Name: Joaquin Urpi.

From: Argentina – Tucuman.

Center: Elisabeth Hospital – Ravensburg, Germany.

Director: Prof. H. Krimmer.

Period: July – August 2017, IBRA Scholarship Program C

Personal experience:

First of all, my regards to all the professionals who work in the Elisabeth Hospital. In Ravensburg I found not only a medieval town with a big Hospital, I also found an excellent place to live and to spend time with great people inside and outside the hospital. In the Hand Surgery Center I met people who want to work always in the best way, creating a great work ambient what is an important experience for someone from an other country, with a different culture and a different language. During my work with Professor Krimmer I learned a lot about different surgeries and still had time to study at home and spend time with my family. I had also the opportunity to visit different places near to Ravensburg, like Friedrichshafen, Constance and Munich.

Positive aspects: The hospital is placed in a beautiful environment and most of the internal patients sleep in a room with great view.

The Hand surgery center and the hospital are fully equipped with everything you need to make a good job in a comfortable way. I mean that you have all the medical equipment and all the material you need to operate.

View from one of the hospital rooms, while we where visiting a patient

I also had the possibility to visit the Medartis factory in Basel and it was an amazing experience for me. I learned a lot about the used material and the meticulous production process that it takes until the product can be used in the human body.

Guys in the quality control of the wrist platel at Medartis in Basel.

Difficulties: In the beginning it was difficult for me to adjust to a new schedule, but over the time I got used to it. As it was my first professional experience in a foreign country it was also hard in the beginning to talk in English all the time. But the personal in the hospital was perfectly used to receive people from foreign countries. They treated me very friendly and helpful what helped me a lot and made me feel more comfortable.

Professional aspects:

During my scholarship I learned the importance to work under optimal conditions to receive the best results. One of the first aspects I noted was that they always work with the right tools in the best conditions and that it is very important to follow protocols, so that there will be less surprises. It is very important for my professional growing to meet people who solve similar problems in a different way. This helps me not only to make my own conclusions but also to consider alternatives. For example it is not common practice to used the dorsal plate for a wrist fracture in my center, but it is a normal procedure here to use it when you have a dorsal

comminute fracture that creates dorsal instabilities. An other aspect was that working with Medartis products creates a bigger range of possibilities to fix a wrist or a hand fracture.

My project:

The scholarship director asked me to make a presentation about my 3D printer project, trying to explain to my colleagues what I am doing there. I think that he was the most interested person with the advantages of a 3D printer working in traumatology. To make the 3D model reconstruction of a comminute radius fracture to plan the surgery, first of all you need the specific patient with the fracture and a CT. Unfortunately sometimes you don't have the patients volume that you expect, especially if you have a limited time period. The idea of my project was not only to show the advantages of the 3D reconstruction of a radius fracture, but also to show the advantages of working with a 3D printer as an innovative tool to create what you need, having as the only limitation your own creativity. I think that this idea was perfectly captured for the scholarship director.

Benefits for the future:

I feel that I came back to my work center with a different view of working. It's difficult to explain but I think that the most important thing in a professional experience like this is that you grow as a person and as a doctor. Not only the theory knowledge, the personal experience is the first advantage in a formative scholarship like this.