

Changing of the Guard

Director of Kavli IPMU

Hitoshi Murayama

When IPMU was launched back on October 1, 2007, there were no scientists on site. The very first scientist that arrived a half month later was our founding Administrative Director Kenzo Nakamura. He stepped down from his role this April.

Kenzo did an amazing job. He took the requirements of the WPI program very seriously, which called for interdisciplinary research environment, a significant international membership, and minimum administrative duties for scientists. Even just one of them poses a significant challenge. He quickly assembled an army of bilingual administrative staff members to aid non-Japanese scientists to settle down and start working quickly and efficiently. He negotiated hard with the University to create flexible employment schemes. In fact, without his persistent work to overcome many challenges with the system, I could not receive an appointment letter from then President Komiyama, and most of us would not be here today! And he even translated my rusty Japanese to our staffs.

Kenzo was a renowned experimentalist in neutrino physics. He played a major role to realize the first long-baseline neutrino oscillation experiment in the world called K2K, which sent a beam of neutrinos from KEK to the Super-Kamiokande detector 250 km away. His consistent work on Particle Data Group demonstrates his service spirit. It is rare to find such a combination of scientific prowess, service spirit, political skill, careful management, and strong devotion. We all owe him a lot.

Actually, Kenzo hasn't left us. He actually still

comes in every day, editing this by-now very popular Kavli IPMU News. Whenever we are not sure about what to do, he is the wise man to advise us.

But what about his successor? Very fortunately, we discovered another such rare breed. Tom Haruyama also came from KEK, and he is a well-known researcher in cryogenics. He contributed to many important experiments in fundamental science, such as XMASS looking for dark matter and KAGRA trying to detect gravitational wave from merging black holes. He has a significant management experience, having served as the Deputy Director of the Institute of Particle and Nuclear Studies within KEK and chaired the Cryogenics Society of Japan. And he is such a joyful person!

We are very lucky to be supported by such amazing individuals. Thanks to them, we enjoy our incredible research environment with peace of mind.

Kenzo compiled yet another issue of Kavli IPMU News that is simply a joy to read. This one features Kenji Fukaya, distinguished mathematician on symplectic geometry, discussing connection between mathematics and physics with our PI Kyoji Saito. Taizan Watari describes his research on flavor physics that involved our mathematician Yukinobu Toda. You'll enjoy this issue. Thank you, Kenzo!



(Left) Kenzo Nakamura
(Right) Tom Haruyama