



International Advisory Board

Newsletter

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From the Secretary General

I am pleased to report several important developments that took place during May and June 2008.

We had the distinct honor of welcoming the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah ibn Abdul'Aziz, to our University to launch several developmental projects and initiatives.

A two-day convention to formalize the Global Research Partnership (GRP) that forms the underpinning intellectual structure of the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) was held in Jeddah at the end of May 2008. On this occasion, our University received the award for the establishment of a Center-in-Development on Transformative Research in Petrochemicals and Polymers. This is one of the focused research areas endorsed by the IAB, where we have core competencies, to develop into a center of research excellence in petroleum refining and petrochemicals.

I would like to mention here that I participated in the First Commemorative Symposium organized by the Waseda University's Middle East General Research Institute under the theme "Japan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – Heading Towards a

New Era," on the occasion of "The Saudi Arabia Day" on June 20, 2008. I had the privilege to represent our Rector in the panel discussion – "University Research in Advance Technology Educating and Nurturing Future Generations to Carry on the Future of the Saudi Arabia." The Middle East General Research Institute was established by the generous support from H.R.H. Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdul'Aziz Al-Saud to stimulate further exchanges in research and between students, and deepen the relationship between Japan and Saudi Arabia.

You will note that three hallmark accords were signed during this period with Saudi Aramco, MIT, and JCCP. These accords are in the focused research areas identified by the University.

I am also pleased to report that preparations for the fourth meeting of the IAB are currently underway, and we hope to have a very successful meeting this time also.

Dr. Khattab G. Al-Hinai

HIGHLIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

King Inaugurates KFUPM Projects

King Abdullah ibn Abdul'Aziz, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, laid the foundations of various development projects and initiatives during his visit to the University on May 24, 2008.

The King, who launched KFUPM's strategic initiatives and its development projects, said "It gives me immense pleasure when I see the University's development programs as knowledge and scientific research have no limits."

KFUPM's initiatives include the University's strategic plan, the International Advisory Board, the endowment fund to support research and academic programs, the Dhahran Techno-Valley (DTV), the e-Education Systems, the Human Resources Development Center, the Centers of Research Excellence, the Personal Skills Development Center, and Production and Manufacturing Center, the fully integrated electronic university, new classrooms and laboratory buildings, new faculty and student housing compounds, and several completed infrastructure and municipal projects.

KFUPM and Saudi Aramco Sign MoU and Contract

The University signed a MoU with Saudi Aramco. This MoU is a "statement of intent between the two parties who have recognized the potential mutual benefits from establishing a strategic relationship to collaboratively address the continuously changing business context in which they operate, and who agree that they will cooperatively work towards establishing a strategic partnership that will serve as a model of academic-industrial cooperation in the region."

Another contract between KFUPM and Saudi Aramco called for establishing a Faculty Endowment, which shall consist of three associate and/or assistant professors to be employed in the University's Petroleum Engineering Department. The primary objective of this Endowment is to promote research in the field of petroleum engineering, concentrating on challenges of Saudi Arabia's oil and gas fields.

KFUPM-MIT Collaborative Research Agreement

The University signed a research collaboration agreement with MIT in June 2008. The accord signed with MIT is for a period of seven years to conduct joint research in the areas of clean energy and design, clean water, and manufacturing and nanotechnology, and to work on educational projects.

MIT will establish and operate a new center at MIT to be called the "KFUPM Center for Clean Water and Clean Energy."

KFUPM-JCCP Sign Contract on Catalytic Research

KFUPM and Japan Cooperation Center, Petroleum (JCCP) signed a new contract to support catalytic research in the Kingdom.

The Vice-Rector for Applied Research, Dr. Sahel Abduljawad and Mr. Katsuo Yokoyama, JCCP managing director, signed the agreement in the presence of H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Oka, Minister of the Embassy of Japan in Saudi Arabia. The accord marks the continuation of the productive collaboration between KFUPM and JCCP since 1993.

The new project calls for exchange of technical know-how between KFUPM and Nippon Oil Research Institute (NORI) in FCC catalyst development and evaluation. The University has accumulated more than 15 years of technical collaboration with JCCP mainly in petroleum refining research.

KAUST Names KFUPM for Center-in-Development

King Abdullah University of Science & Technology's Global Research Partnership (GRP) announced the selection of KFUPM for Center-in-Development (CID) grants. The other two universities selected are: National Taiwan University and Utrecht University in the Netherlands.

The grants are intended to enable each grantee university to generate new research and the capacity for an interdisciplinary center of excellence in specific areas of scientific and technological inquiry that are most relevant to KAUST's research priorities and its development.

The grants at KFUPM will support a Center-in-Development on Transformative Research in Petrochemicals and Polymers, and will focus on the development of advanced catalysts and on the kinetics of key processes in producing intermediate petrochemicals as well as on polyolefins additives and processing polymeric membranes for fuel cells. Efforts will be targeted at addressing the current and future needs of the petrochemical industry in the Kingdom.

National Taiwan University's Solar Energy Research will focus on system integration, product-oriented research and development, and innovation in system optimization for design of solar-assisted air conditioning, heating, desalination, and LED lighting applications in buildings.

The Utrecht University's Center for Soil, Water, and Coastal Resources will act as a clearinghouse for ideas, people, and knowhow between the participating institutes in Europe and KAUST, and help to prioritize research, education, training, joint fieldwork, and outreach in support of KAUST's mission. The center will also assist with the design, instrumentation, and operation of a KAUST environmental observatory in Saudi Arabia.

Each KAUST GRP Center-in-Development proposal was reviewed in detail and scored by between five and seven supplementary reviewers drawn from the community of academic and industrial researchers around the world. The

selection of the CIDs was based on criteria including scientific merit, organizational and management plan, the potential to collaborate in a team environment, and the direct relevance to the proposed research to KAUST research priorities.

KFUPM Graduates 1405 Students

HRH Prince Naif bin Abdul'Aziz, Minister of Interior, honored the 1,405 graduates of the 38th batch during the commencement ceremony at KFUPM on May 22, 2008.

The graduates will leave school with 1,246 Bachelor's degrees, 153 Master's degrees, and six Ph.D.s.

Dr. Al-Sultan Receives the First JPI International Cooperation Award

The Japan Petroleum Institute (JPI), on the occasion of the celebration of its 50th anniversary, bestowed on H.E. Dr. Khaled S. Al-Sultan, the first "JPI Award for Invaluable International Cooperation," in recognition of his outstanding contributions in strengthening and deepening the ties between the two organizations..

KFUPM has had a very long and rewarding association with institutions in Japan fostered by the support of JPI and Japan Cooperation Center, Petroleum (JCCP) in the last two decades. We have successfully worked on joint research projects, exchanged researchers and students, and organized international symposia, workshops, and conferences.

Tony Meggs and G. Wayne Clough Move from Their Current Positions

Tony Meggs decided to move from British Petroleum. He was associated with BP for well over two decades and held the position of the Group Vice President – Technology since 2001.

G. Wayne Clough has moved from Georgia Institute of Technology to join The Smithsonian Institution as its 12th Secretary. He served as the President of Georgia Tech since 1994.

On behalf of the KFUPM community, we extend our hearty congratulations to them and wish them success and satisfaction in their new roles.

FOURTH MEETING OF THE IAB

The agenda for the fourth meeting to be held in London in August 2008, among others, will follow up discussions on several wide-ranging issues such as research strategy, regional competition, administration, and issues related to faculty and students, in addition to an update on the progress made on previous recommendations.

In this regard, three sub committees are working to address issues raised in the previous meeting. The major issues were related to faculty hiring, retention, and development. A detailed update on faculty, research, and students' activities is under preparation for discussion in the meeting.

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