

I Am Super Excited!

Director of Kavli IPMU
Hitoshi Murayama

On April 1, 2012, our institute was renamed as the Kavli Institute for the Physics and Mathematics of the Universe (Kavli IPMU), and the naming ceremony took place on May 10, 2012 at the Kavli IPMU building on the University of Tokyo Kashiwa campus. The day before the ceremony, Mr. Fred Kavli, Chairman and Founder of the Kavli Foundation, Dr. Robert Conn, President of the Kavli Foundation, and I made a courtesy visit to Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda at the Prime Minister's Office. I have been super excited with these great occasions.

At the naming ceremony, I and President Hamada were the first speakers to open the ceremony, and we had congratulatory greetings from eight distinguished guests, Mr. Fred Kavli, Dr. Robert Conn, Dr. Hiroo Imura, Chairman of the WPI program, Mr. Daisuke Yoshida, Director-General of Research Promotion Bureau, MEXT, Roger Blandford from the Kavli

Institute for Particle Astrophysics and Cosmology at Stanford University, George Efstathiou from the Kavli Institute for Cosmology at Cambridge University, Xiaowei Liu from the Kavli Institute for Astronomy and Astrophysics at Peking University, and, Yue-Liang Wu from the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics China at the Chinese Academy of Science. We also had warm and encouraging message from Dr. Jonathan Dorfan, President of the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University, who unfortunately could not make it to the ceremony.

President Hamada expressed gratitude to Mr. Kavli and offered his strong support for establishing Kavli IPMU as a permanent entity of the University. Following the president's speech, Mr. Fred Kavli welcomed IPMU as a member of the Kavli family and spoke about his philanthropic effort to support science. I was deeply impressed and encouraged with



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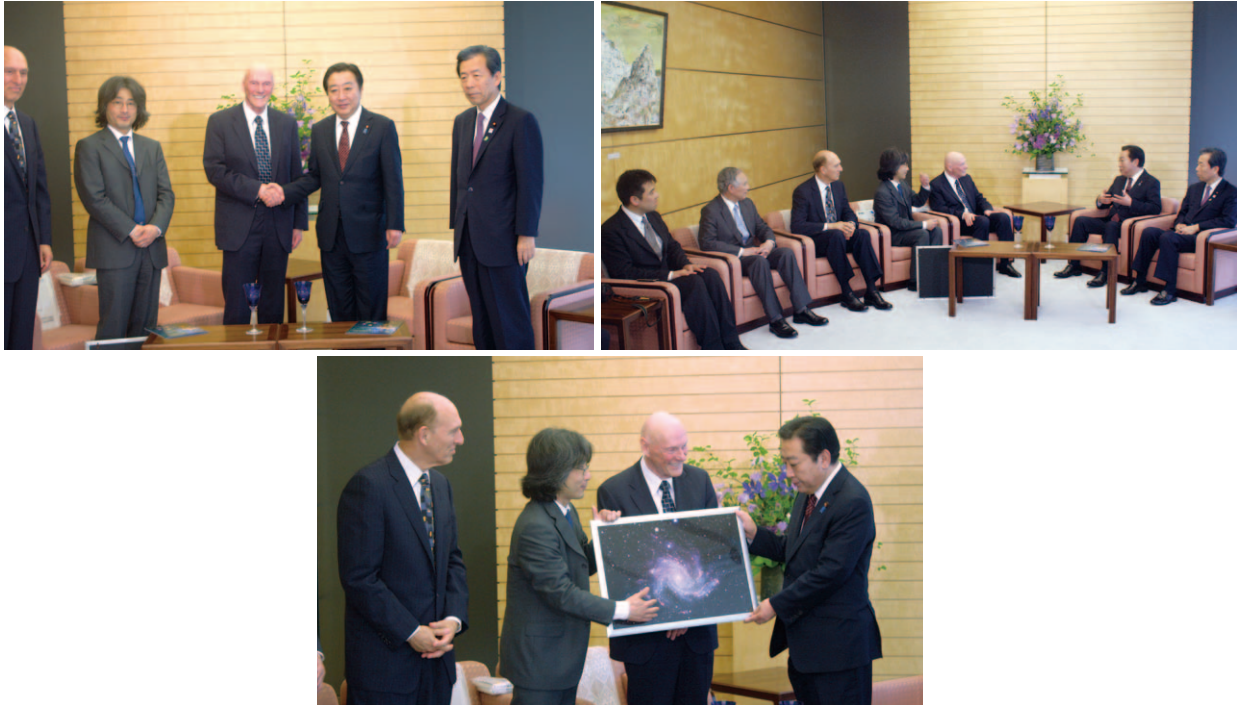
their speeches.

At the end of the ceremony, I and Fred worked together to unveil the new Kavli IPMU sign in front of the Kavli IPMU building. On the front and rear surfaces of this sign are inscribed the patterns representing sketches by Galileo Galilei of Orion Nebula and Praesepe, respectively, depicted in his book, *Sidereus Nuncius*, published in 1610. These patterns shine in the night as you can see in the picture.

On May 9, Fred, Robert, and I visited Prime Minister Noda, together with Prof. Sadanori Okamura, President of the Astronomical Society of Japan and the former director of Todai Institute for Advanced Study, and Dr. Naotaka Suzuki, Staff Scientist of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory who works for Prof. Saul Perlmutter, 2011 Nobel Laureate in Physics for his discovery of the accelerating expansion of the Universe. We were also greeted by Minister Hirofumi Hirano of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT).

“Basic science is an important and common resource for all of humanity and we really admire what you are doing in terms of supporting basic science,” Prime Minister Noda said to Fred. “We are also honored that you have chosen Japan and the University of Tokyo to be supported by the Foundation. We at the government really believe that we need to attract global talent to Japan. The fact that the IPMU has received global attention and your interest and investment is a wonderful thing.”

Addressing Prime Minister Noda, Fred shared his admiration for Japan and their common commitment to science. “It is a very great pleasure to be back here in Japan,” he said. “It is such a fabulous country at the leading edge of science and technology, and it’s a special pleasure to be here supporting science. Everything we touch in our daily lives has been created through the support or influence of science... so we are very, very pleased to support the IPMU, which is at the leading edge of science.”



Dr. Conn concurred, noting IPMU was part of Japan's World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI), which created six international research centers around the country. "We were attracted to Japan by the quality of the science in Japan, ...and that the WPI seems to be having an enormous impact – not only in Japan but around the world. So it is a new way forward. ...We welcome the Kavli IPMU to a family of Kavli institutes that are global. This is the 16th Kavli institute of science and we are very pleased it is at the University of Tokyo and here in Japan."

Minister Hirano also praised the Kavli IPMU. "MEXT established six science institutes across the country under the World Premier International Research Center Initiative and the fact that you have actually chosen one of these to become a Kavli institute is a very good sign that we have made the right choices."

During the visit, I presented the image of a spiral galaxy taken by the Subaru telescope to explain that galaxies are filled with mysterious dark matter. I also

pointed out to the Prime Minister that more than a half of the scientific members at the Kavli IPMU are international, coming from all over the world. In describing the program, I highlighted the unique infrastructure and informal daily teatime to promote interdisciplinary interactions among the members and large number of visitors.

All in all, I am so happy to tell that the Kavli IPMU has started out on the bright future with everybody's blessing.