

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be here to welcome you joining us, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology. Today, 14 Master course students and 37 Ph.D. course students are enrolled to start new challenges, the steep and narrow way to be a top-level scientist to contribute to our better future. The way you chose must lead you to a worthwhile life, and we will do our best to assist you.

This university has established itself as a leading research-oriented academic institution in Japan for more than 130 years. We are putting up the basic principle of promoting intellectual innovation and cultivating global human resources for “the realization of sustainable society,” that is, living in harmony with nature and humanity. To approach this mission, we have developed agricultural and engineering researches, and created new fused grounds of study. And we have also succeeded to develop active collaborations with diverse research groups of academia, industry or government sector to maximize the effectiveness of our cutting-edge researches and harvest its fruits. Furthermore, we have exerted ourselves to maintain fully internationalized atmosphere to bring up opinion leaders who work globally. Now we have more than 400 foreign students from all over the world, and signed more than 80 international collaborative agreements that promote the exchange of leading researchers and talented students. All these approaches are making this university a perfect environment for you to accelerate your potential.

Now, to all of you who are going to be a real scientist, I would like to introduce a speech of Dr. Edward Osborne Wilson, who is a famous American biologist, called “Advice to Young scientists” at TEDMED in 2012. It will give you a lot of suggestion and courage. And especially, I’d like you to take notice of the following phrase;

“In the attempt to make scientific discoveries, every problem is an opportunity, and

the more difficult the problem, the greater will be the importance of its solution.”

This is very important, because you surely have many problems and difficulties from now on, on your new way. But the problems and difficulties you confront show that you are on the right way to move on. It shows you are doing well the things more important and more worthy. Now serious environmental problems threaten the survival of humanity. Global warming, energy problems, food supply dilemmas caused by rapid population growth – all these issues are pressing us to create urgent and effective solutions for the coexistence of humanity and nature. And we, as scientists, are expected to play important roles now in the innovation of environmental and life sciences, which is called “Green Innovation” and “Life Innovation.” Now we are doing our best, of course, but our scientific challenges should be inherited, enhanced and advanced by you and further future scientists. As Dr. Wilson said in the mentioned speech, “the world needs you, badly.” We are so much expecting your unlimited attempt and future success.

In addition, to accomplish your challenge, you need a strong body as well as strong will. Especially the students from abroad will find a lot of difficulties in living in a different culture. Take good care of yourself, and take a look around you. People in this room will be your friends, your colleagues, and most importantly, your partners in your personal and professional life. They are your best source of power to make the most of your extraordinarily valuable experience here.

I hope you can enjoy your university life here, and spread your wings for your bright future and for our beautiful world.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Tadashi Matsunaga
President