

Malaysian scientists head south with Australia



AAD microbiologist Fiona Scott demonstrates microscope repair to Ms. Sazlina Md. Salleh, Mr Mahadi Mohamad, Dr Wan Maznah Wan Omar, Dr. Aileen Tan Shau Hwai, Prof. Mashhor Mansor and Prof. Zulfigar Yasin.

With the encouragement of Prime Minister Dr Mahathir, Malaysia is initiating a program of Antarctic research. Last season, Professor Siti Alias and the late Dr Omar Pozan participated in Voyage 5 and collected microbial samples from Casey. This coming season, six Malaysian scientists will participate in the Australian Antarctic program.

A/Professor Irene Tan and student Wong Chiew Yen, from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, will round-trip to Casey on Voyage 3, studying the microbial content of the ocean and sea-ice as well as snow and soils at Casey.

In addition, four Malaysian scientists will be participating in Voyage 4. During this cruise they will measure the distribution, abundance

and composition of microbial populations as part of the AAD's Marine Microbial Ecology Program. Six scientists (Voyage 4 participants and two backup participants) from the Universiti Sains Malaysia (the science university in Penang) visited the AAD from 6 to 14 October to receive training in the microbiological techniques that they will be using on Voyage 4.

The Vice Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia, Prof. Dato Dzulkigli Abdul Razak, will meet the scientists on their return from Antarctica, and will then sign a Memorandum of Understanding establishing research links with the University of Tasmania. ■

*SIMON WRIGHT,
BIOLOGY PROGRAM, AAD*

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*Top to bottom:
Tony Press
Wayne Papps*

*Opposite page top to bottom:
Andrew Jackson
Holger Martinsen*