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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **IBN Wins Singapore's Top Award for Corporate Health Promotion** *First A\*STAR recipient of the Singapore HEALTH Platinum Award*



**November 30, 2012** – The Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology (IBN) has won the Singapore HEALTH Platinum Award 2012 for its exemplary efforts in promoting and maintaining a healthy environment. Held once every two years, the Singapore HEALTH (Helping Employees Achieve Life-Time Health) Award was established by the Health Promotion Board to recognize organizations with commendable Workplace Health Promotion (WHP) programs. The Platinum Award is the highest accolade under this national award scheme, and is presented to an organization that has received at least two gold awards consecutively and demonstrated measurable success in their WHP program.

Since first participating in the program in 2008, IBN has won the gold award in 2008 and 2010. This year, in addition to winning the Platinum Award, IBN also increased its total score compared with 2010, and obtained full marks for two out of the four assessment criteria. In particular, there has been marked improvement in the frequency of regular exercise, healthier eating habits and blood cholesterol health amongst its staff.

IBN's WHP Committee is responsible for the Institute's WHP programs and initiatives, and comprises the Welfare, Safety, Charity and Career Advisory Committees. Spearheaded by IBN Director, Ms Noreena AbuBakar, the IBN WHP program includes a range of initiatives and activities to enhance the lifestyles and health of its staff, and provide a supportive working environment.

Ms Noreena AbuBakar shares, "I would like to thank the Human Resources Department headed by Amanda Wong for their tireless efforts in organizing a variety of health-related activities for our staff. While we are delighted to win the Platinum HEALTH Award this year, we are even more encouraged by the visible impact that our WHP program has made on our staff's lives. The positive lifestyle change has been reflected in improved health indicators for IBN staff."

A\*STAR Outstanding Publications Award 2009, 2010 and 2012  
A\*STAR Patent Power Award 2009 and 2010  
Singapore HEALTH Award (Platinum) 2012  
Singapore HEALTH Award (Gold) 2008 and 2010

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Besides regular health check-ups, such as the annual health screening, flu vaccination and dental check-ups, as well as educational talks to raise awareness of common health issues, IBN's WHP Committee also organized a new initiative in 2010, the IBN Charity Month, to foster employee well-being and team spirit through volunteerism. This annual event features activities such as fundraising, donation drives, visits and outings for beneficiaries of various charities. IBN has also appointed an Early Career Advisor to help junior staff manage their expectations and changes in the workplace.

Professor Jackie Y. Ying, Executive Director, adds, "Our workplace health program has been running successfully all these years through the active participation and support of our staff. Various interesting activities are organized during office hours. It is an important priority for us to not only conduct cutting-edge research in biomedical sciences, but also to adopt a healthy and well-balanced lifestyle for everyone at IBN."

**For interview requests or media queries, please contact:**

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**About the Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology**

The Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology (IBN) was established in 2003 and is spearheaded by its Executive Director, Professor Jackie Yi-Ru Ying.

Professor Ying was a Professor of Chemical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1992 - 2005). She was recognized as one of "One Hundred Engineers of the Modern Era" by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers in 2008 for her groundbreaking work on nanostructured systems, nanoporous materials and host matrices for quantum dots and wires.

Under her direction, IBN conducts research at the cutting-edge of bioengineering and nanotechnology. Its programs are geared towards linking multiple disciplines across engineering, science and medicine to produce research breakthroughs that will improve healthcare and our quality of life.

IBN's research activities are focused in the following areas:

- **Drug and Gene Delivery**, where the controlled release of therapeutics involves the use of functionalized polymers, hydrogels and biologics for targeting diseased cells and organs, and for responding to specific biological stimuli.
- **Cell and Tissue Engineering**, where biomimicking materials, stem cell technology, microfluidic systems and bioimaging tools are combined to develop novel approaches to regenerative medicine and artificial organs.
- **Biodevices and Diagnostics**, which involve nanotechnology and microfabricated platforms for high-throughput biomarker and drug screening, automated biologics synthesis, and rapid disease diagnosis.

- **Pharmaceuticals Synthesis and Green Chemistry**, which encompass the efficient catalytic synthesis of chiral pharmaceuticals, and new nanocomposite materials for sustainable technology and alternative energy generation.

IBN's innovative research is aimed at creating new knowledge and intellectual properties in the emerging fields of bioengineering and nanotechnology to attract top-notch researchers and business partners to Singapore. Since 2003, IBN researchers have published over 796 papers in leading journals.

IBN also plays an active role in technology transfer and spinning off companies, linking the research institute and industrial partners to other global institutions. The Institute has a portfolio of over 502 patents/patent applications on its inventions, and welcomes industrial and clinical partners to collaborate on and co-develop its technologies. IBN has successfully commercialized 33 patents/patent applications, and has established 6 spin-off companies.

IBN's current staff and students strength stands at over 150 scientists, engineers and medical doctors. With its multinational and multidisciplinary research staff, the institute is geared towards generating new biomaterials, devices, systems and processes to boost Singapore's economy in the medical technology, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, consumer products and clean technology sectors.

IBN is also committed to nurturing young talents. Besides the training of PhD students, IBN has a Youth Research Program (YRP) for students and teachers from secondary schools, junior colleges, polytechnics, and universities. Since its inception in October 2003, IBN's YRP has reached out to more than 59,000 students and teachers from 288 local and overseas schools and institutions. Over 1,650 students and teachers have completed research attachments at IBN for a minimum period of four weeks.

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