

CAP '08 Meeting Report

I would like to begin by thanking the Intersociety Council for Pathology Information, Inc. (ICPI) for considering and accepting my application for an ICPI Trainee Travel Award. I sincerely appreciate the intention of the award, as it not only encourages trainees to participate in scientific meetings but also reflects the commitment of the pathology community to training and education.

One benefit of the award is that I actually felt comfortable (financially!) staying at the hotel hosting the conference, since these hotels are usually somewhat expensive. While this may seem insignificant to some, I can not stress enough how great of a feeling it is to stay at the hotel when the entire hotel feels dedicated to the conference. At any point in the day, wandering through the public areas of the hotel, I could always identify other participants from the conference.

As far as the benefits of attending the conference, the most important benefit for me was being able to attend the Residents Forum. It was refreshing to find myself amongst so many other pathology residents who are as passionate about pathology and willing to travel from across the continent to support the Residents Forum. While the formal agenda of this meeting is important, I found that the most useful aspect was being able to talk to other pathology residents about problems and concerns faced in their residency training and to share my own experiences. In my home residency program in Winnipeg, our program is small with typically around 12 pathology residents. When faced with problems within our program, we have often wondered how training takes place elsewhere. Due to the nature of the specialty, I have always found it difficult to get residents from other medical specialties to relate to or understand the problems I face within pathology. All in all, at times I can feel cut-off and isolated in the medical world. I am relieved that there exists such a forum where I can meet other residents who have experienced similar difficulties in their training and where we can discuss our ideas for improving our specialty.

Another great benefit of attending the conference was the opportunity to network. I had the chance to meet many pathologists who are prominent in their fields, and these are people that one day may be reading my fellowship application or may be receiving consults that I've sent out. Meeting the other pathology residents in attendance was also important, as these are people that I can maintain contact with throughout my training so that I don't feel so isolated in Winnipeg.

The majority of the conference is dedicated to academic lectures, and the benefit of being able to attend the variety of courses offered at CAP '08 is tremendous. My entire residency is dedicated to anatomical pathology, and the CAP conference offers enough variety that I was able to fill my days with AP material.

In summary, the CAP '08 conference was a great opportunity to hear some great pathology lectures, meet other pathologists and pathology residents, and enjoy the great weather in San Diego. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,
Paul Wawryko
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