

AAD Registration Scholarship
AAD Annual Meeting 2018, San Diego, California

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I would like to thank the British Association of Dermatologists for putting me forward for the AAD Registration Scholarship to attend the recent meeting in 2018. As a first-time attendee to the AAD, I very much enjoyed all the clinical, social and cultural opportunities afforded to me at the meeting,

The AAD registration scholarship holder experience started with a reception and dinner. This was a great experience, and from chatting to other holders I was fascinated at the many differences in the practice of dermatology around the world.

The actual experience of attending the meeting was overwhelming. As many of you will know, this is one of the largest dermatology conferences in the world, and the sheer volume of different sessions to choose from was both impressive and confusing. The saving grace from the organisers are that important sessions are repeated several times, and as inevitable clashes were present between different sessions that I wanted to attend, there was the opportunity to go another day.

Some highlights of my AAD experience were:

1. The dermoscopy course. I signed up for a paid dermoscopy course and it was suitably intensive for the cost – a whirlwind of basic to more complicated signs and patterns to look out for. It was definitely a great experience to be introduced to a systematic approach to dermoscopy.
2. Educational half-days. I attended several including infectious diseases; referrals and inpatient dermatology; eczema; practice gaps; autoimmune bullous disease to name but a few. They were all clinically very useful, and a mix of evidence-based practice with anecdotal tips and tricks.
3. The exhibition hall. This was a lot larger than ones I had been to before. It was a bewildering array of different companies jostling for your attention with big pharmaceuticals, cosmetic groups, small indie tech/pharma/publishers and many more exhibiting the wonderful and the less conventional. I particularly found the exhibition for one of the brands fascinating, especially how they combined scientific sounding evidence with commercial advertising flair to present their products to a group of mostly medical specialists.
4. The plenary session. I particularly enjoyed the historical insight into the discovery of TNF and infliximab by Jan Vilcek, highlighting the serendipitous nature of some very important medical findings.

The AAD was held at the San Diego Convention Centre, an absolutely massive place that is used for the yearly Comic-Con. The location was very convenient, and I took the opportunity to visit a few tourist destinations. The USS Midway is a must-see destination, and is a converted aircraft carrier museum led by talks from ex-pilots and crew of the Midway. The San Diego Zoo, Balboa Park, whale watching, Old town and La Jolla were other great tourist spots that I thoroughly enjoyed!

Finally, I would like to thank the BAD and the AAD for the registration scholarship again, and I believe that attendance to international meetings such as the AAD will be invaluable to my practice of dermatology now and for the future.