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Grateful for My Environment and the People I Met

Shu Tanaka

It has already been five years since I opened my laboratory at Keio's Department of Applied Physics and Physico-Informatics in the Faculty of Science and Technology in April 2020. In March 2024, I gave a sendoff to the lab's first cohort of students, and it is safe to say that all the different events of the laboratory have finally come full circle. The timing of this opportunity to be featured in the New Kyurizukai also allowed me to reflect on my own career path to date. And I realized again the importance of having a mindset where you do what needs to be done given your situation at the time and be thankful for the encounters you make there.

There were many twists and turns from my student days to my current position. However, by keeping positive, I believe I was able to make it this far without losing heart. Of course, the process was not smooth sailing in the slightest. I often compared myself to others, and I caused a lot of worry and trouble for a lot of people. Nevertheless, the one thing I came to value was the ability to work hard at what needs to be done, making the most of the environment I was given while leaning on the support of the wonderful people around me.

Compared to when I was a student, today there is an overabundance of information, and it is easy to feel outshined by those we perceive to be doing "better" than us. Because of that, some may feel rushed to accrue experiences that set them apart. It is good to be motivated by outside influences, but it is also good to adjust your mindset so you can think a little more calmly. If we take full advantage of our current environment, we

can get something out of it. We may not be privileged enough to have special experiences for one reason or another. You can apply that positive mindset to make the best of your circumstances in those cases, too. Taking full advantage of the environment around you may seem like a modest undertaking, but I believe it will allow you to develop a variety of skills and provide a strong foundation for future work.

I myself am currently engaged in a number of tasks in different capacities, including leading a laboratory, organizing various R&D projects, and serving as CTO of the startup company we founded, Quanmatic. I feel that I am able to carry out these tasks because of the support of the people around me, as well as the experience I have gained by taking advantage of the environment around me. And now, in full appreciation for this wonderful environment, I hope to lay the foundation for future work in the years to come, and beyond.

理工学 Information

Keio's Faculty and Graduate School of Science and Technology Advancing the KeiDGs for Their 100th Anniversary



Artist: Ryoko Utsunomiya
Art Direction: TokyoDex

Keio University's Faculty of Science and Technology and Graduate School of Science and Technology are working to advance the Keio Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Goals (KeiDGs) as action goals as we set our sights on 2039, the 100th anniversary of the faculty and graduate school's founding. KeiDGs are objectives that incorporate the concept of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I)—whose significance has become increasingly apparent in recent years—into education and research while also framing it along with the spirit of Keio's founder, Yukichi Fukuzawa.

Based on these goals, a working group established by the faculty and graduate school is actively aiming to implement various measures and events. The Faculty of Science and Technology and the Graduate School of Science and Technology will forge ahead, advancing the KeiDGs to shine not only as they approach their upcoming 100-year anniversary, but also in the years to come.

For more details on the activities of the KeiDGs, be sure to check out the following website.



<https://dei.st.keio.ac.jp/en/>

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Editor's postscript

For this 40th issue of the New Kyurizukai, we featured Associate Professor Shu Tanaka and his research on quantum annealing and quantum computing. When we consider the scope of how combinatorial optimization can be applied and how it can impact society, we naturally dream of a brighter future.

Through the interview and comments from students, you can see how sincerely Tanaka works with each and every member of his laboratory. In turn, this created a warm, welcoming atmosphere in the lab, with students naturally gravitating around him.

(Fuhito Sugihara)