

Uschara Thumarat

Affiliation: Department of Industrial Biotechnology, Faculty of Agro-Industry, Prince of Songkla University, Thailand

Research title for the award: Biochemical characterization and molecular engineering of recombinant cutinases and carboxylesterase from a thermophilic actinomycete, *Thermobifida alba* AHK119



[Background and Achievements]

Dr. Uschara Thumarat earned B.Sc. and M.Sc. from Prince of Songkla University, Thailand. During her master degree study in May 2007, she went to do research at Professor Kawai's laboratory at Okayama University for ten months supported by Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO). After that, she worked as Ph.D. student at Kyoto Institute of Technology under Professor Kawai's supervision. Her Ph.D. thesis is "Biochemical, genetic and structural analysis of cutinases from *Thermobifida alba* AHK119." She published four research articles and one book

chapter.

Her work has been supported by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) since 2009. After graduation, she went back to work in Thailand as a lecturer at King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang for one year and transferred to Prince of Songkla University in January 2014. Currently, her work is related to molecular in polyester-degrading and pesticide-degrading enzymes. As pesticides are toxic and kept long in the environments, pesticide contamination in soil is a serious problem in Thailand; therefore, enzymatic removal and monitoring of the pesticides is useful for environmental remediation of contaminated soil and streams. In addition to work with enzymes, she also isolates soil bacteria with promoting plant growth activity and these organisms will be used as bio-fertilizer in the future.

[Message as a prize winner]

I appreciated the Society for Biotechnology, Japan to choose me as the prize winner of the DaSilva Award 2016. This prize not only encourages me to continue my research but also shows collaborations between Japanese scientists and others. As a young scientist to receive this award, I will do research as best as I can. I would like to thank Professor Kawai to support me for nearly 10 years. Professor Kawai always supervises my work and cherishes me to do research. Thank you Journal bioscience and bioengineering (JBB) to publish my work and I will publish more in this journal.

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