

Suk honored for contribution to global environmental health

By Sara Mishamandani

The Pacific Basin Consortium for Environment and Health (PBC) selected NIEHS Superfund Research Program (SRP) Director William Suk, Ph.D., to receive its inaugural Chairman's Award. The award, presented at the 15th International Conference of the PBC Sept. 24-27 in Honolulu, recognized Suk's enormous contribution to reshaping the PBC to focus more on global environmental health, with particular emphasis on children's health.

The PBC, originally called the Pacific Basin Consortium on Hazardous Wastes, was established in 1986 to address the issues of toxic waste in the Pacific Basin region resulting from rapid industrial growth. The consortium provides a forum for scientists and engineers to facilitate dialogue and cooperation among industry, governments, and academia, to tackle problems associated with hazardous waste production, management, and remediation.

As part of the opening ceremony at the meeting, Suk presented a keynote speech, looking back on a quarter century of the PBC, and providing ideas for moving forward. He also discussed his involvement in a new collaborative project led by the World Health Organization (WHO), to explore the health effects of electronic waste, or e-waste (see [story](#)).

"The WHO program on e-waste, which was officially launched at the PBC conference, is a current-day example of the hazardous waste problems that were the original brief of the PBC," said PBC Chair Peter Sly, M.D., D.Sc. "I think it shows Bill's dedication to such issues that he has been intimately involved in, with this new project. This should give us all hope for the future."

Addressing emerging global environmental health issues

Suk played a special role in the development of the PBC, helping to transform the organization's mission over time from focusing primarily on remediation to include greater consideration of health effects. He served as a member of the board of directors from 1996-2004, and chair from 2000-2004.

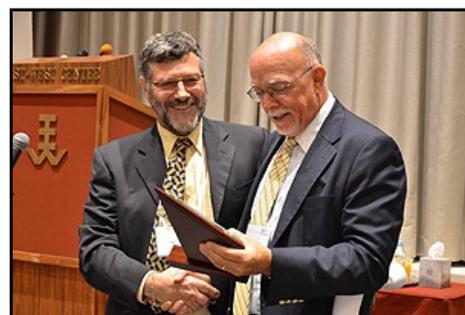
In 1996, Suk was instrumental in organizing the PBC meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which began the shift within the PBC to become more health-driven. Over the years, the PBC has further evolved in its consideration of environmental health issues.

The PBC, as it is today, reflects Suk's vision for the organization, which, along with the SRP, addresses toxic substances in an interdisciplinary fashion, ranging from methods of remediation to studies of health effects.

(Sara Mishamandani is a research and communication specialist for MDB Inc., a contractor for the NIEHS Superfund Research Program and Division of Extramural Research and Training.)



Suk presented the keynote speech at the 2013 PBC Conference. (Photo courtesy of East-West Center)



Sly, left, presented Suk with the inaugural PBC Chairman's Award at the international conference. (Photo courtesy of East-West Center)

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