



# TESTIMONIES

*Erasmus Mundus  
Students, Alumni and Scholars from  
Indonesia*

## Deasy Samantha Ardini Erasmus Mundus 2008 Master of Bioethics



*Deasy Samantha Ardini is a obstetrician and gynecologist in Semarang, and she has been working at a private hospital for 3 years. She completed her bachelor's degree and general practitioner education at Diponegoro University (Semarang), where she also completed her Obstetrician and Gynecologist education, as well as her master's degree on biomedical treatment.*

*Besides working as a doctor, she is also teaching at the Medical Law postgraduate programme at the Faculty of Law of Soegijapranata Catholic University (Semarang).*

I pursued my Erasmus Mundus Postgraduate Programme, namely Master of Bioethics, for 10 months. The programme was divided into 3 periods, namely 4 months at Katolieke Universiteit Leuven (in Leuven, Belgium); 3 months at Radboud University (Nijmegen, The Netherlands); and 3 months at University of Padova (Padova, Italy). I selected this program because it was in line with my profession as a lecturer. In addition, as a specialist in reproduction, this programme was interesting because it covered many ethical issues on reproduction technology. There are only a limited number of experts in bioethics in Indonesia.

By attending this programme, I hoped that I could advance my career as a lecturer and a doctor and, if possible, I also hope that I could become one of experts in bioethics in a hospital, or to become one of the forerunners (because such team is currently very hard to find).

Personally, this programme was very interesting and it has broaden my horizon after studying at leading universities in Europe, learning from world-class professors, learning in a very conducive situation, with almost unlimited access to books, literatures, articles. The programme also provided me with the opportunity to improve my communication skills in foreign languages, as well as to socialise, have discussions, interact in classrooms, learn in creative ways, to become independent and more skillful.

On the professional level, there were many benefits that I received from the programme, including broader perspective, especially on the subjects that I have been learning, namely bioethics, and the opportunity to know more about the obstetrician and gynecologist professions in Europe, the existing facilities, the technologies used, the applicable regulations, etc.

One interesting aspect of my experience while studying in Europe was the fact that I had to bring my child. While in Europe, I found that facilities for children were very complete (schools, daycare centres, school holiday programmes, etc.). This was helpful for someone with a child.

The second interesting thing was the interactive learning programme. Students were accustomed to think creatively and to speak their minds. In addition, students were provided with adequate facilities and information regarding lesson materials, examination methods, expected standards, etc., and therefore we could always prepare ourselves.



## Adhitya Trenggono Erasmus Mundus 2004 European Master in Materials Science (EMMS)

*Before obtaining an Erasmus Mundus scholarship, Adhitya Trenggono completed his bachelor's degree (1997-2002) in Material Engineering at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). Since 2003, he has been teaching at the Metallurgical Engineering Department of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University (Untirta), Banten.*

As part of the Erasmus Mundus, I pursued a European Master in Materials Science (EMMS) programme at Universidade de Aveiro (Portugal) from November 2004 up to April 2006, followed by TUHH (Germany) from May up to November 2006.

I took this programme because the courses and research topics were in line with my undergraduate background and my profession as a lecturer at Untirta. Before completing my Master's Degree programme, I had already been admitted at Commissariat a l'energy et atomique (CEA) in Saclay, France to undertake a doctoral programme in nanotechnology through the Marie Curie scholarship – which is also funded by the European Union – from March 2007 up to March 2010.

My experience with the European educational system and culture made me better prepared for my doctoral studies in Paris and for when I travelled to several European countries. My knowledge about Europe also improved and it also broadened my horizon. I also tried to introduce Indonesian culture to people I met while I was studying in Portugal and Germany.

With the subjects that I took and the research that I conducted in Portugal and Germany, I could determine my future, namely to conduct a research in the field of nanotechnology. My academic and research experience improved while I was studying, attending seminars, making industrial visits, conducting practical work and projects, as well as my Master's Degree research.

A memorable experience that I had when I was in Portugal was the time when I gathered with my friends at a café while enjoying a cigarette and a cup of coffee and discussing various things, ranging from lesson materials and exams as to stories about our daily life.



**Meutia Zahara**  
**Erasmus Mundus 2008**  
**International Master in Horticultural Sciences (IMHS)**

*Meutia Zahara completed her undergraduate study at the Biology Department of the Faculty of Science and Mathematics at Syiah Kuala University (Banda Aceh).*

My Erasmus Mundus postgraduate programme was International Master in Horticultural Sciences (IMHS), in which the host university was in Bologna (Italy).

I spent the first semester in Bologna; the second semester at TUM, Munich (Germany); third semester at BOKU, Vienna (Austria) and I returned to Italy for the last semester to complete my thesis. Horticultural sciences is a programme related to agriculture with science as the basis.

I was interested in taking this programme because it was closely related to my undergraduate programme. The tragic disaster that hit my hometown in Aceh also contributed to the decision. Many trees and lands were wiped out by the disaster, but there had not been any effort to address the issue. I hope that after my studies, I would be able to assist in making Banda Aceh green again as it used to be.

By taking the IMHS programme, I had the opportunity to participate in internships and to learn many things in several European countries. It was also an opportunity for me to learn more about their agricultural techniques and methods in order to achieve successful results.

Personally, through the IMHS programme, I finally had the opportunity to fulfil my late father's dream, namely to study and to travel abroad. I also learned about other people's cultures, and this helped me to be a better person. I had many interesting experience. For instance, during my first days, I did not know the neighborhood well. As a consequence, I could not find my way to the bank and had to spend two hours wandering around due to my poor understanding about reading a map. I learned from this experience that it is important to understand how to read a map wherever we are.



## Yansen Darmaputra Erasmus Mundus 2006

### European Master in Computational Logic (EMCL)

*Yansen Darmaputra completed his Bachelor's Degree from the Electrical Engineering Department of University of Indonesia. Before obtaining an Erasmus Mundus scholarship, he was working at a well-established foreign bank in Jakarta. He graduated from EMCL in July 2008 and currently he is advancing his career in the field of information technology at a foreign bank in Jakarta.*

I obtained my scholarship for the European Master in Computational Logic (EMCL) programme. It is managed by a consortium comprising 5 universities: Technische Universität Dresden (Germany), Technische Universität Wien (Austria), Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (Italy), Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (Spain) and Universidade Nova de Lisboa (Portugal). The duration of the EMCL program is 2 years, in which students studied at 2 of those 5 universities. I spent the first year in Bolzano (Italy) and the second year in Vienna (Austria).

There are many interesting aspects in Computational Logic (CL), both theories and applications. That was the reason why I selected this programme – even though the term CL may be quite unfamiliar in Indonesia. Whether we realise it or not, we often use the concept of CL in our daily life. Take Sudoku for example. We use logic to find solutions to this game of filling in numbers into a 9x9 box. Social networks, such as Friendster and Facebook, apply part of CL called semantic web. Formal verification from a system, such as how to ensure that there will be no accident in a high-speed subway network when a train is late, is also one of the aspects learned in CL.

My expectation when I took EMCL was to gain an academic degree, improve my experience, and certainly, improve my skills in my field of work. What I got from EMCL was very satisfying. Total support from the teachers, availability of information (libraries and the internet) and complete supporting facilities indicate that Europe is really serious in developing their education. They have provided everything needed for study so that it is all up to your determination and motivation in achieving your goals.

After graduation, the degrees (double degrees/joint degrees) with a scholarship as prestigious as Erasmus Mundus will certainly increase your bargaining power, both in the professional and academic worlds. As there is no binding contract or agreement with Erasmus Mundus, you are also free to determine the next step in your life.





*Yeni Kristanti earned her undergraduate degree from the English Language Education Department of Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta. Currently, she is working for the Early Recovery Assistance project, a collaboration between UNDP and Bappenas in Yogyakarta.*

I do not have any medical education background. However, my experience as a volunteer in Malaysia and Aceh in 2004 and 2005 was always related to health.

At that time, I told a friend from America about my frustration with regard to the poor disaster response coordination system and the lack of my knowledge about emergency response. Several months later, my American friend gave me information about the European MSc in International Health (tropEd) programme with support of the European Union's Erasmus Mundus scholarship.

I did not waste the opportunity because one of the fields of study offered provided the solution to my needs for improving my knowledge about emergency health response. Thank God, my application was accepted and I was then listed as a recipient of Erasmus Mundus scholarship for that programme.

## Yeni Kristanti Erasmus Mundus 2006 European MSc Programme in International Health (tropEd)

For my Health in Emergency programme, I had to attend a core course at University College London (UCL) for 4 months, then 4 months at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh (Scotland) and another 4 months for more courses and writing a thesis at Copenhagen University (Denmark). Before starting with the core course in London, the recipients of Erasmus Mundus scholarships had to attend an introduction course for 2 weeks at the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Charité-Universitätsmedizin (Berlin, Germany).

It was quite difficult for me at the beginning of the programme, because I had never learned specifically about health in my academic life, even though I had experience working in the field of health. However, I was very lucky because UCL gave so many facilities and access for learning. In addition, many friends and teachers there were kind enough to help me.

I do not mean to scare anyone who wants to study in Europe, but I think I need to share a bitter experience, in addition to pleasant experience while studying in Europe. I was a victim of a crime when I was studying in Edinburgh, right before I moved to Copenhagen. However, I thanked God and was very grateful to the authorities (police officers, detectives and counselors), who immediately settled the case. I am also thankful friends, staff, teachers, supervisors and counselors in Copenhagen University helped me to dealing with the trauma, so that I could complete my thesis and graduate. I have learned many things from this experience regarding public services there, especially those related to crimes and healing trauma.



**Vicky Agung Wibisono**  
**Erasmus Mundus 2007**

**Joint European Master in Local Development (CoDe)**



*Prior, Vicky Agung Wibisono worked for Plan Indonesia, an international non-government organisation (NGO) engaged poverty reduction in developing countries.*

*After working for 9 years at Plan Indonesia, he joined ILO-IPEC, a UN organisation engaged in the elimination of child labour.*

I was interested in enhancing my knowledge about local development policy reform and its implementation. For that reason, I applied to an Erasmus Mundus postgraduate programme, namely Joint Master on Local Comparative Development (CoDe). I was very lucky that I was finally accepted by this scholarship programme.

Initially, I was confused in understanding the perspective of development presented in the programme which was focused more on "top-down" approach rather than "bottom-up". As we know, almost all NGOs no longer use such "top-down" approach and there was only few experience from developing countries presented in the programme. In the end, I understood that the two approaches are required for the improvement of the macro and micro policies.

In the second and third period of the programme, we learned about the experience of European Union's enlargement and how countries, such as Slovenia and Hungary, are catching up with other members of the European Union in terms of development.

In responding to our proposal, the Academic Committee of the postgraduate programme agreed about the importance of the "bottom-up" approach to development and various inputs regarding CoDe program based on various experience in implementing community development projects in developing countries. Our inputs will be considered, even though it would take relatively long period of time to make changes to the existing syllabus.

The most interesting aspect of this program is the opportunity for doing internship in an organisation in Europe. I am very grateful because my application for internship was accepted by one of the largest NGOs in Europe, namely Plan International Europe. This opportunity gave me valuable experience in interacting with Europeans and also participating in various fora for NGOs and social organisations in order to be able to make an impact on policies at the European and global levels in relation to social development, human rights and children rights. During the internship, I also had the opportunity to share facts about child domestic workers in Indonesia. My thesis discussed about this issue.





## Dr Salamun Sastrawikarta Erasmus Mundus 2007

### European Public Health Master (Europubhealth)

*Dr Salamun Sastrawikarta is 65 years old and completed his Master of Public Health in 1971 in the USA. After completing his general practitioner education at the Faculty of Medicines of the University of Indonesia in 1969, he joined the Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI) and retired as Colonel.*

My clinical skill is as an eye specialist and I have mastered 60% of all super-specialisation in the science of eye disease. I have also conducted researches in various fields that I have mastered, including hospital management, hospital planning, hospital waste disposal, refractive disorders in school children, hereditary diseases, cancer, family planning, rehabilitation of narcotic users, HIV/AIDS and Avian Flu.

When the Erasmus Mundus programme was introduced, I was very interested considering that the European Union had the experience in Public Health, which are caused by, among others, major migration from various countries, either within the European Union itself or from developing countries.

The most challenging thing for me as a Master's degree graduate from the USA was to comprehend the Public Health education in the UK and mainland Europe. My choice to teach and conduct research in Sheffield (UK) and Krakow (Poland) was very accurate. The UK, which has a social system for health and a monarchy background, and Poland, which applies an open market system and post-communist political system, have given me priceless experience. I taught 37 international students from 9 countries, with diverse cultural background, varied level of education and different ages. It was very interesting.

In Sheffield, we were provided with very sophisticated teaching facilities. However, we had to do everything ourselves. Only the dean had a secretary. My colleagues laughed when I told them that in Indonesia I had a personal secretary and also an assistant secretary.

Unfortunately, my stay in Europe, in my opinion, was not long enough and most of the teachers from 6 universities in the Europubhealth consortium were relatively very young. They might have doctoral degrees but their teaching and research experience were still very limited.

When I attended a postgraduate program me abroad with a scholarship in 1971, there were only 6 foreign students. In 2008, I obtained a scholarship as an Erasmus Mundus scholar for teaching Master's students, and there were 37 foreign students. It was a very different experience.





Lim Yohanes Stefanus, PhD

Erasmus Mundus 2007

## European Masters Programme in Computational Logic

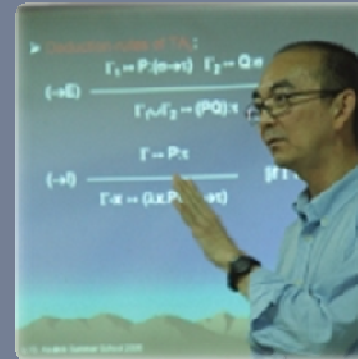
*Dr Lim Yohanes Stefanus has been teaching and conducting researches at the Computer Science study programme of the University of Indonesia (UI) since 1992, after he completed his studies in Computer Science at the University of Waterloo (Canada).*

In 2004, UI in cooperation with Hanoi University of Technology (Vietnam), Universidade Nova de Lisboa (Portugal), and Technological University of Dresden (TU Dresden, Germany) established a cooperation project on teaching and research on Computational Logic in the context of the Asia-Link project funded by the European Commission. In this project, I was acting as local coordinator for UI. Computational Logic is a sub-field in the Computer Science serving as the basis for Intelligent Systems.

Universidade Nova de Lisboa and TU Dresden, in addition to their role as members of the Asia-Link project, were also members of a consortium of European universities organising an Erasmus Mundus postgraduate programme entitled European Masters Programme in Computational Logic.

Considering my involvement in the Asia-Link project, in 2007 I was nominated by TU Dresden and Universidade Nova de Lisboa to become an Erasmus Mundus scholar for Erasmus Mundus postgraduate programme in Computational Logic.

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I went to Europe in February 2008 for teaching and conducting research in Computational Logic postgraduate programme at Universidade Nova de Lisboa and TU Dresden. My term of service was divided into two phases: approximately 2 months in Portugal and approximately 2 months in Germany. After the assignment, I continued my teaching and research activities at the Faculty of Computer Science of UI until now.

What was the benefit of Erasmus Mundus for me? Personally, I had the opportunity to live and work as a scholar who is acknowledged by European countries that have a culture which is very much different from Indonesian culture.

Professionally, I could contribute my thoughts and skills as a scientist to the international community. Students attending my postgraduate classes were from several European and Asian countries. I also had an invaluable experience in conducting research within the environment of European universities, which highly value quality, discipline and scientific frankness.



**Widodo Budiharto, S.Si, M.Kom**

**Erasmus Mundus 2007**

**European Master in Vision and Robotics (VIBOT)**



*Widodo Budiharto attained his Bachelor's Degree in Physics from the University of Indonesia (UI) and a Master's Degree in Computer Science. He is currently working as a permanent lecturer of Information Technology at Bina Nusantara University (Jakarta), and a visiting lecturer of Computer Systems at Stikom DB Jambi. He has also been involved in writing 15 books on electronics and computer, published by Elex Media and Andi Offset. In addition to his activities as a lecturer at Bina Nusantara University, he is currently taking a doctoral programme.*

I had never expected that I would be admitted into the Erasmus Mundus scholarship programme, even though when I sent my application, I prayed to be accepted. It might be because I could assure and convince the European universities that I was the most suitable person from Indonesia to obtain a scholar scholarship.

It seemed that they are looking for academicians and professionals having tremendous dedication to educate and develop the nation. I was so sure that I was the most unique person, and that was why I was placed in no 1 in the Erasmus Mundus main list.

I obtained an Erasmus Mundus scholarship as a scholar (visiting professor and researcher) in a programme which is known as the most popular in Erasmus Mundus, namely European Master in Vision and Robotics (VIBOT) at University of Burgundy (France). This programme is a collaboration between Heriot-Watt University (UK) and University of Girona (Spain).

I taught Digital Signal Processing to French students, organising seminars for Vision and Robotics Master's Degree students, and conducting research in embedded system and neural networks in robotics. I selected this programme because of my expertise in embedded system and robotics.

The 3-month activity gave me various valuable experience, such as learning about high-quality research and teaching models in Europe. The position as an Erasmus Mundus scholar was also valuable and a prestige for my career as a lecturer and scientist. In addition, I also had the opportunity to understand and learn about European culture, which has many differences from Asian culture. Among the interesting experience that I had while teaching/ conducting research was that I taught French students who were not fluent in English.

Researchers in Europe are generally hard-workers, which made us motivated to follow their rhythm of work.

