

GIS TEAM WINS 5 AWARDS AT BCVS SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS 2019

Congratulations to Dr Benson Lim and Mr Wilson Tan!

The Genome Institute of Singapore (GIS) would like to congratulate Dr Benson Lim and Mr Wilson Tan for winning a total of five awards. The awards were conferred to the GIS team, from Prof Roger Foo's Foo-lab, at the international Basic Cardiovascular Sciences (BCVS) Scientific Sessions 2019 held in Boston from 29 July to 1 August 2019.

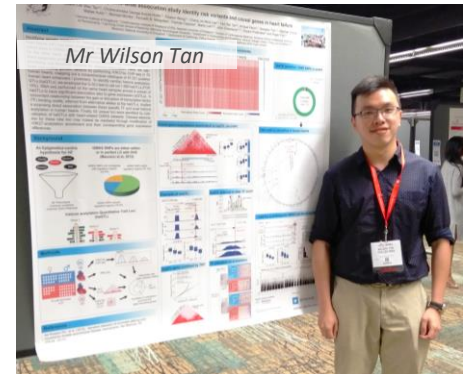


Dr Benson Lim

Dr Benson Lim, Research Fellow from the Foo-lab at the GIS, represented the NUHCS Cardiovascular Research Institute (CVRI) at the inaugural Asian Cardiovascular Symposium (ACS), and showcased their recently published work titled "Targeting the highly abundant circular RNA, circSlc8a1, in cardiomyocytes attenuates pressure overload induced hypertrophy". Circular RNA are a newly discovered species of non-coding RNA in our cellular system, and they face increasing attention because these RNA species may hold clues to new ways of treating heart disease. This work is the first in the world to showcase the function of a ubiquitously expressed circular RNA called circSlc8a1.

Dr Lim's abstract won him the second prize at the oral abstract competition, and one of top 5 best selected abstracts at ACRE. Dr Lim was also awarded the BCVS New Investigator Travel Grant for the overall top 20 abstracts in BCVS 2019, and also won the Paul Dudley White International Scholar Award for the highest ranked abstract from Singapore, and an Honorable Mention at the Early Career Poster Competition. In total, Dr Lim bagged 5 awards at the BCVS Scientific Sessions 2019. This work has been funded by a Singapore National Medical Research Council (NMRC) Young Investigator Grant to Dr Lim, and various NMRC and BMRC Translational Research awards to the Foo-lab. The full work is recently published in the journal Cardiovascular Research (<https://doi.org/10.1093/cvr/cvz130>).

Mr Wilson Tan Lek Wen, a PhD student in the Foo-lab, was also awarded one of the top 5 winners at the Early Career Poster Competition, with his abstract titled "Disease and phenotype relevant genetic variants identified from histone acetylomes in human hearts". DNA histone acetylation is a key epigenetic feature distinguishing heart failure, and the Foo-lab is a world leader in the research of CV Epigenetics.



BCVS SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

The American Heart Association (AHA) established its Council on Basic Cardiovascular Sciences (BCVS) in 1999, and the BCVS Scientific Sessions has become an annual gathering of all of the world's basic science researchers in Cardiovascular Research since the early 2000s. This year, the meeting (29 July to 1 Aug) was held in Boston, and attended by the largest record number of scientists (>1,000) in its history. In addition, the inaugural Asian Cardiovascular Symposium (ACS), attended by hundreds of Asian CV scientists was held, for the first time, one day prior to the official BCVS Sessions.

The ACS was jointly hosted by Asian cardiovascular groups including the Academy of Cardiovascular Research Excellence (ACRE), Japanese Cardiovascular Group (JCS), Korean Cardiovascular Society (KCS) and South Asian Heart Association (SAHA). Dr Lim Tingsen Benson (Research Fellow from the Foo-lab) represented the NUHCS Cardiovascular Research Institute (CVRI) at the ACS, and showcased their recently published work titled "Targeting the highly abundant circular RNA, circSlc8a1, in cardiomyocytes attenuates pressure overload induced hypertrophy". Circular RNA are a newly discovered species of non-coding RNA in our cellular system, and they face increasing attention because these RNA species may hold clues to new ways of treating heart disease. This work is the first in the world to showcase the function of a ubiquitously expressed circular RNA called circSlc8a1.

