

International Travel Award Summary  
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9<sup>th</sup> International Angiogenesis Conference in Patras, Greece  
June 22 – 26, 2008

I attended the 9<sup>th</sup> International Angiogenesis Conference in Patras, Greece from June 22 – 26, 2008. Angiogenesis, the growth of new blood vessels from existing vessels, is an exciting field for both cancer therapy (anti-angiogenesis) and tissue engineering or wound healing (pro-angiogenesis). I recently was awarded a grant in this field, and my goal in attending the conference was to present our preliminary findings, increase my knowledge of angiogenesis, and meet world experts in the field.

The conference began with an introduction to Greece: slideshow of Greek wonders, a selection of Greek music, and a welcome reception with Greek delicacies. The first day of scientific talks focused on angiogenesis signaling, the role of angiogenesis in inflammation, and how progenitor cells contribute to angiogenesis. The day concluded with a memorial lecture to Judah Folkman, the father of the field of angiogenesis, who passed away this past year. On the second day, I learned about extracellular matrix and hypoxia in angiogenesis. That afternoon, I gave my talk “Endothelial cell proliferation and survival in response to basement membrane fibroblast growth factor-2 depends on secondary mediators,” which was very well received. On the final day of talks, we heard about angiogenesis inhibitors in clinical trials. The conference concluded with a Gala dinner overlooking the beautiful bridge from the Peloponnese peninsula to the Greek mainland and trip to ancient Olympia (see pictures).

This was my first international conference, and it was a great experience for me. I learned about the latest research in angiogenesis as well as techniques that will be effective in my Pennsylvania Department of Public Health Grant project. I made key contacts with leaders in the field, including Michael Maragoudakis (University of Patras, Greece), Gerard Luty (Johns Hopkins University), Philip Lazarovici (Hebrew University, Israel), Roberto Nicosia (University of Washington), Jennifer Strande (Medical College of Wisconsin), and William Li (The Angiogenesis Foundation). I was invited to give seminars at several laboratories, and I was invited to The Angiogenesis Foundation’s International Conference.

This conference was a significant boost to my career. At such a small conference with a high concentration of world-renowned experts, I met colleagues in the angiogenesis field that I would have been unable to meet otherwise. I was able to ask them research and technical questions, which will help me progress my currently funded research. And I was able to inform them about my own research and improve both my international reputation and that of Drexel University. I am grateful to the Drexel Office of International Programs for making this possible.

