Dean of HKU Faculty of Dentistry receives 2010 IADR Oral Medicine and Pathology Research Award

Professor Lakshman Samaranayake, Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at The University of Hong Kong, has received the 2010 Oral Medicine and Pathology Research Award from the International Association for Dental Research (IADR), the world’s largest non-government dental research organisation.

Presented on 14 July 2010 at the 88th General Session and Exhibition of the IADR in Barcelona, Spain, the award comes with the title of IADR Distinguished Scientist, and is one of only 16 discipline-specific awards granted by the IADR.

“The Oral Medicine and Pathology Research Award is one of the highest honours bestowed by the IADR”, according to the association. Supported by Unilever Oral Care and awarded by an international selection committee, the IADR Distinguished Scientist Award for Oral Medicine and Pathology recognises “outstanding and sustained peer-reviewed research that has contributed to the understanding of the mechanisms governing the health and disease of the oral cavity and associated structures, principally encompassing skin, bone, and the oral soft tissue”.

Over the past three decades, Professor Samaranayake has contributed to the scientific literature on oral infections caused by Candida yeast, infection control in dentistry, and oral microbial diseases in general, including more than 300 original, peer-reviewed research and review articles.

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“I am proud to be the first Asian from Asia to receive this coveted prize and Distinguished Scientist title,” says Professor Samaranyake. “For scientists from this part of the world to be recognised globally for dental research achievements is perhaps long overdue, so this award sends a clear message of encouragement to dental researchers all over Asia to keep striving to advance research to improve oral health.”

Hailing from Sri Lanka, Professor Samaranyake is considered a pioneer clinician-scientist in oral mycology and clinical microbiology, and is named the world’s foremost expert on oral candidiasis in www.Biomedexperts.com. He was the first to describe the adhesion of Candida to oral appliances and tissue surfaces of the mouth, “leading to the currently fashionable candidal biofilm era of research in mycology”, the IADR notes.

Professor Samaranyake has also been honoured by The University of Hong Kong through the HKU Outstanding Researcher Award in 2001, Research Output Prize in 2009, HKU Outstanding Research Student Supervisor Award in 2001, and Tam Wah-Ching Endowed Professorship in Dental Science in 2010, the first endowed university professorship in dentistry in Hong Kong. In 2005, his alma mater, the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, honoured him through a Doctor of Science (honoris causa) degree, making him the first Sri Lankan dental professional to have received this award.

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The IADR is the largest non-government, non-profit organisation in dental research, with more than 12,000 individual members worldwide. For more information about the IADR, visit <www.iadr.org>.

Professor Lakshman Samaranayake is Dean, Chair Professor of Oral Microbiology, and Tam Wah-Ching Professor in Dental Science at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry. For more information about Professor Samaranayake, visit <http://odont.hku.hk/dean/index.htm>.

For more information about the HKU Faculty of Dentistry, visit <http://facdent.hku.hk>.

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