

Gigi Varghese, India

ISS/SIC Travel Scholar of the 47th WCS, Basel, Switzerland

I had the privilege of being chosen as a travel scholar by the International Society of Surgery Foundation for the World Congress of Surgery 2017. Being my first international travel, I was excited about it from the very beginning and was looking forward to the 10 days I was planning to spend my time with the top academic surgeons from around the world and to meet a group of colleagues from various backgrounds of academic and surgical practice.

We were soon informed about the venue for the welcome dinner, which was organized at Novotel at Basel and had a warm welcome to a gathering of fellow Travel Scholars along with the administrators of ISSF. It was indeed an eye opener for me to have interacted with surgeons all around the world. We talked about our culture, our practice as surgeons and quickly succeeded in making friends and established cordial relationships. Soon I realized how different the practicing environments were in various other continents. I have been a practicing colorectal surgeon for 6 years now and extremely intrigued by the depth of culture and knowledge of fellow Travel Scholars.

It also made me understand the difference in practice in various countries. We headed back to our respective rooms for an early head start the next day for the Davos GI Surgery Course for both open as well as laparoscopic approach. The course was carefully designed and well-structured to give us a comprehensive exposure to GI surgical techniques in toto. The most striking concept that hit me was the respect for time as demonstrated by the organizing team and how meticulously every exercise was planned. It was exhausting though and we completed the 2 days with enough time to interact with both the instructors as well as the support team present there.

The presentation ceremony for the workshop thereafter gave us an opportunity to meet the administrators of the ISS/SIC and thereafter we headed for the Inauguration Ceremony. The next day we attended the presentation of Travel Scholars along with the Presidential Address and Martin Allgöwer lecture which was inspiring. Thereafter, a few of us attended the Free Paper presentation ISS/SIC and important aspects of trauma care. The next day I had put up the Abstract for WCS as a poster and had interaction with several delegates. I was particularly impressed by colleagues from Japan, who would otherwise walk around quite unassuming, but would be presenting Abstracts on some spectacular work back in Japan. I attended Free Papers in endocrine surgery and wrapped up the day.

The final day began with meeting Dr. John Hunter and other colleagues and attended Lloyd Nyhus session for the best paper. I also attended the trauma session. Later on I attended Grey Turner lecture on Surgical Innovation followed by the General Assembly of ISS/SIC. I have reached back home with a wealth of experience and knowledge and a whole lot of friends, some of would want to visit my department at the Christian Medical College, Vellore in India in the near future.

Extremely thankful and god bless.