

NTU provost awarded Imperial fellowship

By **AMANDA TAN**

SERIAL inventor and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) provost Freddy Boey has been awarded the prestigious Imperial College fellowship, joining the ranks of top British scientists.

The Faculty of Medicine Fellowship by the renowned London college was awarded to Professor Boey in recognition of his exceptional achievements in medical technology and his outstanding contributions to the development of the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, a joint medical school between NTU and Imperial College.

Prof Boey has 25 global patents to his name through the invention of breakthrough biomedical devices such as the world's

smallest piezo heart pump, several types of drug eluting and biodegradable stents as well as a disposable surgical tissue retractor. The award of the fellowship recognises the avid inventor's big contributions to biomedical sciences.

Imperial College's Faculty of Medicine fellows are elected annually on the basis of their demonstrated outstanding achievements, exceptional service to the Faculty or for achieving outstanding distinction in appropriate fields.

With the fellowship, Prof Boey, 56, will be joining an illustrious list of Fellows, including the UK's first female professor of surgery, Averil Mansfield; and inventor Mark Brian Pepys, a professor who was knighted last year for his services to biomedicine.

Prof Boey is still inventing, and his newest invention is the Medlinx Hernia Mesh, which is being developed and marketed by NTU start-up company Medlinx Acacia. It was recently approved for sale by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).



Inventor honoured: Prof Boey receiving his fellowship award from Professor Dermot Kelleher, principal of the Faculty of Medicine of Imperial College

A hernia mesh is commonly used by doctors to repair tears in the abdominal wall which can be caused by injuries, pregnancy, surgery or ageing.

The Medlinx Hernia Mesh will prove a useful invention as the demand for hernia repair procedures is

expected to increase, with growing obesity in affluent countries as well as the rise in the elderly population in countries such as Singapore – where, by 2030, one in five residents is expected to be 65 or older.

As Prof Boey says of his invention: "This milestone

is a great example of how Singapore and NTU have caught up with the world in terms of biomedical research and development."

He also hopes that this new device will help to entrench Singapore as a nation able to create world-class innovations.