

## Special Issue in Honor of Prof. Kang Ro Lee



It is our pleasure and privilege to serve as guest editors for this special issue of the *Natural Product Sciences* in honor of Professor Kang Ro Lee of School of Pharmacy at Sungkyunkwan University. Professor Lee's distinguished career spanned over 32 years, from March 1, 1991, to February 28, 2023, during which he made significant contributions to natural product chemistry and profoundly impacted his students and colleagues.

Professor Lee graduated from Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU) with a BSc degree in the School of Pharmacy in February 1980 and pursued graduate studies with a MSc degree at Seoul National University, specializing in pharmacognosy under the guidance of Professor Young Choong Kim. In 1984, he received a scholarship from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation to study in Germany, where he completed his Ph.D. in natural product chemistry at the Bonn University in 1989 under the guidance of Professor Gerhard Rücker. Upon returning to Korea, he researched at the Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) before joining SKKU in March 1991.

He established the Natural Products Laboratory, and his early research focused on the terpenoid components of Asteraceae, which is a continuation of his doctoral research. This period involved extensive fieldwork, with graduate students collecting research materials from remote areas such as Odaesan Mountain and Ulleungdo Island, often facing considerable hardships. In the 2000s, Professor Lee expanded his research area to discovering bioactive compounds from diverse Korean medicinal plants and poisonous mushrooms. He has published over 350 scientific papers in international and domestic journals and supervised 22 doctoral and 33 master students.

While at SKKU School of Pharmacy, he served as Department Chair (2004–2006) and Director of SKKU Pharmaceutical Research (2016–2018). Regarding academic activities, he also served as President (2015) of the Korean Society of Pharmacognosy (KSP). Professor Lee's scholarly endeavors have garnered widespread acclaim and recognition, as evidenced by a litany of prestigious awards and accolades bestowed upon him throughout his illustrious career. He was awarded the Best Paper Award (1999), the Academic Grand Prize (2009), the Hanpoong-Sangam Award (2016), and the Gasan-Kwangdong Award (2020) from KSP, the Academic Encouragement Award (1998), the Pharmaceutical Research Award (2006), and the Whal-Myung-Su Award (2013) from the Pharmaceutical Society of Korea (PSK), and the Best Researcher Awards (2009–2016), the SKKU Family Award (2014), and the SKKU-Fellowship (2016) from SKKU.

As Professor Kang Ro Lee embarks on the next chapter of his journey in retirement, his impact and legacy will continue to resonate within the hallowed halls of academia and beyond. It has been a great privilege to collaborate with him, who has been a source of inspiration both as an advisor and scientist. We look forward to his continued participation in scientific and public activities. We all extend our heartfelt wishes for his good health and happiness.

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