IBRA report - Spies CK - April 1st - April 12th 2019
Dr. Scott Edwards, head of hand surgery at the University Hospital Phoenix, Arizona, USA.

I started my IBRA sponsored observership on April 1st. It lasted for 2 weeks until April 12th. Dr. Scott Edwards heads the hand surgery department of the university hospital Phoenix, which is the biggest medical provider in Arizona and is approved for all major cases in the region as a level 1 trauma center. Dr. Edwards is responsible for the hand specialty training and therefore teaches fellows during their rotation.
After checking in at the administration office and getting clearance I had a very warm welcome by Dr. Edwards on the first day. He had clinic and worked with a fellow and an intern. The first detail I have noticed was the open and relaxed atmosphere. Dr. Edwards is very keen on teaching his fellows and he is mindful to prepare them to work on their own. I joined them when they were discussing the advantages and disadvantages of surgical interventions of distal radius fractures. We engaged in a general and open discussion concerning this very common issue extensively. We exchanged our views and approaches. It was certainly interesting to get different opinions and ideas to cope with the latter lesions. Another very profound and really informative discussion based on a clinical case we saw was about fixing scaphoid non-unions. I have learned very interesting aspects about the application of the scaphoid plate system.
The following morning I joined Dr. Michael McKee in the operating room (OR) and I had the opportunity to observe a great variety of upper extremity procedures. Very intriguing was the CMC-1 fusion which was performed with a compression screw. We had an open discussion about indications and contraindications, and the technical aspects of the latter operation. The rest of the week I had the chance to observe Dr. Edwards operating. I experienced the procedural work-flow in a North-American OR and observed different surgical interventions.
During the first week I was invited to take part in the official journal club meeting with the senior faculty. This meeting was also very educational and informative. It was very impressive to listen to the different senior surgeons' opinions and to see how they engaged and openly shared their knowledge and personal strategies to cope with certain problems which they have encountered yet. These meetings are excellent sources for all residents and fellows.
I spent the second week with Dr. Andrew Blount, a plastic and hand surgeon at St. Joseph's hospital and a former member of Dr. Edwards' team. He is also engaged in teaching fellows. He provided a warm welcome, as well, and I had the opportunity to take part in clinic and observe him in the OR. Besides hand related issues, I came across other medical problems regarding defect coverage. Again, these impressions were very educational. I got hold of different approaches and tricks which may broaden my strategies to cope with certain issues in the future. Another great experience of the second week was the journal club meeting at Dr. McKee's house for all residents to which I was invited, too. Quite a few publications were discussed in a relaxed atmosphere and the residents experienced how a renowned surgeon interprets and draws his conclusions out of these manuscripts.
All in all, this observership was very informative and it cannot be replaced by anything else. I want to thank Dr. Scott Edwards and Dr. Andrew Blount for their time and effort to make my stay a truely outstanding experience for me. Furthermore, I want to thank Dr. Michael McKee for his time and willingness to host me in his OR. Last but not least, I thank Mrs. Susan Redell for managing all organisational issues, as well.

Finally, I want to deeply thank the International Bone Research Association (IBRA) for realising this outstanding experience. It was a great educational trip with many interesting aspects. I had the opportunity to meet colleagues who excel in their profession. It gave me the chance to broaden my professional network.

Fig. 1 University hospital Phoenix, Arizona, USA

Fig. 2 Dr. Scott Edwards and myself

Fig. 3 St. Joseph's hospital, Phoenix, Arizona, USA

Fig. 4 Myself, Dr. Andrew Blount (middle), and Dr. Christian Moody (right)