

# Proteoglycan Forum, 2013

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“Proteoglycan Forum” consists of a series of lectures on proteoglycans and related subjects presented once or twice a year, ordinarily in an afternoon. Speakers, who are developing new concepts on proteoglycans especially in biological systems in which proteoglycan involvement has not been previously noted, has accumulated substantial amounts of systematic information on proteoglycans, are selected by organizers who have been leading various aspects of proteoglycan research in Japan. Past and current organizers include Drs. M. Ishihara, H. Kitagawa, T. Shinomura, S. Yamada, I. Kakizaki, K. Takagaki, N. Itano, N. Toyoda, T. Toida, H. Watanabe, and their astute selection has been the first key to the success of the Proteoglycan Forum. Intended target audience includes not only the full time proteoglycan researchers but also those became interested in the molecule often by an accidental discovery of proteoglycans in multitude of biological systems. Recruitment of young

investigators especially from other disciplines is another important mission of the Proteoglycan Forum to foster the proteoglycan research. The number of speakers in the past and this meeting has counted over 70, including Drs. T. Toida, H. Habuchi, M. Ishihara, N. Schwartz, R. Stern, B. Toole, N. Itano, K. Takagaki, H. Kitagawa, K. Oguri, A. Oohira, M. Noda, K. Takeuchi, T. Itakura, M. Endo, M. Nomizu, Y. Tanaka, M. Miyasaka, H. Nakato, H. Toyoda, N. Nakanishi, K. Sekiguchi, N. Ueno, N. Maeda, T. Oohashi, H. Kawano, A. Kazunaka, A. Ikai, H. Inagaki, K. Kobayashi, R. Taku, E. Arikawa-Hirasawa, K. A. Podyma-Inoue, H. Shinkai, O. Habuchi, H. Ichijo, K. Nakanishi, K. Miyata, K. Yoshida, M. Okayama, I. Kakizaki, K. Kojima, M. Takahashi, S. Munesue, S. Shimizu, J. D. Esko, Y. Hayashi, A. Muthusamy, S. Makino, H. Watanabe, H. Nakamura, S. Mochizuki, N. Koshikawa, T. Takino, C. Shukunami, T. Shinomura, T. Sato, K. Matsumoto, Z. Isogai, K. Kadomatsu, M.

# –who and what made 20 meetings possible

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Igarashi, S. Lohmander, L. Uhlin-Hansen, A. Salustri, J. C. Calvo, K. Sugahara, K. Sakaguchi, K. Kimata, V. C. Hascall. I would like to thank all of them for their contribution providing exciting ideas in proteoglycan research.

The original idea of Proteoglycan Forum was conceived during my conversation with Dr. Keiichi Yoshida (former Director of the Seikagaku Laboratory) in 1997. Traditionally, there had been very active proteoglycan research groups in western regions of Japan ( i.e., Nagoya, Kobe...), and they held regular meetings on proteoglycans to exchange research ideas, foster active collaboration, and provided a portal to recruit new and young investigators from other research fields. In the eastern regions of Japan, however, there were no such regular meetings. We felt it would be an excellent idea to hold regular meetings in the east as well (not out of competition between east and west, but

simply to provide more opportunities as a matter of logistics and to reduce time and expense of traveling long distances) to further expand scientific interests on proteoglycan in Japan. Then, Tokyo would be a convenient and strategic location to hold meetings. Dr. Yoshida also assisted us in getting financial and secretarial supports from the Seikagaku Corporation; as everybody in the our field has been appreciating, scientific supports from the Seikagaku Corporation to the glycoscience community has been invaluable and exceptional.

Lastly, but not least, we enjoyed working together with staffs from the Seikagaku Corporation for the preparation and execution of the meeting. Especially, I would like to express my special gratitude to Ms. Eriko Hagiya, without her excellent organizational skills and diligent attention to every detail of preparation, no Proteoglycan Forum meeting was possible.