Title	Why not start small?
Sub Title	
Author	川上, 了史(Kawakami, Norifumi)
Publisher	Faculty of Science and Technology, Keio University
Publication year	2023
Jtitle	New Kyurizukai No.37 (2023. 8)
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	Man-made proteins from Keio's Faculty of Science and Technology : invention and creation through researching self-assembling proteins Norifumi Kawakami : senior assistant professor, Department of Biosciences and Informatics
Genre	Article
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=KO50001003-00000037-0008

Why Not Start Small?

Norifumi Kawakami

Right before I was approached to be interviewed for this issue, I had the opportunity to reconnect with an old friend who studies plant ecology and listen to them give a talk about their current research project. The subject my friend discussed was about trees that are planted on the borders of private properties and how to preserve them. The research documentation detailed 2001 individual trees from 177 different locations, numbers that left us all dumbfounded. But, if you think about it, the researchers did not magically collect this data all at once. They started with a single tree and, from there, painstakingly gathered example upon example to produce these results. Simply put, they found a project that interested them and stuck with it. However, I understand that this can be a difficult thing to do. Many people drop projects after a few days or don't even pursue new ideas in the first place.

When I look back to our time as graduate students, my friend was the person who told me that "science is all about pursuing the things you love!" I think that this research is an embodiment of that idea. I remember how shocked I was back then because it confronted my fundamental understanding of science. I never doubted the idea that there was no "meaning" to research that had no direct application. And yet, somehow, I ended up going into the sciences too.

After the twists and turns in my career that led me to Keio University, I realized that if I started working on a project that I didn't find interesting, I would inevitably quit somewhere down the road. This is why I chose to begin trying to create a new molecule even though the only thing this project had going for it was my personal interest. Luckily, through seemingly endless time, patience, and perseverance, this research led to the creation of TIP60. It would be presumptuous of me to put myself in the same league as my friend, but in the end, the key to both of our success was to start and to never give up.

Looking around the world, there are myriad ways to define "success," and different approaches to getting there, so I can't say that blind repetition is always the right answer. However, no matter what you're working on, by continuing to build on your previous efforts, the likelihood of you stumbling across something important only increases, just like how my friend whose single data point of one tree eventually became 2000. Even if you think you lack talent at something, your understanding of the topic will increase, you might come up with new ideas, and somewhere along the way you might realize that you're having fun. This is what will motivate you to persevere. This is one of the reasons I started my YouTube channel. There's no guarantee that any job will go well. If there is something that you think you can do, some occasion where you want to raise your hand and volunteer, why not try? Start small, put aside profits, and even if it's just something you work on casually, why not at least take the first step?

理 工 学 Information

Videos of Research Findings from the Faculty of Science and Technology (Sci-Tech TV)

The website for the Faculty of Science and Technology (https://www.st.keio.ac.jp) has set up a page for each of the different laboratories to introduce their research projects (https://www.st.keio.ac.jp/rikou-tv/).

Providing a unique perspective into the ambience and energy at Yagami Campus, these videos allow viewers to get an inside look at the equipment and general atmosphere in the laboratories as well as up-to-date information on the researchers' most recent projects. Explore the latest in science and technology from the comfort of your own screen!

Editor's postscript

This issue has featured Senior Assistant Professor Norifumi Kawakami and his research on artificial protein nanoparticles. We hope that these collections of articles prove useful to a wide readership.

We believe that the vitality and positivity Professor Kawakami has demonstrated strongly embodies Keio's principle of *Jiga Sakko*, or "Creating History to Define the Future," embarking to understand unexplored fields of study, and overcoming challenges or adversity that stand in the way. We look forward to seeing how his resiliency in facing problems inspires his students.

(Midori Nakayama)

新版 窮理図解

New Kyurizukai
No. 37 August 2023

Editing: "New Kyurizukai" Editing Committee
Photographer: Keiichiro Muraguchi
Designers: Hiroaki Yasojima, Yukihiko Ishikawa (GRiD)
Cooperation for editing: Sci-Tech Communications, Inc.
Publisher: Toshiyuki Murakami
Published by : Faculty of Science and Technology, Keio University
3-14-1, Hiyoshi, Kohoku-ku, Yokohama, Kanagawa 223-8522
For inquiries (on "New Kyurizukai" in general) :
kyurizukai@info.keio.ac.jp
For inquiries (on industry-academia collaboration) :
kll-liaison@adst.keio.ac.jp
Website version:
https://www.st.keio.ac.jp/en/kyurizukai/