

## **Dr Stela Ziaj**

### **AAD Registration Scholarship, Summer 2017**

Armed with the AAD app, my passport and 23kg worth of luggage I travelled to San Diego. The transatlantic flight was long but the excitement was rather high. Once I got to the airport the Californian sun welcomed us. I was so excited even though I was in a state of jetlag and wearing my February Winter coat at 23 degrees weather.

As a scholarship recipient I attended the membership dinner welcome dinner on Wednesday night. I got the chance to meet dermatologist from all over the world and talk to some of the American Consultants. Meeting Dr Jean Bologna was like VIP Meeting, dr was very welcoming and dr inspired me further. We were presented with our certificate, the traditional photo was taken and our AAD badges and language tags were handed out.

The Following morning bright and early we attended the medical dermatology section which was really interesting cases chaired by Dr Jorizo. Followed that I attend a session on melanoma, and skin cancer, confocal microscopy, top surgical tips, mycosis fungoides.

Two days went by and I felt for the first time the FOMO (fear of missing out) in dermatology. The lecture were practical, loaded with practical tip you can take home. So once you found the lecture room in the long winded corridor while you were trying to push through 5000 delegates. We still had a great amount of energy and enthusiasm.

On the Saturday morning I presented my case and unlike in the UK the audience was rather small. Further on as I had signed To a Scar revision practical session which was fantastic. It was a hands-on experience afternoon with the American residents and MOHS Fellows. I got the opportunity to talk and be inspired by some of the Mohs' surgeons.

In the last few days despite missing out on visiting the exhibition hall. I attended session on new treatments in eczema and psoriasis, hair loss, and photobiology. The highlight was the plenary session where Prof Varghese gave an inspirational talk on burn out and the role of bedside medicine in our time. After a standing ovation from the audience.

The education component was exceptional, the timetable overwhelming and the delivery and usefulness was paramount. But we meet some inspiring leaders, got to meet and attend American residents events which was a great exchange.

There was a great social aspect too. A good team of British registrars attended the meeting. As you can imagine we stuck together and experienced the local coffee, Italian, tacos or aperol sprits in the sunshine (off course sunblock was on). The BAD at the AAD event was well attended too and was a chance to discuss about how we can bring to our own meeting some of the best component of the AAD.

I would like to thank the AAD for giving me this great opportunity, as well as fellow British dermatologist who attended the AAD. I had a fantastic experience which I thoroughly recommend to anyone.

