

The Bustling of Scramble Intersection of Shibuya Station, the Excited Rugby World Cup Tournament & Innovation of the Annual Meeting of the Japan Oil Chemists' Society

President of Japan Oil Chemists' Society Prof. **Kouichi ASAKURA**



“About 3,000 for each green light” is the number of people who cross the “Scramble Intersection” of Shibuya Station during the most populated time zone, according to information posted on the website of Shibuya Center-gai (<http://center-gai.jp/info/index.asp>). It is always bustling with various kinds of people gathering for various purposes. “Intersection” is also a word that sums up the vision of innovation plan of the Japan Oil Chemists' Society (JOCS) proposed in 2017 by Future Design Committee led by Chairperson Dr. Dai Kitamoto. We, at JOCS, are now pushing for an innovative plan based on the vision for our biggest event, the annual meeting, where it becomes “an intersection for researchers and engineers from diverse fields. They gather at the intersection for diverse purposes to develop a chaotic atmosphere to emerge new alliances, technologies, and academic fields that can be never imagined before.”

As an initial trial, the “Main subject symposium: Matching of sees and needs” was held during the 2019 annual meeting by the extraordinary effort of Dr. Naohiro Goto, executive committee chairperson. (The last year's main subject symposium was unfortunately cancelled because of the typhoon.) Under the leadership of Dr. Tomohiro Imura, chairperson of the planning and management committee of the annual meeting, academic researchers introduced cutting-edge research results and policies on education, while researchers from industrial fields explained their requirements in the technologies and human resources field. Many people actively participated in the discussions during the symposium and poster session. Our annual meetings in 2020 and 2021 will be held in Gifu and Kochi, respectively, and the executive committee chairpersons for these will be Dr. Mamoru Koketsu and Dr. Nagatoshi Nishiwaki, respectively. The annual

meeting is expected to evolve as a “Bustling Intersection of Industry and Academia”.

On a different note, Rugby World Cup tournament in 2019 generated a lot of excitement across Japan. However, there is one thing that makes me disappointed. Although the number of Japanese players was 24 in the Japan's national team, a majority of Japanese believe that it was 16 or 15. (They seem to think that the number is 16 or 15 depending on whether they look at the name list or picture list.) In addition, three in seven foreign players graduated from Japanese universities or high schools. This situation made me remember the event just after I completed my sabbatical year in the US and returned to my university in 1997. I heard the word “Ryugakusei” for the first time in a year (it segregates foreign students from Japanese students in Japan). In the US, compared to students born and raised in America, an increasing number of students coming from the other countries were studying at the graduate school of so-called research universities even in the middle of the 1990's. I remember that neither segregations nor special cares was provided to overseas students at US universities.

The second concept of the innovation plan for the annual meeting is “Intersection of Researchers and Engineers from Diverse Background.” It would be nice if our annual meeting evolves into an intersection where diverse people from different places gather to succeed, just like BRAVE BLOSSOMS, Japan's national rugby team. In order to ignite the evolution of our annual meeting, we have decided to launch “Selected Lectures” instead of reducing the number of invited lectures at the 2nd World Congress on Oleo Science to be held in Kushiro city in 2022 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of JOCS. The major concept of “Internationalization” in Japan may involve contacting

an authority or leading group in the world to follow and emulate their success story. Therefore, many presentations were made by authorities invited in the international conferences. On the contrary, for “Selected Lectures”, the executive committee selects aspiring researchers among applicants from across the world, who will provide renewed and vital primary information. In other words, the plan is not based on the concept of “Inviting Zico or Iniesta here to learn everything from them”, but is based on “Sowing the seeds of talented persons who wish to choose this place, to make great efforts in this place, and to vitalize this place like Michael Leitch or Kotaro Matsushima”.

I feel that I heard nice words at the award presentation of JOCS Award for Young Scientist by Dr. Makoto Uyama at the 2019 annual meeting. That is “The past success experience occasionally becomes leg-irons to the future development.” I hope our annual meeting continues to be an innovative affair in order to evolve as an “Intersection.” I thank you very much for your support.

In conclusion, let me wish you a Happy New Year! I hope the year 2019 or Reiwa 2nd, when Japan hosts the Summer Olympic Games for the first time in 56 years, will be a wonderful one for you.

(Prof. of Keio University)