

Pathological Society of Great Britain and Ireland Travel & Conference Bursary Report

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95th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Neuropathologists

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Firstly, I would like to thank the Pathological Society for the award of a Travel and Conference Bursary. This, along with other support, allowed me to attend the 95th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Neuropathologists (AANP) in June 2019 in Atlanta, Georgia, where clinicians and scientists assembled to introduce and discuss the latest advances in the field of neuropathology. This meeting is the first international conference I have attended with regards to my PhD work on the biology of paediatric central nervous system tumours at post-mortem.

The meeting began with the 2019 Special Course focusing on the neuropathology of systemic therapies including CAR-T cell therapy and associated neurotoxicities and amyloid-B immunotherapy for Alzheimer's disease. Two days of scientific sessions followed, highlighting the latest neuropathology research in a variety of topics including neurodegenerative diseases; neuromuscular diseases; central nervous system tumours; paediatric neuropathology and trauma. In addition, new technologies advancing the field of neuropathology were acknowledged, from single-nucleus RNA sequencing to reconstructing post-mortem coronal slices using quantitative volumetric analysis.

One presentation I found particularly interesting outlined that certain neuropathological features observed at the time of death in patients with glioblastoma have changed in frequency since radiation and temozolomide were introduced into clinical practice. This highlighted that preclinical models used in studying diseases of the central nervous system may need to change if disease mechanisms are changing due to new treatments.

During the meeting, I attended a Trainee Luncheon, which allowed me to meet trainees from the US and further afield. I enjoyed learning about both the clinical and research training pathways within the US with regards to pathology as well as hearing about the various research that trainees are involved in. In addition, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to give an oral presentation on my PhD research and I very much appreciated the interest shown in the work. The abstract (#138) can be read at the following link: <https://academic.oup.com/jnen/article/78/6/520/5491089#135806793>.

The 2019 Presidential Symposium concluded the conference with a further focus on new technologies but particularly those improving the imaging of the brain at various levels, including 3D tissue imaging that has resulted from the CLARITY technique for tissue clearing.

Overall, attending the AANP Meeting was an invaluable experience and I would like to thank those people who contributed to the work I presented. I would definitely recommend other PhD students applying for similar opportunities and I look forward to keeping in contact with clinicians and scientists I met at this meeting as well as those I had known previously. Now back at UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health, I continue to feel encouraged with the research and I hope to have the opportunity to attend another AANP Meeting and similar conferences in future years.

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