IBRA International Bone Research Association

Guidelines IBRA scholarship report

Information about Scholar and fellowship

- **Name of Scholar (Family Name/First Name)** Giuliana Olivi Tanaka
- **Country of Citizenship** São Paulo-SP/ Brazil
- **Name and Country of Training Center** ORTHOPEDIC DPT. - C.T.O. HOSPITAL Torino/ Italy
- **Name of Fellowship Director:** Prof. Dr. Bruno Battiston
- **Scholarship Type (Program B or C):** B
- **Scholarship date (from – until)**: September 4th until October 5th

Professional and personal experience

- What were your professional and personal expectations of the scholarship?

Having the opportunity to get to know a different service means learning new points of view, practices, and ways of looking at things. It means questioning yourself, adding ideas and sometimes changing your way of thinking. I was hoping to get to know the hospital, the director`s scholarship center and the team that is a reference in the field of hand and microsurgery, to learn about the routines of orthopedic cases and to learn about different techniques, procedures and ways of thinking, as well as to see how the service works, the working materials and the relationships between health professionals in a large orthopedic hospital. I also wanted to have longer contact with the professional relationship in a different culture, as well as expand networking, and learn in depth about day-to-day life in a region that is part of my family's history, having more contact with the culture, language, food, which only the experience of a routine "living" in a different region could bring me.

- What is the main focus of the IBRA training center (in general and of the department)you assisted in?

The hospital headquarters of “Torino Hand Surgery and Microsurgery Unit” is C.T.O. (Centro Ortopedico Traumatologico), part of the hospital complex “Città della Salute e

della Scienza", one of the two main Hospital Centers in Italy as number of medical beds and medical activities. The activity of the Unit is essentially the treatment of hand and upper limb trauma and sequelae. The Center is recognized by the National Health System as "Hub" treating simple fractures but receiving from all the other "Spoke Centers" the complex lesions (mangled limbs, amputations) to be treated with replantations and reconstruction with microsurgical procedures. Furthermore, severe traumatic sequelae are sent from all the italian regions for reconstruction: brachial plexus palsies, severe bone and/or soft tissues loss, secondary deformities or non-unions. All the other non-traumatic hand and upper limb problems are treated as well: congenital and rheumatic diseases, tumors, peripheral nerve problems. Due to the microsurgical competence of the surgeons of the Unit, many reconstructions with free flaps are requested from the other surgical Units of the hospital: general surgery, orthopedic oncology, maxillo-facial surgery, urology, plastic surgery.

- What did you do during your scholarship/how were you incorporated in the trainingcenter's daily routines/activities:
  - How many surgeries have you assisted and which concrete technicalmodifications and methods have you seen?
  - Specify your 3 to 5 favorite procedures and/or new skills you could acquire
  - Which procedures can potentially be adopted in your future practice and how do they compare to your experiences at home

I can say that I was very well received by Dr. Bruno Battiston and the whole team even before I started my internship, when I contacted them via email. From day one, they were very kind in explaining how the service worked, the routine of the activities, offering me the opportunity to take part in all the activities I was interested in.

I was able to follow the routine at meetings (weekly on Monday mornings and Thursday afternoons, with discussions of inpatient and outpatient cases and having classes on various topics in the area).

I was able to attend the emergency room with hand cases, emergency amputation cases in microsurgery and surgical treatment for orthopedic hand trauma (distal radius, finger and carpal fractures), as well as treatment of chronic cases such as metacarpal and phalanx tumors, as well as sequelae of deformity from rheumatoid arthritis.

I worked in the general hand outpatient clinic, with post-operative cases, and followed up with Dr. Titolo, who allowed me to experience outpatient cases of peripheral

nerve injuries and their management (nerve transfers such as accessory nerve to the suprascapular nerve, Oberlin surgery, contralateral C7 transfer, nerve transfer from the triceps to the biceps, ganglion resection of the peroneal nerve, sacral plexus injuries).

I took part in several surgeries, being able to dress up and enjoy the team, around 40 surgeries (microsurgery for patients with amputation and the need for re-implantation, microsurgery for the treatment of patients with proximal femur osteonecrosis performing vascularized fibula, metacarpal prostheses for rheumatoid arthritis, several finger fractures with fixation with screws and Kirschner wires, carpal dislocation fracture, with reduction and screw fixation, distal radius fracture with fixation with a locked volar plate, acute and delayed treatment, with consolidation already underway, phalangeal tumor resection and placement of synthetic bone, prosthesis for scaphoid pseudoarthrosis, tenorrhaphy and neurorrhaphy for tendon and nerve lesions, respectively).

I also had the chance to take part in a course that took place during my exchange period on the management of pain in emergency and outpatient patients.

I really enjoyed following the microsurgery procedure with a case of amputation and revascularization, as well as the case of a vascularized fibula for a patient with osteonecrosis of the femoral head. The discussions in Dr Titolo's outpatient clinic on cases of peripheral nerve damage was very interesting.

I compared how to evaluate and gained knowledge about the indication for surgery, the materials used and the post-operative protocol in these cases of revascularization and microsurgery for a vascularized fibula flap, as well as cases such as chronic plexus injury and the indication for surgery, as well as post-operative follow-up.

I was able to add to my know-how of the management of patients with pseudoarthrosis of the scaphoid, with prosthesis placement or indication for carpectomy, which is a little different from my service. I followed techniques for reducing distal radius fractures with arthroscopic equipment to aid traction and post-operative management with the use of vicryl or vicryl rapid skin closure instead of nylon and the use of a temporary post-operative drain, which is different from my service. I found it interesting that many of the practices and procedures are similar to those of my service, which is also a reference in orthopedic hand trauma and microsurgery.

I was also able to see the implementation of a pre-programming project for locked volar plate fixation in distal radius fractures, which the team was implementing during my exchange period.

I was very fortunate to meet very helpful and kind people, Dr. Bruno and his team, who always took time to explain all the cases to me and share their knowledge. They usually translated or communicated with me in English so that I could follow all the cases, and they were very attentive when I had any doubts or questions.

I was able to understand how the Italian health system works, how patients are followed up from the moment they go to the emergency room or how they are referred to an outpatient clinic.

I also had the chance to meet several of my fellow residents and talk to them about their day-to-day lives and experiences, and they were always very willing to add me to their routines, especially Carlotta and Olimpia, fellows in hand area, and Lorenzo, a third-year orthopedic resident, whom I got to know better and even kept in touch with, and I can now call them "friends".

- What was the most significant personal experience of the scholarship for you (e.g.cultural exchange etc.)?

I felt that I came back a different person, with more of a learning load, more capable, professionally and humanly. I increased personal relationships, learned more about a different culture by living as a local. It's something that makes you better, because every experience adds up and makes you grow as a person.

Closing words

- Tips to future scholars (housing, traveling etc.)

I'd like to say to anyone who wants this experience, to go with an open mind and enjoy every moment, whether you're learning on the job or out of it, getting to know the culture, experiencing the day-to-day life, culture, festivals, travel, food.

It's always interesting, if you get the chance, to read up a bit about the culture and customs, as well as the local language, because it makes it much easier to get to grips with the culture.

I took a few Italian lessons before my trip, which allowed me, especially as the weeks went by, to have some basic understanding, but I feel that if I have an advanced known about the language, the process of immersing myself in the culture and work activities would be quicker and easier.

- Acknowledgement (thanking IBRA and the training center)

I am very grateful to all members off the IBRA Committee, and to Ms. Caroline, with whom I had contact via email and who was always extremely helpful. I would like to thank for giving me this incredible personal and professional opportunity.

I am also extremely grateful to Dr. Bruno Battiston, Dr. Madalenna Bertolini, and their colleagues, who allowed me to follow them closely as a member of the team. It was an experience in which, by learning and immersing myself in academic and hospital activities, I learned a lot, not just about techniques and procedures, but about patient care and broad views on life. I was able to strengthen relationships and make friendships that I will carry with me for life.

I had the opportunity to travel around the region, which has many diverse and wonderful places nearby, such as the Alps, to learn about the culture of Turin, Italy's first capital, and to taste good wines, pasta and gelato.
I've grown as a person and professionally, and I've been able to share my knowledge with my peers today.

I came back a different person, more critical, more evolved, more experienced.

Dr Bruno Battiston and his team

Carlotta and Olimpia (hands fellows) Dr Titolo, Julien (hand fellow) and me

Lorenzo and me

Group of orthopedic residents

Turim city (*Monte Cappuccini view*)

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