



# UoA News 11

※The described school year is when he/she received the award.

## Professor MIYAZAKI Toshiaki Assumed the Position of the Chairperson of the Board of Executives



I assumed the positions of the Chairperson of the Board of Executives and University President on April 1, 2020. I would like to further increase both the research ability and the internationalization of the University of Aizu in order to realize its further development. I am considering a variety of initiatives for this purpose. However, none of these initiatives can be realized without cooperation of faculty, administrative staff members and students. As such, I will ask for your cooperation in order to implement them with a sense of urgency.

Although April is normally a time that the campus should have been livened up by accepting new students, this year an uncomfortably silent atmosphere has fallen over the campus as most of the courses are offered on line in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Having said that, cherry blossoms on campus are in full bloom, announcing the beginning of the new academic year. Now is the time for patience. The university has resolutely taken every measure possible to prevent the spread of the disease. However, I ask that each of you take steps to protect your health with an understanding that you are ultimately the person most responsible for preserving your own life. Please continue going about your daily business with a belief that a door to a great future will open to you once we have overcome this global crisis.

### Degree Conferment Ceremony for AY 2019 Held



On March 19, 2020 (Thu), the degree conferment ceremony for AY2019 was held at the University of Aizu auditorium. 253 individuals, including 197 students graduating from the Undergraduate School of Computer Science and Engineering, 54 students completing the Master's Program and two students completing the Doctoral program were conferred with degrees that will help them contribute to society in their own way.

At the conferment ceremony, University President OKA Ryuichi conferred diplomas to Undergraduate Representative NIITA Yoshitaka, Master's Program Representative SONOKE Takashi. After President OKA's ceremonial address, students who excelled in academics and research while attending the university were commended.

Undergraduate Representative NIITA Yoshitaka stated his reply address.

I am very proud of what I have learned at the University of Aizu, and at the same time, I will continue to strive to become a person who can contribute to the local and international society.

### AY 2019 Excellent Student Award



On Thursday, March 30, 2020, the top performing students for Academic Year 2019 were awarded certificates. The University of Aizu utilizes a Grade Point Average (GPA) system, and the top three performers from the undergraduate school are awarded. GPA is an internationally recognized standard for university grades, and a student's GPA is a major factor in landing a job, getting in to graduate school, and for studying abroad.

Students who were commended are as listed below  
First-year students:

Takahashi, Hikaru / Hoshino, Yusui / Takiguchi, Yuto

Second-year students:

Ito, Ryoya / Kanno, Daiki / Murakami, Hiromu

Third-year students:

Muraki, Masaya / Phea, Sinchhean / Matsuo, Yuhi

## Three UoA Employees Receive FY2019 Long Service Awards



The following three employees retiring from the university at the end of March 2020 received the long service awards at the Award Presentation Ceremony held on March 30, 2019.

Professor SUGIYAMA Masahide (Division of Information Systems)  
Senior Staff AKIBA Masahiro (Information Systems and Technology Center)  
Senior Staff ISEKI Tetsuya (Information Systems and Technology Center)

## Report Meeting on AI and Intellectual Property Investigations



On Thursday, March 19, 2020, the report meeting on investigations regarding AI and intellectual property financed with Aizuwakamatsu Grant Donation at the UoA. It was held with the audience limited to people within the university.

The following presentations were made:

- Outline of the result of the investigation on AI and intellectual property by Senior Associate Professor OKA Hiroyuki
- Successful cases of utilization of intellectual property by companies in Fukushima by Mr. SATO Tatsuhiko, Executive Chairman of SATO & ASSOCIATES
- Measures, etc. implemented by Japan Patent Office by Mr. AKO Shuichiro, Policy Planning and Research Officer of JPO

## A 4th-year Undergraduate Student Wins Prizes in Hitachi Hokudai Labo & Hokkaido University Contest 2019



4th-year undergraduate student SHIRAI Tomoki won 1st place for Problem-C, 3rd place for Problem-B and 4th place for Problem-A at the Hitachi Hokudai Labo & Hokkaido University Contest 2019, a marathon style programming contest, held from November 8 to 21 and from November 29 to December 12, 2019. Mr. Shirai also won prizes at the contest in 2018.

<Comment from Mr. Shirai>

The theme of this contest was optimizing delivery planning in a dynamic environment. Problems regarding delivery planning are often seen at other contests, but most of them are optimization in a static environment. This theme was new to me so tackling it was really interesting. I also enjoyed exchanging opinions and impressions with other participants after the competition.

## A Graduate Student Wins 81st IPSJ National Convention Best Paper Award



2nd-year master's student KOBAYASHI Seiya received the Best Paper Award at the Information Precession Society of Japan National Convention in March 2020.

He presented his graduation thesis research at the 81st National Conference of the Information Processing Society of Japan held at Fukuoka University in March 2019 and won the award.

This award was established in FY1996 and the award presentation ceremony is usually held in March of the following year. However, as the presentation ceremony for the 81st convention was cancelled due to the COVID-19, the certificate and award medal were sent to Mr. Kobayashi this March.

## Research Paper about Asteroid Explorer Hayabusa 2 Co-authored by University of Aizu Faculty Members and Student Published in Digital Edition of Nature



A research paper co-authored by five UoA faculty members and one UoA master's student affiliated with the Aizu Center for Space and Informatics (ARC-Space) was published in the digital edition of the world-renowned British academic journal Nature on Monday, March 16, 2020. This paper summarizes research achievement such as the capturing of a full rotation's worth of high-resolution thermal images of the asteroid Ryugu by Hayabusa 2, a world first, and discovering that the surface consists of porous boulders and fragments.

This is the first time a research paper co-authored by a UoA student has been published in Nature. The student, SUKO Kentaro, a second-year master's student supervised by Professor Demura, was in charge of the development and operation of the HEAT software for calibration and temperature conversion for the Thermal InfraRed Imager (TIR), as well as temperature calibration and conversion based on the ground test data.

## Paper on Achievements on Hayabusa2 Observations Published in Science Magazine



A paper co-authored by three faculty members of the University of Aizu's Aizu Research Center for Space Informatics (ARC-Space) was published in Science Magazine on Thursday, March 19, 2020.

This paper was written on scientific achievements made by observing the generation of an artificial crater on the surface of the asteroid Ryugu using the Small Carry-on Impactor (SCI). Faculty members of ARC-Space and UoA students are served on the Hayabusa2 project's Science Team as its members. These three faculty members were also involved in the development and operation of observation devices including SCI as well as observation data analysis.

## The University of Aizu was Ranked 24th in the World University Ranking Japan 2020

順位	大学名	総合スコア	教育	研究	社会貢献	環境
1	東北大学	83.0	84.1	80.6	96.6	73.9
2	京都大学	81.5	83.4	78.7	98.4	69.1
+3	東京大学	81.2	86.5	79.8	94.1	64.0
+3	東京工業大学	81.2	80.1	80.8	97.8	74.4
+21	筑波大学	65.2	49.3	87.9	65.8	61.9
23	千葉大学	65.9	63.3	75.9	72.0	50.2
24	会津大学	65.0	63.9	76.8	33.9	74.0
25	お茶の水女子大学	64.8	64.2	76.9	55.7	55.0
26	京野理工福祉大学	64.3	59.3	67.1	65.4	67.8
27	国本大学	64.2	63.6	70.9	59.3	58.1

On Tuesday, March 24, 2020, The UoA was ranked in 24th of "THE Japan World University Rankings 2020" published by the British educational journal "Times Higher Education", which is 2 ranks up from 26th last year. In this ranking, they evaluate the universities with 16 items in 4 fields; Resources, Engagement, Outcome, Environment.

The UoA was 2nd in the ranking of the public universities. The evaluation in THE Japan World University Rankings emphasizes "Teaching" in consideration of the mission of the Japanese universities compared to the evaluation in THE World University Rankings which emphasizes "Research".

<Comment from OKA Ryuichi, the former Chairperson of the Board of Executives>

I am glad that the university ranked high for the fourth year straight. This is one of the achievements our faculty and administrative staff members, students and alumni have accumulated with the help of many people supporting the university. I would like to express my gratitude for every one of them.

We are currently facing tough circumstances in our international educational and academic exchange activities. However, we will make every effort to overcome this situation and further develop our university as an institution that attracts both domestic and international attention.

## UoA PhD student wins the 2019 IEEE ComSoc Sendai Chapter Student Excellent Research Award



Hoang D. Le, PhD student supervised and recommended by Professor Anh T. Pham of the Computer Communications Laboratory (CCL), wins the IEEE ComSoc Sendai Chapter Student Excellent Research Award 2019. The award is targeted to students in Tohoku region with excellent achievements in research areas covered the IEEE Communications Society(ComSoc). Every year, a maximum of three students are selected for this distinguished award.

<Comment from Hoang D. Le>

It is my great honor to be one of receipts of the IEEE ComSoc Sendai Chapter Student Excellent Researcher award for my research achievements in 2019. This award highly motivates and encourages me to continue doing research as well as make more contributions in IEEE society in the future. On this occasion, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. PHAM Tuan Anh for his great guidance and constant support. In addition, my sincerely thanks also go to the University of Aizu for the research support grants during my PhD study, so that I could focus on my research and have the opportunity to obtain this accomplishment.

## UoA PhD student wins the Outstanding Paper Award for Young C&C Researchers



TRAN T.T. Huyen, a PhD student supervised by Prof. TRUONG Cong Thang at the Computer Communications Laboratory, won the Outstanding Paper Award for Young C&C Researchers.

The award ceremony was held at the NEC Head Office Building, Tokyo, on January 28, 2020.

<Comment from TRAN T. T. Huyen>

It's a great honor to receive the Outstanding Paper Award for Young C&C Researchers.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Senior Associate Professor Truong Cong Thang, and members in our lab., Computer Communications Lab., who have helped and supported me over the years.

In addition, I am extremely grateful to the NEC C&C foundation for their travel grant award for presenting our research and attending the INFOCOM conference in Paris, France.

## Senior associate professor HIRATA Naru moderated the panel discussion on "HAYABUSA2" in the IP event held by Japan Patent Office



On January 22 nd 2020, one of the IP seminars of FUKUSHIMA IP utilization project was held by Japan Patent Office in Koriyama. This project has started in 2018FY, and in 2019FY the IP seminars were held sequentially in Minami-Soma, Aizu, Shirakawa, and Koriyama.

In the Koriyama IP seminar, a panel discussion on "HAYABUSA2 - the key for success and the power of FUKUSHIMA-" was held, and Senior associate professor HIRATA Naru in UoA worked as the moderator of the discussion.

In this seminar, the winner of Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2019 Dr. YOSHINO Akira gave a special speech on "The future achieved by lithium-ion batteries".

## UBIC Awarded FY2019Kahoku Culture Award



The University-Business Innovation Center (UBIC) was awarded the 69th *Kahoku* Culture Award for its many years of contribution to industry in the Aizu region, Fukushima and Tohoku.

The presentation ceremony was held on Friday, January 17, 2020 in Sendai. At the ceremony, UBIC Director IWASE Jiro, and Professor ISHIBASHI Shiro, the Deputy Director, received an award certificate, a plaque and an extra prize from Mr. ICHIRIKI Masahiko, the Chairperson of the Board of Executives the *Kahoku* Culture Foundation, and the President of *Kahoku Shimpo* Publishing Corporation.

## UoA Competitive Programming Club to Participate in ICPC 2020 World Competition



Asian Regional Conference in Yokohama



Asian Regional Conference in Kuala Lumpur

On Thursday, January 9, 2020, it was announced on the official homepage of the ACM-ICPC International Collegiate Programming Contest that University of Aizu team UKUNICHIA had been selected as one of the teams to compete in the World Finals.

This is the fourth time that the University of Aizu has been selected to compete in the ACM-ICPC International Collegiate Programming Contest World Finals. The previous three times were in 2009, 2016 and 2017. The World Finals will be contested by the teams that survived the domestic and regional (Africa and the Middle East, Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America, South Pacific) qualifiers. Four Japanese teams from the University of Tokyo, Kyoto University, Tsukuba University and the University of Aizu, respectively will be competing in this year's World Finals.

The 2020 World Finals will be held from the Sunday, June 21 to Friday, June in Moscow, Russia.

UKUNICHIA members:

NAKAMUA Aki (1st-year master's student), OHASHI Hiroki (1st-year master's student), and MATSUKAWA Hisato (2nd-year undergraduate)

Coach: Senior Associate Professor WATANOBE Yutaka

## University-Company Joint Team Wins Two Awards in RT-middleware Competition 2019



RT-middleware (**Robotics Technology Middleware**) Competition 2019 was held in Kagawa Prefecture on Thursday, December 12, 2019. The team led by Associate Professor NAKAMURA Keita demonstrated their software there and won two awards, the Japan Robot Association Award and the Best Support Award.

**Outline of the software:** Practical robotics teaching material using RT-middleware developed for nurturing and training robotics talent

**Team members:** NAKAMURA Keita (UoA), MOUE Takeshi (FSK Co., Ltd), ARAKAWA Hiroei (FSK Co., Ltd.), SASAKI Akira (GCLUE, INC.), WATANOBE Yutaka (UoA), YASHIRO Makoto (UoA)

## University of Aizu Student Wins the Unity Engine Challenge



3rd-year undergraduate OBA Shuji won the first prize at the Unity Engine Challenge by mixi GROUP held on Saturday, December 7, 2019. This is a competition of a new genre of Unity Challenge Series in which students compete in the environment similar to a business situation.

<Comment from Mr. Oba>

I think I was able to demonstrate my skills for development using Unity. I am glad to have won the first prize.

## Third Symposium on AI Center was held



Third Symposium on AI Center was held on Saturday, November 23, 2019.

In this symposium, Professor Hideharu Amano, Keio University lectured about "A multi-FPGA system for AI application" as a keynote speech.

Professor Timothy K. Shih, National Central University, Taiwan shared his research about making instrumental sound from finger tracking.

UoA faculty members' research on four themes were also given: Deep Learning Based On-Road Risk Detection by Professor Zhao, Physical Modeling of Human's gesture caused by our neural mechanisms by Professor Lubashevsky, Energy Management System based on AI-Chip and Electrical Vehicles by Professor Ben and creativity adaption, generating ideas and decisions in AI and humans' correlation by Senior Associate Professor Yoshioka.

## UoA Team Wins the Endorsed Character Award



*Aizu San Geek*, a team from the UoA, won the Endorsed Character Award in the Endorsed Character Hackathon, one of the categories in the MA Heroes League 2019 national tournament ("MA (Mashup Awards) 2019 Final).

MA Heroes League is one of the largest competition groups in Japan, in which any one can become a hero through making things. The event is comprised of 12 leagues including MA League and Endorse Character League.

Title of their work: *Nemu Nemu Kun* (Mr. Sleepy)

Members of *Aizu San Geek*: MAEDA Noriko (2nd-year undergraduate), SUKEGAWA Takuya (2nd-year undergraduate), and HASHIMOTO Shihomi (2nd-year undergraduate)

## Undergraduate Student Wins Logicool G CUP 2019, E-sport Competition



4th-year undergraduate SUZUKI Takayuki won in the Logicool G CUP 2019 e-sport competition held in Tokyo on Saturday, November 23, 2019. The Logicool G CUP was established to promote e-sports in Japan sponsored by Logicool Corp. and this was the fifth competition.

The competition's 1,580 entries competed in the action building game *Fortnite* published by Epic Games, Inc. A total of 99 participants including those who survived the online qualifiers and were selected through a lottery on the day of the event competed in the finals at the venue in Ota Ward, Tokyo. Mr. Suzuki scored a total of 46 points in three games and won the first prize.

<Mr. Suzuki's comment>

I am honored to be able to leave behind a result at such a large competition. I will continue developing my skills moving forward.

## Professor Jungpil Shin Wins Best Paper Award at 2nd IEEE ICKII 2019



The University of Aizu's Professor Jungpil Shin and his co-authors won the Best Paper Award at the 2nd IEEE International Conference on Knowledge Innovation and Invention 2019 held in Seoul on July 13-16, 2019.

This conference aims at interdisciplinary collaboration of science and engineering technologists in the academic and industrial fields, as well as networking internationally.

The title of the awarded paper is "Dynamic Hand Gesture Based Sign Word Recognition Using Convolutional Neural Network with Feature Fusion"

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