Global Young Academy (GYA)
Young Scientist Ambassadors Programme

Prof. Dr. Thomas Edison E. dela Cruz
University of Santo Tomas, Philippines

Mission Report

GYA supports an enrichment seminar for the next-generation of scientists in Myanmar

Science, technology and innovation (STI) are recognized as important key drivers for economic growth, enhancing community well-being and promoting integration (APASTI 2016-2025). There is a direct relationship between economic growth and the country's support of science, technology, and innovation. Thus, ASEAN youth who are science-literate, technology-competent, and creative and passionate about STI are deemed the hope for ASEAN prosperity. However, the state of science and technology in the ASEAN region is not progressing at similar pace. For lower-middle and low-income countries, the number of researchers per million population differed significantly from high income and upper middle-income countries. In response to the initiative of the Global Young Academy – Young Scientist Ambassador Programme (GYA-YSAP**), Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Thomas Edison E. dela Cruz, a professor of microbiology from the University of Santo Tomas (Philippines) and a GYA member, conducted an enrichment seminar for at least 100 young scientists and science educators from 45 state-run universities in Myanmar.** Held on 17 November 2017 at the University of Yangon, Dr. dela Cruz initially introduced GYA to the participants and highlighted the importance of networking for their professional career development. This was followed by another lecture cum audience participation on conducting and writing scientific research. Dr. dela Cruz emphasized here the need to publish their research outputs even in local-based journals. The morning session of the one-day enrichment seminar focused more on developing skills needed by Myanmar young scientists. Thus, a lecture on presenting research outputs was delivered by Ms. Jeane A. dela Cruz, an instructor from the University of Santo Tomas and 2017 ASEAN Science Leadership Programme (ASLP) fellow. The ASLP is another initiative of GYA with other young academies and organizations in the ASEAN region aimed to train young scientists on leadership, communication and public engagement. During her lecture, Ms. dela Cruz used a tool she learned from ASLP to emphasize the importance of effective science communication. Upon request of the local organizers, the afternoon session centered on delivering updates and on recent developments in the field of microbiology. Dr. dela Cruz gave a lecture on something close to his heart, on the use of fungi for drug discovery and environmental clean-up. Various research methods were presented to provide information that can be adapted by the young scientists of Myanmar. Ms. dela Cruz also gave a lecture on the role of microbes in fermentation technology and food safety. After the enrichment seminar, Dr. dela Cruz also visited some laboratories in the university, assisted students in the identification of their fungi and provided insights on their research. Participants expressed enthusiasm after this one-day event with some giving invitation to visit their universities. This initiative would not be possible without the support provided by the Global Young Academy – Young Scientist Ambassador Programme (GYA-YSAP).

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Photos taken during the NGS lecture-seminar in Myanmar:

The next-generation of scientists from Myanmar with university officials and the lecturers.

Dr. dela Cruz and Ms. dela Cruz delivering their lectures.

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Participants learn the importance of effective scientific communication.