

Special Issue: AFDA 30th Anniversary**History of Asian Federation of Dietetic Associations:
Celebrating the 30th Anniversary, 1991-2021**

Chwang Leh-Chii

*Honorary President, Asian Federation of Dietetic Associations
President, Chinese Dietetic Society (Taiwan)***The Birth and Founding of AFDA:**

The birth of Asian Federation of Dietetic Associations (AFDA) fell on September 1991, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The original name of AFDA was Asian Forum of Dietetic Professionals (AFDP). AFDA serves to enhance the level of professionalism of dietetic practitioners and facilitate the regional collaboration of dietetics in Asia. This year of 2021 marks AFDA's 30th anniversary. The purpose of this article is to document the founding and development of AFDA during 1991- 2021.

The science and practice of modern dietetics began evolving in early 20th century. Dietetic Associations in Asia have been formed in various countries since 1945(1). The idea for forming Asian Federation of Dietetic Associations (AFDA) was inspired by the very first meeting of Asian dietitians who were invited to Taipei for the 1990 Asian Symposium on Rice and Nutrition held by Taipei Dietitians Association (2).

Representatives (in alphabetical order of Organization) were Connie Chan (President, Hong Kong Nutrition Association), Murni Prakaso (Indonesian Nutrition Association), Mitsutoyo Hanamura (Delegate, Japan Dietetic Association), Cho JS (President, Korean Dietetic Association), Uma Thevendran (Nutrition Society of Malaysia), Verona Corpus, President, Nutritionist-Dietitians' Association of the Philippines), Susani Karta (Singapore Dietitians' Association), Viboonyanont S, Vichai Tanphaichitr (Delegates, Dietitian Club of Thailand) and Chwang Leh-chii (President, Taipei Dietitians Association)(3). The most existing session was representatives from 9 Asian countries briefed their dietetic practice and activities outlining the dietetic status. In the plenary session of "where do we go from here", we concluded to form an Asian Dietetic Network for further collaboration (Photo 1).

Asian Symposium on Rice and Nutrition, Taipei, Taiwan, 1990

Photo 1: Asian Symposium on Rice and Nutrition, Taipei, Taiwan, 1990

In the following year, a group of dietitians attended the 6th Asian Congress of Nutrition during September 16-19, 1991 (Photo 2), and held the Preparatory Meeting for establishing AFDP (4) on September 17, 1991 (Tuesday), 1.30-2.30 pm, at Putra World Trade Center, 3rd level.

The meeting was chaired by Chwang Leh-chii. Participants were: Hong Kong Nutrition Association- Veronica Ho, Indonesian Nutrition Association - Murni I.D. Prakaso, Susirah Sutardjo, Japan Dietetic Association - Teiji Nakamura, Korean Dietetic Association- Kim Eul-Sang, Lee Young-Na, Nutrition Society of Malaysia- Uma Rani Thevendran, Singapore Nutrition and Dietetics Association- Evelyn Fong, Lynn Alexander, Taipei Dietitians Association- Chwang Leh-chii, Chiu Ching-hwa

*Corresponding author: lcchwang@gmail.com

AFDP Established in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1991



Photo 2: AFDP established in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1991
 Uma Rani Thevendran (2nd, L), Murni I.D. Prakaso (3rd, L), Chwang Leh-chii (4th, L),
 Lee Young-Na (5th, L), Susirah Sutardjo (6th, L), Teiji Nakamura (1st, R)

The Resolution Adopted by AFDP

In order to improve nutrition status for the population, to promote the development of the dietetic profession, and to establish international cooperation for dietetic education and research activities in Asia, it is agreed to set up a Forum, named as the Asian Forum of Dietetic Professionals (AFDP). The following resolutions were made:

1. The Forum is open to Asian national dietetic associations that represent their countries / areas. When a national dietetic association is not available, a leading association of dietitians will take its position instead.
2. The definition of Dietitian is based upon that of respective country/area.
3. The President-Elect for the Forum is Dr. Chwang Leh-chii, President of the Taipei Dietitians Association and Secretary-General is Ms. Murni Prakaso of Indonesian Nutrition Association.
4. A Symposium on Dietetics is to be held on a 4 year interval. The first one will be held in Indonesia in 1994 and the second one in Korea in 1998.
5. The followings are the founding members of AFDP: Hong Kong Nutrition Association, Indonesian Nutrition Association (now Indonesian Dietetic Association), Japan Dietetic Association, Korean Dietetic Association, Nutrition Society of Malaysia (now Malaysian Dietitians' Association), Singapore Nutrition and Dietetics Association, Taipei Dietitians Association (now Chinese Dietetic Society (Taiwan)), Thailand Dietitians Club (now

Thai Dietetic Association), Nutritionist-Dietitians's Association of the Philippines

In the beginning, it is expected that the Forum develops to a Federation when time is mature for conducting Asian Congress of Dietetics, as we have minimal experience in organizing a Dietetic Congress of a large international scale.

Our wish rapidly became materialized in 1994, the Asian Congress of Dietetics (ACD) was held in Jakarta, Indonesia. Vice President Try Sutrisno and Minister of Health Sujudi inaugurated the Congress. The first Congress laid an excellent example for the following ACDs. AFDP was renamed as Asian Federation of Dietetics Associations (AFDA), and Murni Prakaso of Indonesian was the President elected.

The AFDA Constitution

To guide the activities of AFDA and its members, the AFDA constitution was initially drafted by Dr. Chiu Ching-hwa from Taipei during the first ACD in 1994. The AFDA board held meeting in Beijing 1995, when they attended the 7th ACN, discussed the draft and invited Dr. Susan Lui of Hong Kong Nutrition Association to join drafting. The preliminary edition of AFDA Constitution with 12 articles was set forth during the 1996 International Congress of Dietetics (ICD) in Manila. The Constitution draft went through continuous edition and discussion during 2002 and

2006 ACD. The final version of Constitution with 11 articles was adopted at AFDA General Assembly, chaired by Dr. Demetria Bongga of NDAP, 2007, the 10th ACN in Taipei (5).

The Federation respects the autonomy of its member associations and will not pursue any political, religious, racial or commercial ends. The management of AFDA affairs is vested in the Executive Council.

The member hosting the current Asian Congress of Dietetics (ACD) designates a representative to serve as the President of the Federation for the next term of office. The Honorary President is the founder of AFDA with a permanent appointment.

The objectives of AFDA are to: promote the development of the dietetic profession by keeping members abreast of new knowledge in the area of nutrition and dietetics, establish international collaboration and linkages for dietetic research and educational activities in Asia, promote a network of scientific information exchange in nutrition and dietetics through sharing of expertise and other resources, organize meetings, workshops, conferences and congresses, and link with international dietetic, nutrition and health-related organizations.

The Logo of AFDA:

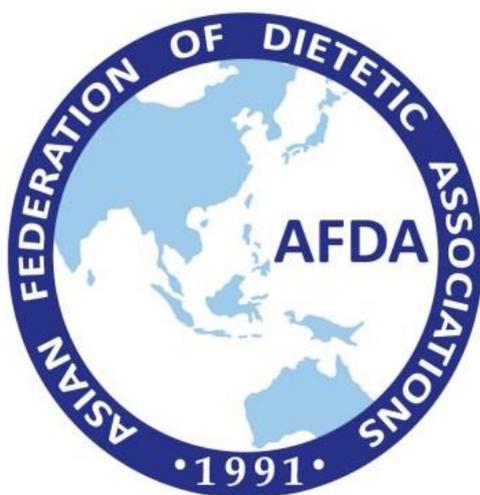


Photo 3: AFDA logo

The AFDA logo profiling the geographic territory of AFDA members in shades of blue (Photo 3) was jointly designed by Nutritionist-Dietitians's-Association of the Philippines, Dietitians Association of Australia, and Hong Kong Nutrition

Association. It was completed and adopted during AFDA General Assembly, chaired by Dr. Sunard Taechangam (TDA) during the 5th ACD in 2010, Bangkok (5).

The AFDA Website:

Facing digital era, a resolution was made to create a website for AFDA at the General Assembly meeting during the 4th ACD held in Bangkok in 2010, and Camila Lee of Hong Kong Nutrition Association served as webmaster. The website www.afda-dietitians.org was launched in 2016. It features milestones and updated activities linking dietitians in Asia and worldwide.

Asian Dietitian's Day:

Asian Dietitian Day is to recognize dietitian's contributions in providing nutrition care to the nation! All members celebrate Asian Dietitians Day annually in their countries throughout Asia and accolade fellow peers in their important roles. September 19 is chosen to commemorate the founding date of AFDA in 1991. It was approved by Executive Council meeting of AFDA in 2015, at Yokohama, Japan, during the 12th Asian Congress of Nutrition (5). For instance, Thai Dietetic Association celebrates this day by sponsoring more than 30 hospitals nationwide to conduct community nutrition activities each year.

The Development and Progress of AFDA:

Asian Congress of Dietetics (ACD)

Since the first ACD was held in Indonesia (1994), it was consecutively held in Korea (1998), Malaysia (2002), Philippines (2006), Thailand (2010), Taiwan (2014) and Hong Kong (2018). The forthcoming congresses will be in Japan (2022), and India (2026).

Each has a theme aiming at contemporary directions and challenges. Gathering of dietetic professionals, nutritionists, researchers and scholars every four years provides a unique venue for sharing new findings in dietetics and innovative evidence-based dietetic practices.

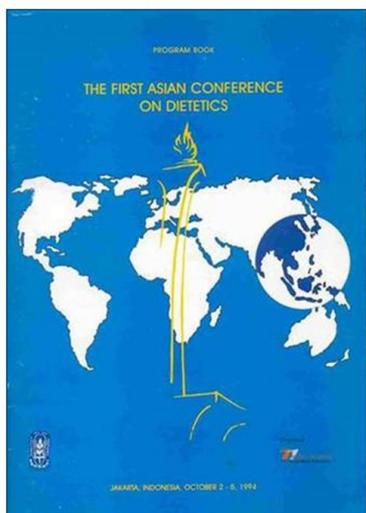
Among all ACD programs, the training and education of dietitians is always the essential subject. It originated from the first ACD 1994, the very first workshop on Education and Training of Professionals in Dietetics and Food Service System Management (DFSSM), chaired by Dr. Sunita Almatsier (INA) and Professor Corazon Barba (NDAP). It was agreed to set up an institutional network to strengthen the education and training program in Asia-Pacific region in order to produce quality dietitians to provide quality nutrition care (6).

Highlight of ACD is the Declaration named after each host city and signed by representatives from AFDA members at the closing ceremony. The declaration is based on discussions at the conference, recognizing urgent issues, striving to promote quality dietetic practices and education, and pledging to enhance health and well-being in Asia (Photo 4-11).



Photo 4: Signing of Taipei Declaration, at 6th ACD, 2014.
 Left to right: HKNA, IDA, AsDI, JDA, KDA (behind), MDA, PNDS, NDAP, SNDA, CDS (Taiwan),
 TDA, DAA.

The 1st ACD, 1994, Jakarta



**Murni Mahila
 INA (now AsDI)**

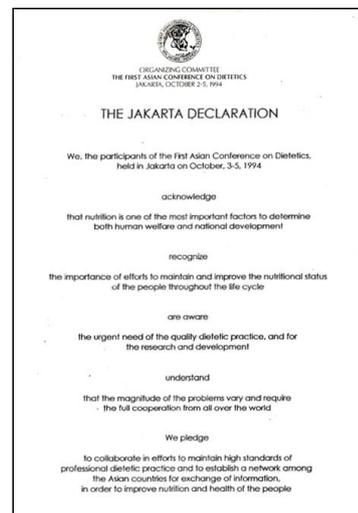
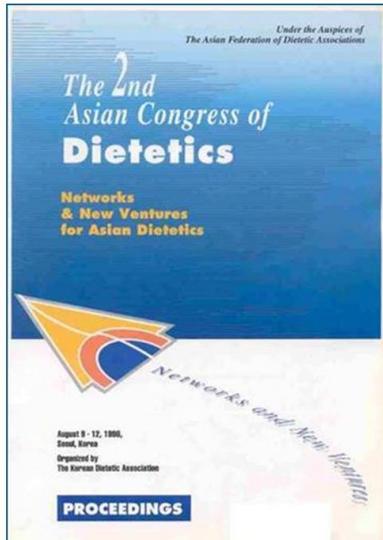


Photo 5: The 1st ACD, Organizing Chair of INA (now AsDI), 1994, Jakarta, Indonesia

The 2nd ACD, 1998, Seoul



Suh Eun Kyung
KDA

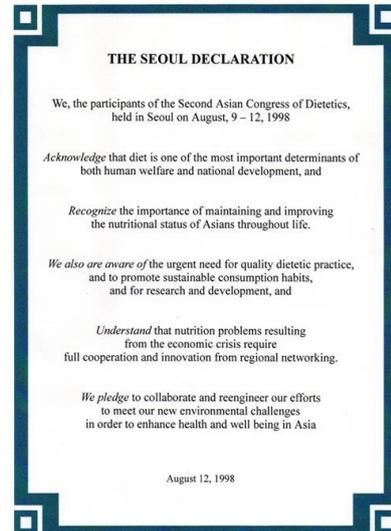
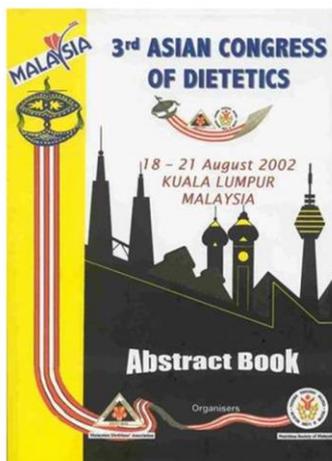


Photo 6: The 2nd ACD, Organizing Chair and President of KDA, 1998, Seoul, Korea

The 3rd ACD, 2002, Kuala Lumpur

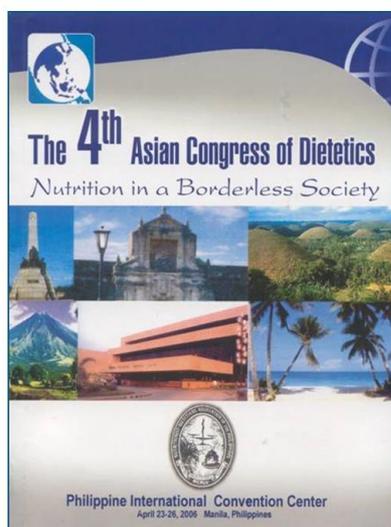


Fatimah Arshad
MDA



Photo 7: The 3rd ACD, Organizing Chair and President of MDA, 2002, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The 4th ACD, 2006, Manila



Demetria Bongga
NDAP

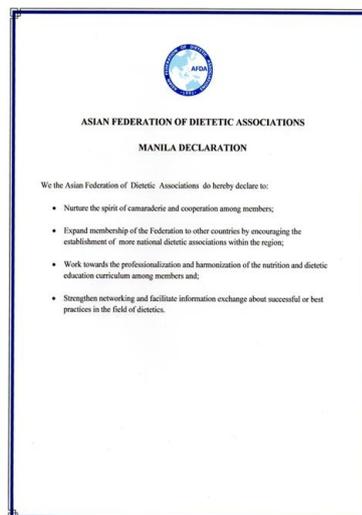
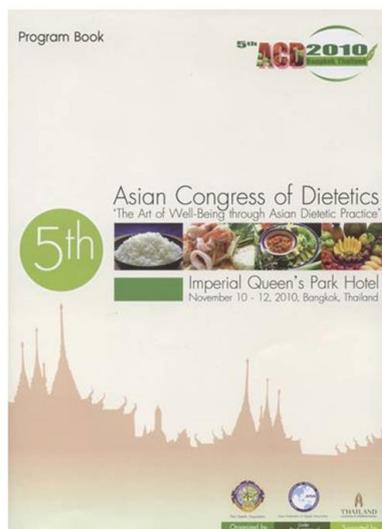


Photo 8: The 4th ACD, Organizing Chair and President of NDAP, 2006, Manila, Philippines

The 5th ACD, 2010, Bangkok



Sunard Taechangam
TDA

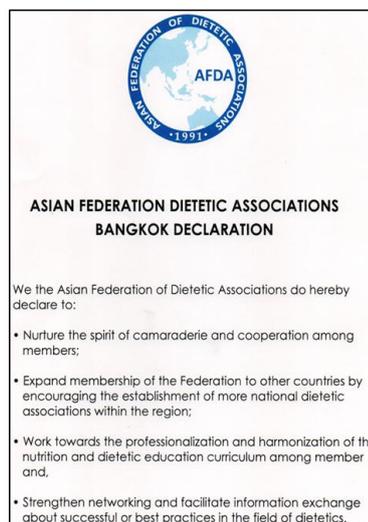
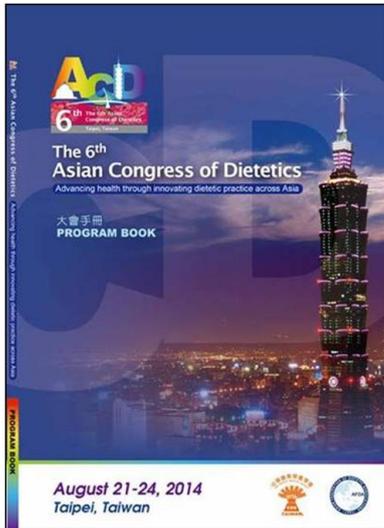


Photo 9: The 5th ACD, Organizing Chair and President of TDA, 2010, Bangkok, Thailand

The 6th ACD, 2014, Taipei

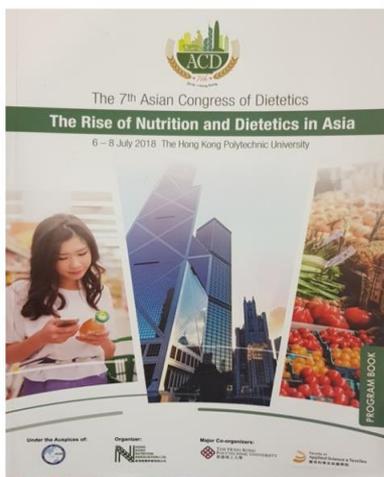


Chwang Leh-Chii
章樂綺
CDS (Taiwan)



Photo 10: The 6th ACD, Organizing Chair and President of CDS (Taiwan), 2014, Taipei, Taiwan

The 7th ACD, 2018, Hong Kong



Gordon Cheung
張智良
HKNA

Frankie Siu
蕭沛霖



Photo 11: The 7th ACD, Organizing Chair and President of HKNA, 2018, Hong Kong

Asian Dietetics Forum (ADF)

The purpose of the Asian Dietetics Forum is to allow AFDA to have interim meeting and activity prior to every 4 years ACD conference.

The first ADF was held in Kuala Lumpur on May 25, 2016, sponsored by Chinese Dietetics Society (Taiwan) and Malaysian Dietitians' Association (Photo 12).

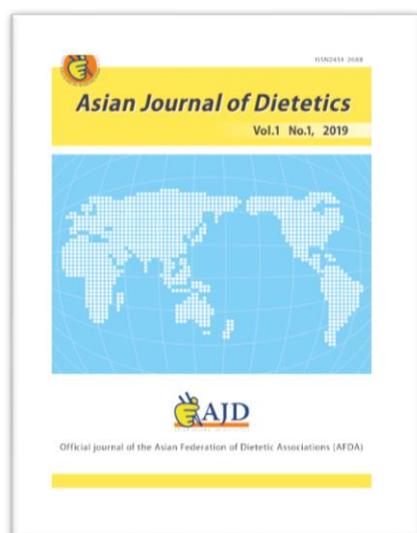
The theme of the forum is "**Asian Dietetics Education**". The aim is to work out a benchmark

statement for AFDA member countries on curriculum, practicum programs and competency standards for dietetic education program. The goal is to facilitate the free flow of dietetic professionals in this region, and to uplift the competency standards of dietitians to meet career requirements and to explore more job opportunities.

The second one planned to be hosted by Hong Kong Nutrition Association in 2020, however, postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic.



Photo 12: ADF in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2016
 Left to right: PNDS, HKNA, JDA, SNDA, DAA, IDA (front), KDA, CDS (Taiwan), AND (USA), MDA, NDAP, AsDI



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Photo 13: Asian Journal of Dietetics, the official journal of AFDA

Asian Journal of Dietetics (AJD)

The 2002 Kuala Lumpur Declaration and 2006 Manila Declaration indicated the urgent need of research and information exchange.

Publishing an academic international periodical in Asia is a formidable task, as writers and readers are from diversified social cultural backgrounds, and topics cover a wide range of preventive and clinical dietetics, dietary culture and behavior, institutional food service management, nutrition policy, education, epidemiology, etc. It was until 2018, Council Meeting of AFDA held in Hong Kong approved the web publishing and peer-reviewed journal. Editorial board members are from eleven AFDA members. Owing to the initiative of Editor-in-Chief, Professor Shigeru Yamamoto from Japan Dietetic Association, the Asian Journal of Dietetics (AJD) with 4 issues a year has been successfully published since January 2019, which provides various subjects of interests to dietitians and benefits their professional development (Photo 13).

Achievement and Prospective of AFDA***Expanding AFDA membership***

Three more national dietetic associations (NDAs) joined AFDA since its founding in 1991: Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) as an affiliated member in 1998, Pakistan Nutrition and Dietetic Society (PNDS) in 2006 and Indian Dietetic Association (IDA) in 2014 as full members.

Among the founding members, three were originally nutrition associations. AFDA encouraged the transformation of dietetic associations to join AFDA: Indonesian Dietetic Association (AsDI), Malaysian Dietitians' Association (MDA) and Thai Dietetic Association (TDA).

There are now in total 11 regular members and 1 affiliated member in AFDA, the population of these countries are more than 2 billion. The geographic location of AFDA members therefore expands from East and Southeast Asia to South Asia and South Pacific. We shall continue to support and assist establishing more NDAs to join AFDA.

Encouraging policy formation to advance professionalism

Professionalism is manifested by accountable persons acquiring knowledge and competency to

fulfill their duty well. All health care professionals require education, internship, certifications and licensures. Dietitian being health professional has no exception.

At present, certification of dietitians in Japan, Philippines, Korea, Taiwan and Malaysia is regulated by government. qualification examination is required to obtain the title of Dietitian. In other AFDA member countries, it is self-regulated by NDAs, however, not all legally binding. Mandatory registration from a governing body requires law enactment to better safeguard the qualification and credentials of dietitians. We shall also support and enhance professionalism in countries lacking qualified dietetic workforce.

Honoring the devoted and committed pioneers

Many colleagues have been untiringly devoted themselves during the past 3 decades to upgrade dietetic profession and network linkages for AFDA. In addition to the organizing chair of each ACD (Table 1), who is the President of host NAD and serves as the President of AFDA for the next term; acknowledgment also extends to Secretary-General, Dr. Susan Lui (HKNA), Dr. Adela Jamorabo Ruiz (NDAP) and Dr. Winnie Chee (MDA) for assisting AFDA affairs. In recognition of prominent dietetic professionals making significant contribution domestically and internationally toward enhancing dietetic profession, Dr. Chwang Leh-chii Asian Dietetics Award has been conferred at ACDs since 1998 (Table 2).

Asian Outstanding Young Dietitian Award funded by Dr. Chiu Ching-hwa since 2018 recognizes young devoted dietetic professionals aged below 45 making contributions to nutrition and dietetics through active participation, extensive services, domestically and internationally (Table 3).

During the course of the past 30 years, there have been inspiring collaborative events of dietetics through active participation of all AFDA members. The unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic has drastically changed our life since 2020, we shall learn to cope with it and turn crisis into opportunities. Looking to the future, 2021 is an inflection point as we move toward the next decade. We shall continue to build a powerful support of dietetic profession on a broader prospective and to realize the aim of better nutrition status for the population in Asia.

Table 1. ACD during 1994-2022 (5)

ACD	Venue & Date	Theme	Organizing Chair
1 st ACD	Jakarta, Indonesia October 2-5, 1994	Beyond Nutrition Challenges and Opportunities for Professionals in Dietetics	Murni Prakaso, President, Indonesia Nutrition Association
2 nd ACD	Seoul, Korea August 9-12, 1998	Networks & New Ventures for Asian Dietetics	Suh Eun Kyung, President, Korean Dietetic Association
3 rd ACD	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia August 18-21, 2002	Harmonization of Asian Dietetics	Fatimah Arshad, President, Malaysian Dietitian Association
4 th ACD	Manila, Philippines April 23-26, 2006	Nutrition in a Borderless Society	Demetria Bongga, President, Nutritionist-Dietitians' Association of the Philippines
5 th ACD	Bangkok, Thailand November 10-12, 2010	The Art of Well-Being through Asian Dietetic Practice	Sunard Taechangam, President, Thai Dietetic Society
6 th ACD	Taipei, Taiwan August 21-24, 2014	Advancing Health through Innovating Dietetic Practice across Asia	Chwang Leh-chii, President, Chinese Dietetic Society (Taiwan)
7 th ACD	Hong Kong July 6-8, 2018	The Rise of Nutrition and Dietetics in Asia	Gordon Cheung, President, Hong Kong Nutrition Association
8 th ACD	Yokohama, Japan August 19-21, 2022 (scheduled)	Realizing a Sustainable Healthy Society for a Bright Future in Asia	Teiji Nakamura, President, Japan Dietetic Association

Table 2: Dr. Leh-Chii Chwang Asian Dietetics Award

Awardee	Venue, Year conferred
Dr. Fatimah Arshad,– Malaysian Dietitians' Association	at the 2 nd ACD, 1998, Seoul, Korea
Ms. Murni Muhilal,– Indonesian Dietetic Association	at the 3 rd ACD, 2002, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Ms. Velona Corpus,– Nutritionist-Dietitians' Association of the Philippines	at the 4 th ACD, 2006, Manila, Philippines
Dr. Hyun Kyung Moon,– Korean Dietetic Association	at the 5 th ACD, 2010, Bangkok, Thailand
Dr. Sunrad Taechangam,– Thai Dietetic Association	at the 6 th ACD, 2014, Taipei, Taiwan
Dr. Susan Lui,– Hong Kong Nutrition Association	at the 7 th ACD, 2018, Hong Kong
Dr. Salma Halai Badrudin,– Pakistan Nutrition and Dietetic Society	at the 7 th ACD, 2018, Hong Kong

Table 3: Dr. Ching-Hwa Chiu Asian Outstanding Young Dietitian Award

Awardee	Venue, Year conferred
Mr. Gordon Cheung— Hong Kong Nutrition Association	at the 7 th 7th ACD, 2018, Hong Kong
Ms. Fayza Khan— Pakistan Nutrition and Dietetic Society	at the 7 th 7th ACD, 2018, Hong Kong

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