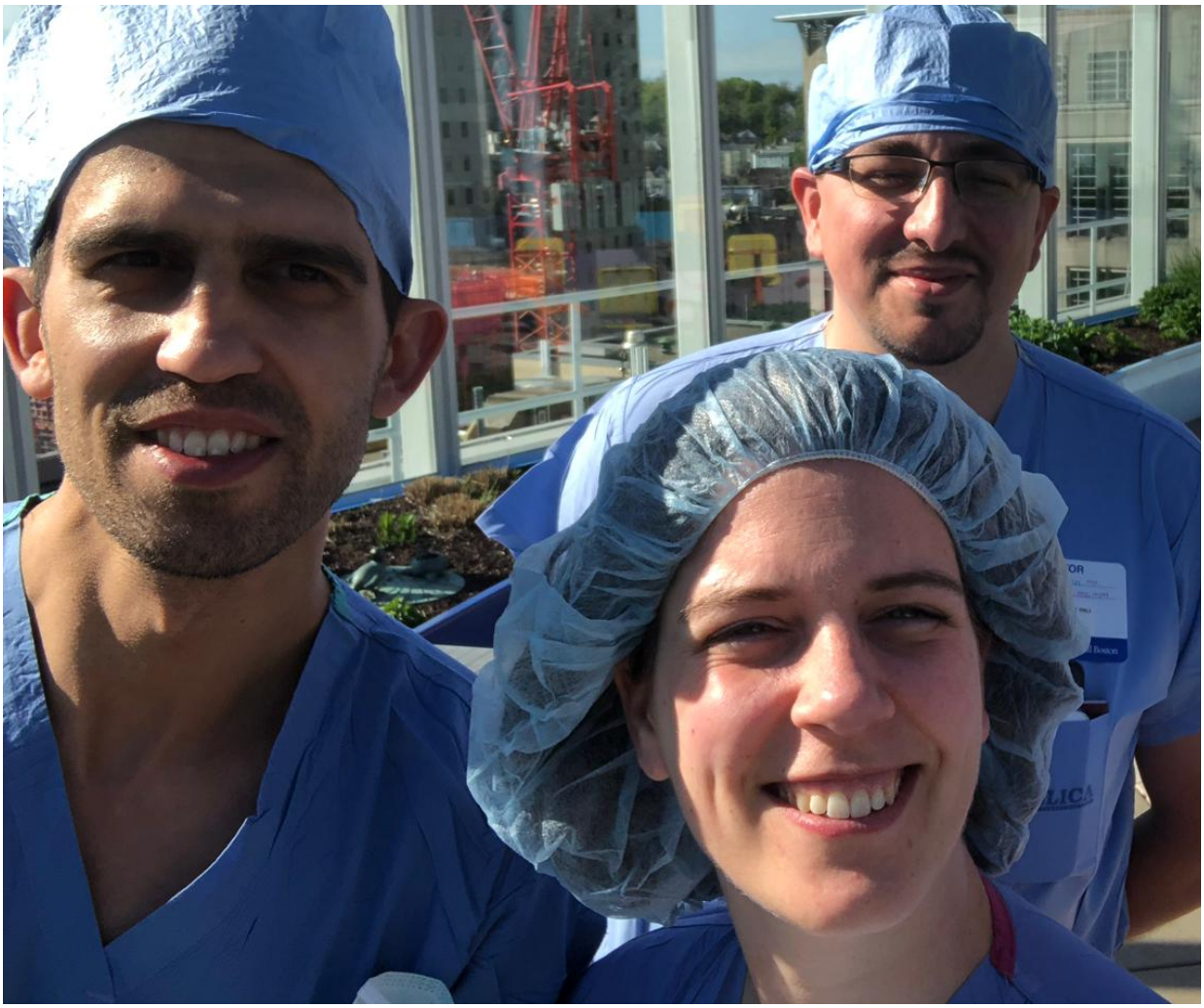
2019

Travelling fellowship EPOS-POSNA

Gyula Domos, Bartosz Musielak, Suzanne de Vos-Jakobs



Selection

In 2018 we applied for the 2019 travelling fellowship. Not knowing where we would go, not knowing whom we would go with. All three of us saw the opportunity of meeting new people and visiting interesting places in the USA.

In December 2018 we heard we were selected and we also saw the names of the other fellows, being Gyula Domos from Hungary, Bartosz Musielak from Poland and Suzanne de Vos-Jakobs from The Netherlands. In February 2019 we received our preliminary itinerary for the trip. We were planned to leave on May 4th or 5th. Our stops would be: Cleveland Rainbow hospital for Babies and Children, Boston Children's Hospital, Paley Institute for Orthopedics and Spine and POSNA annual congress in Charlotte (NC).

Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital, Cleveland

After arrival we were invited for dinner with the staff of the Rainbow Hospital for Babies and Children. There we met both the staff and each other, as we all arrived on different flights.

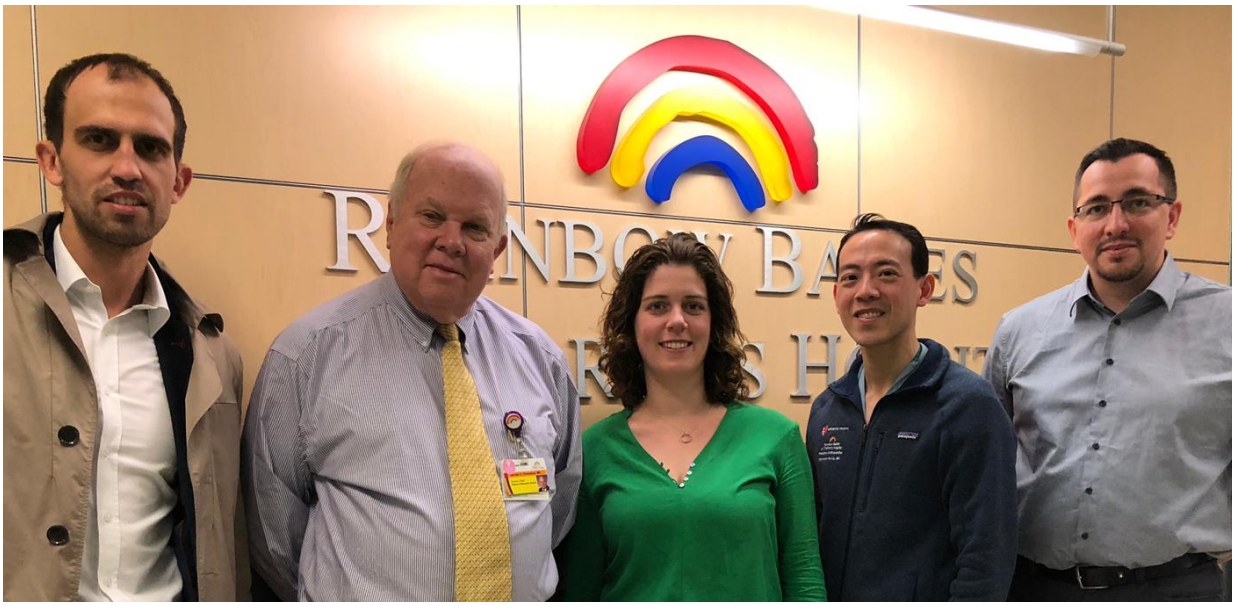


Fig 1. Left to right: Bartosz Musielak, George Thompson, Suzanne de Vos-Jakobs, Raymond Liu, Gyula Domos

On Monday we started our day with breakfast in the hospital and then we were off to the OR. There we observed a correction of a congenital high-thoracic scoliosis using the innovative 'Firefly'-system (OrthoPediatrics). This system was unknown for the three of us. It provided a 3D-model of the spine based on preoperative MRI of CT scan. And jigs for screw positioning during surgery. The result was perfectly positioned screws and the desired correction of the technically challenging scoliosis.

After the case in OR, our fantastic host Dr Raymond Liu had a program for exploring the highlights of Cleveland. We started by visiting the 'Rock and Roll hall of fame', where we discovered that Rock and Roll also includes Motown, Lady Gaga, Michael Jackson and ABBA. In the evening we viewed a baseball-game of the Cleveland Indians vs The Chicago White Sox. Unfortunately, the White Sox walked over the Indians and the game ended in a loss of 1-9.

The next day we also visited the OR where we first discussed the potential use of intra-operative ultrasound for hip dislocations. This was illustrated by a case of spica cast exchange (Fig 2).
The second case in the OR was of a young lady with residual dysplasia after DDH on whom a periacetabular osteotomy according to Ganz was performed. Tips and tricks of this common surgery were exchanged and fluoroscopic images were discussed.



Fig 2. Spica cast exchange with the orthopedic surgeon and plaster technician

After the surgery we visited the place where our host Raymond Liu spends a lot of his research time: the Haman Todd collection of osteology in the Museum of Natural History in Cleveland (Fig 3 and 4). This collection of over 3000 complete skeletons is used for several research projects on developmental disorders and abnormalities of the bones.



Fig 3. Skeleton of a child in Haman Todd collection



Fig 4. Each drawer contains a skeleton

That night we had dinner with the pediatric orthopedic staff, the residents and nurse practitioners of the department. We also had a case discussion and we had the opportunity to evaluate similarities and differences between the different countries in an informal setting. We were hosted by one of the staff members, Christina Hardesty, who did a wonderful job cooking for all of us and hosting us in her home.

Our last day in Cleveland we started off with our presentations for the complete orthopedic staff on previous chosen subjects. Bartosz informed us on patellar stabilization using combined Langeskiöld and Grammont techniques, Gyula had a presentation on initiating a limb reconstruction clinic in Hungary and Suzanne talked about traction treatment prior to closed reduction in DDH.



Fig 5. The staff attending our presentations on Wednesday

After the presentations we all decided to join different activities. Gyula and Bartosz joined in surgery for a limb reconstruction. Suzanne joined in clinic with one of the consultants. After that we said goodbye to all our wonderful hosts, took a picture (fig 5) and left for the airport.

Boston Children's Hospital, Boston

After a smooth flight we arrived in Boston. That evening we had dinner and some drinks with just the three of us and got to know each other's lives, families and professional circumstances.

The next morning we were picked up at the hotel early and we left for the hospital. After a small tour of the hospital, we joined the morning conference and journal club. For this day the theme was hips. We attended a hip meeting, joined in hip clinic where arthroscopic surgery, open reconstructive surgery and conservative treatment was discussed with patients and their caretakers. And we observed bilateral hip reconstruction surgery (derotational, varisation femoral osteotomy and Dega pelvic osteotomy both sides) in a child with Cerebral Palsy. When surgery finished we had a drink in a local bar next to the hospital, where we discussed similarities and differences between our home countries and the Boston Hospital. Also new research ideas were born.

That night we had dinner at The Harvard Club in Boston at the Harvard Grounds with the pediatric orthopedic staff and fellows. After dinner we had a nice tour around the Harvard Gardens and all important buildings were pointed out to us (fig 6).



Fig 6. At the Harvard grounds with Ben Shore and a visitor from Turkey.

On Friday morning we were picked up from the hotel early, so we could prepare our talks. We presented our research to the staff and residents. Bartosz and Suzanne presented the same topics as in Cleveland, Gyula presented his research on tension band plates. After the presentations Bartosz went to the OR again and watched hip and knee arthroscopy. Gyula and Suzanne joined one of the staff members in clinic, where several rare syndromes and conditions were seen in a population of international children (Portugal, Belgium, Croatia, Brasil). The staff was extremely friendly and parents were very helpful.

That afternoon our great host Dr Ben Shore took us for a Duck Boat tour around the city center of Boston. After which we had a quick dinner and then headed for another baseball game in Fenway Park, where the Red Sox played against the Seattle Mariners. We had wonderful spots and enjoyed the game (fig 7). The Red Sox won 13-1.



Fig 7. Baseball game in Fenway Park, Boston.

After these amazing, but exhausting days in Boston, we left the warm ‘family’ of Boston Children’s Hospital and continued on Saturday morning for our trip to Florida.

Paley Institute, West Palm Beach

Our next destination was West Palm Beach in Florida. After a smooth flight we landed in a completely different kind of America. It was warm, humid and big. Craig Robbins welcomed us at the airport and briefly talked us through the program for the upcoming days. He transferred us to the hotel and we made some arrangements for the next days. Then we enjoyed 2 relaxing days in a beautiful place at the ocean's shore (fig 8).



Fig 8. Atlantic Ocean front

On Monday morning we left for the hospital early and started off with a conference by the staff of the institute (David Feldmann on Athrogryposis Multiplex Congenita, Dror Paley on limb reconstruction and congenital pseudoarthrosis of the tibia). These presentations were followed by our presentations on different subjects. Bartosz presented research on acetabular orientation in Congenital Femoral Deficiency Gyula presented research on tension band plating and Suzanne presented research on congenital forearm pseudarthrosis. Unfortunately, we didn't have enough time to finish all the scheduled presentations, as both the staff and us three had more subjects to discuss.

In the afternoon we joined in clinic with Dror Paley and we saw both some preoperative patients and (longterm) follow-up patients. It was amazing to hear about the opportunities he had for the various diseases and conditions.

That night we were invited for dinner at Dror Paley's house with all staff members and partners. We discussed our personal lives in contrast to the lives in Florida. It was great to get to meet all these people.

On Tuesday we had just half a day left at the Paley Institute. We joined Dror Paley in the OR for 2 cases. We started of with a hip stabilization after instability was induced by lengthening. Secondly, we participated in a frame-assisted correction osteotomy of the femur and intramedullary fixation and lengthening.

In the afternoon we left for the airport again to depart for our final destination in the USA. Not before we had a picture taken of us with the staff member (fig 9).



Fig 9. At the Paley Institute (left to right: Craig Robbins, Corey (fellow), Gyula, Suzanne, Bartosz, Dror Paley, David Feldmann)

POSNA congress, Charlotte

The last stop of our fellowship was Charlotte, where we took part in the Annual Meeting of the Pediatric Orthopedic Society of North America (POSNA). At the day of our arrival we didn't have a schedule, so again we took the opportunity to spend time together eating, drinking, and watching some NHL and NBA games at the bar.

On Wednesday we attended the pre-course meeting on a very important subject concerning physician well-being and burnout. After that, we joined one of the concurrent sessions focusing on sports related pathologies. At the end, we attended the welcome reception. Here we took the occasion to meet our 'old' friends from the centers we had visited throughout this fellowship, as well as new people from all over the world (fig 10).



Fig 10. Gyula and Bartosz with Dr Tony Herring

On Thursday morning we participated in the general sessions and we went through some posters, e-posters and video presentations of different surgical techniques. In the afternoon during the free time Suzanne and Gyula went for a ride through Charlotte on electric scooters, while Bartosz stayed in the hotel to finish some work.

Friday was our last whole day of the traveling fellowship. We started that day with joining the general sessions of the meeting, while in the afternoon we had a great chance to see some of the subspecialty sessions. We regretted that many interesting topics were presented at the same time, so we couldn't see all of them. Nevertheless, the presentations we saw were of great importance and high value.

Friday evening, we spent at the NASCAR hall of fame, where we attended one of the most exciting closing receptions in our life. After having some drinks and pictures taken in front of

the massive sports cars, we all participated in the NASCAR race, where we competed against each other and other POSNA attendees. Next, Suzanne and Gyula took on the role of a pit crew, showing great teamworking skills while changing tires and refueling of the NASCAR at the pit stop (fig 11).



Fig 11. Suzanne at the pit stop competition

Once we had finished our sporting activities, we joined a small group of people at the dance floor where we got the party started! We danced and sang karaoke with others, cherishing the last moments of our fellowship together.

Even though we went to sleep very late at night, we participated in the morning session on Saturday. Once the conference had finished, we went for the last lunch together, where we recalled the greatest experiences of our 2-week-long fellowship. We promised each other to meet in the future at least once a year during the annual meetings of EPOS or POSNA!
We left Charlotte and drove to the airport where each of us took their own flights to return home safely.

Summary

In conclusion, we had a wonderful trip where we got to know new inspiring people. We had the opportunity to see other hospitals and different approaches to common problems in everyday practice. Research ideas where shared and collaborations were discussed. This all will become a basis on which we hope to grow into future collaborations and friendships.

Word of thanks

This fellowship was a unique opportunity for all of us to improve our knowledge, to exchange our experiences and to enrich our personal network both in Europe and overseas. We are sincerely grateful to EPOS and POSNA for having given us this opportunity to spend two weeks at some of the leading Northern American pediatric orthopedic departments. A warm word of thanks to Sanni Hiltunen (EPOS) and Melody Raymond (POSNA) for arranging everything perfectly for us.

Also, we would like to thank our fantastic hosts in the hospitals around the USA. They invested so much love and personal devotion to ensure an unforgettable experience for us both inside and outside the hospital. We not only got insight in their exemplary pediatric orthopedic work, but also in the daily life of their departments. We especially want to thank Raymond Liu in Cleveland for arranging a wonderful program and a smooth transition into the American timezone. Ben Shore in Boston for letting us bond as a group and feeling comfortable at his 'hospital-home'. Dror Paley for showing us how new techniques are discovered in an 'out-of-the-box-practice'

Everywhere we were accepted in the medical team as if it was a family. We felt like VIP's during our complete trip and we are very grateful for everything that we have experienced. This shared experience will connect us forever and we are thankful for all friendships that we have made along the way.