

撮影・繁田統矢

ゴールド・メダル賞を受賞する

菅 裕明さん 53

薬の候補となる物質を合成する革新的な技術を開発し、読売テクノ・フォーラムのゴールド・メダル賞に選ばれた。

アミノ酸が10個程度つながった物質「ペプチド」に着目、独自の技術で1兆種類を人工的に合成できるようにした。その中から、治療に役立つものを効率よく探す仕組みも作った。

「薬になるペプチドがあ

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るはず」と自信をのぞかせ、2006年に共同設立した「ペプチドリーム」社は、既に国内外の製薬企業十数社と契約を結んでいる。

経営は社長に任せ、口出しはしない。家具店を営んでいた父親を間近に見て育ったため、「経営の難しさは十分わかっている」。

岡山大学工学部を卒業後、米マサチューセッツ工科大

(MIT)で博士号を取得。ペプチド合成技術のもと、米ニューヨーク州立大で開発した。03年に東大に移り、05年から教授を務める。

ギターが趣味で、毎年のようにライブに出る。好きな言葉は「異端」。トレードマークのひげと長髪は、20歳の時から変えていない。新薬開発に向けて、前人未踏の領域を進み続ける。

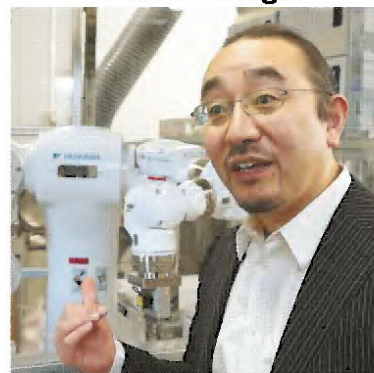
(科学部 木村達矢)

In the News

‘Maverick’ receives honor for pharmaceutical technology

By Tatsuya Kimura
Yomiuri Shimbun Staff Writer

Hiroaki Suga



The Yomiuri Shimbun

Hiroaki Suga, 53, won this year's Gold Medal Award from the Yomiuri Techno Forum for his successful efforts to develop an innovative technology to synthesize substances from which pharmaceuticals can be produced.

In his research and development, Suga focused on peptide, a chain of about 10 amino acids, and succeeded in devising his own method for artificially synthesizing 1 trillion kinds of compounds. He also devised a mechanism with which to effectively screen substances that may be useful for medical treatments.

"There must be a peptide that can be used as a medicine," Suga said with confidence. His company, PeptiDream Inc., which was jointly established with his business partner in 2006, has already signed contracts with more than 10 pharmaceutical companies both at home

and overseas.

Suga tries not to interfere in the president's work, leaving him to run the firm. He is well aware of how difficult it is to manage a company as he grew up closely watching his father run a furniture store.

After graduating from Okayama University's faculty of engineering, Suga obtained a doctoral degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The prototype of the technology to synthesize peptides was developed when he was at the State University of New York. Suga moved to the University of Tokyo in 2003 and has served as a professor since 2005.

He loves playing guitar and performs live in concert almost every year. His favorite word is "maverick."

He is known for his mustache and long hair, the style of which has not changed since he was 20. Suga never stops exploring unexplored fields in the hopes of developing new medicines.

"There must be a peptide that can be used as a medicine"

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