

# **BSDS Travelling Fellowship Report**

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I have never attended the American College of Mohs Surgeons meeting before and therefore I was very excited to find out what the whole conference would be like. The four days that ensued far exceeded my expectations and I can highly recommend this conference to Mohs fellows in training. I started off the meeting with a 7am workshop on 'reconstruction of the lateral nasal tip/alar', where Jeremy Bordeaux imparted pearls of wisdom and I desperately tried to scribble everything down. On the first day, I particularly enjoyed the Tromovich award abstract session because it was mainly Mohs fellows in training presenting projects and research that they had undertaken during their fellowship. This gave me some insight into the American fellows' curriculum and the quality of the research they are conducting. A particular highlight from the first day was the video reconstruction session where Tri Nguyen discussed tips to successfully execute a forehead flap and Chrysalynne Schmults talked about periocular reconstruction. The day ended with an excellent update on high risk tumours such as squamous cell carcinoma and merkel cell carcinoma.

The second day started off with an excellent early morning workshop on 'reconstruction of the columella and soft triangle' by Glenn Goldman. This was followed by a fantastic anatomy session combining clinical photos of skin cancers with an in-depth review of the relevant anatomical structures related to the site of the skin cancer. The anatomist showed videos of live dissections of the peri-ocular, lip, nose and temple areas and her expert commentary helped to consolidate my knowledge. The afternoon video session on designing and executing the forehead and abbe flaps were well explained.

Saturday morning started off with a 7am workshop on 'reconstruction of the cheek' by Christopher Miller and Joseph Sobanko. Their main tips for cheek reconstruction were regarding the use of suspension sutures which is something I will incorporate into my practice. Later that morning the talk on 'Multi-disciplinary care of complex tumours' was outstanding, the guest speaker Vasu Divi, head and neck surgeon, discussed the relevant important anatomical structures of the neck and discussed the surgical management of high risks skin cancer of the neck. The afternoon update on melanoma management was interesting as it highlighted the subtle differences of the US approach to treatment of melanoma. I found John Zitelli's talk particularly fascinating as he discussed the use of genetic profiling for melanoma and he uses the profile results to guide follow-up. The session on reconstructive conundrums was excellent, here each presenter had to devise either a simple or complex reconstruction for a similar defect. I particularly liked the sliding flap to repair a defect on the cheek. In the afternoon Wal Hussain showcased his innovative dressing for scalp wounds which he has named the 'staple sandwich', this idea was well received by the delegates.

On the morning of the last day of the conference the lectures which were most memorable were on suturing technique and dressings. There was also an insightful talk on the patients' perception whilst being sat in the waiting room between Mohs stages. The presenter emphasised the need to effectively communicate with the patient

regarding likely waiting times and to try and keep the patient informed of their progress in a timely manner.

I felt that the four days of the conference passed incredibly quickly and the knowledge I have gained is immense and I cannot wait to put the tips and pearls into practice. I would like to thank the BSDS for awarding me a travelling fellowship, the ACMS meeting was fantastic and I look forward to attending the next conference in Chicago next year.