

The Nipah encephalitis virus is the new virus transmitted from fruit bat to pigs which caused outbreaks in Malaysia and Singapore during 1999-2000. This outbreak caused the death of pig handlers and the collapse of a very important and profitable industry in Malaysia. The fear of its potential spread to neighbouring countries such as Thailand and Indonesia was magnified when several cases were diagnosed to be due to Nipah virus in a Singapore abattoir.

The discovery of this newly virulent paramyxovirus, which is named Nipah virus after the name of the village from where the patients came, had a significant impact in the management of patients and prevention and control of this deadly disease. This story has been extensively covered by international news media and agencies.

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The International Academic Congress on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the establishment of the Prince Mahidol Award

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presided over the International Academic Congress to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the establishment of the Prince Mahidol Award with the cooperation of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation, Mahidol University, Ministry of Public Health and the World Health Organization on 1st February 2002 at the Imperial Queen’s Park Hotel. The title of the Congress was “Medicine and Public Health in the Post-genomic Era.” The topic of Congress was chosen to highlight the recent and rapid advancement of molecular biology and achievements in sequencing the genomes of humans and other organisms.

On 2nd February 2002 Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana Krom Luang Naradhivach Rajanagarindra paid a private visit to the exhibition honouring His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla which was held during the Congress. Executive administrators of Mahidol University and academics from various fields were present.
Welcome to the first English-Thai edition of the Prince Mahidol Award Newsletter. You may note that we have increased the number of pages of this newsletter in response to increasing interest shown by our readers both in Thailand and abroad.

As usual, I must begin by extending my sincere congratulations to the three recipients of the 2001 Prince Mahidol Award, namely, Sir David John Weatherall in the field of medicine, Dr. Barry J. Marshall and Professor Lam Sai Kit in the field of public health. Early this year a number of activities were held to commemorate the 110th Birthday Anniversary of His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla and the 10th Anniversary of the establishment of the Prince Mahidol Award. On 1st January 2002 a supplement in commemoration of His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla was published by Bangkok Post. On that same day, the first of a five-parts documentary on the life and work of His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol was broadcasted on all Thai television channels. After the award ceremony on the 31st January 2002, an academic Congress titled “Medicine and Public Health in the Post-genomic Era” was held with the cooperation of Mahidol University, Ministry of Public Health and the World Health Organization, at The Imperial Queen’s Park Hotel, Bangkok from 1st to 3rd February 2002. Eminent scientists including the present and past Prince Mahidol Awardees participated in the congress and gave addresses on topics such as genomic medicine and control of tropical diseases, bioinformatics, pharmacogenomics, nutrition in the post-genomic era, emerging disease surveillance, social and ethical issues in the post-genomic era among others.

We have sadly learned the passing away of Dr. Cesar Milstein, an accomplished scientist and a valued member of the International Award Committee for the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation. Since 1995 Dr. Milstein has devoted his precious
time to the screening and selection process of nominations for the Prince Mahidol Award during which his significant contribution was duly recognized. As a cherished member of our International Award Committee, his death is a great loss to the Foundation.

On November 21st, 2002, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, President of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation, chaired a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Prince Mahidol Award. The Board of Trustees approved, upon the recommendation of the International Award Committee, four Prince Mahidol Award winners which were selected from 44 nominees from 22 countries for the 2002 Prince Mahidol Award. Professor Thomas E. Starzl from the United States and Sir Roy Calne from the United Kingdom jointly receive the award in the field of medicine. Dr. Maurice R. Hillman from the United States and Dr. P. Helena Mäkelä from Finland jointly receive the award in the field of public health. We look forward to meeting them at the Prince Mahidol Award Presentation Ceremony to be held in January 2003.

I hope our readers enjoy this new dual language edition of the Prince Mahidol Award Newsletter. The editorial board welcomes any comments and the Foundation welcomes articles from our readers for publication in the newsletter.

R. Manathat
Director-General of the Department of Information
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Chairman of Sub-Committee on Public Relations
Prince Mahidol Award Foundation under the Royal Patronage
Prince Mahidol Award 2001
รางวัลสมเด็จเจ้าฟ้ามหิดลประจุปี 2544

Photo of royal event.

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