



OPEN MEDICAL INSTITUTE

SEMINAR REPORT

DERMATOLOGY

October 16-22, 2022

A Global Educational Initiative by the
American Austrian Foundation

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SALZBURG WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR IN DERMATOLOGY

October 16-22, 2022

30 fellows from 21 different countries
12 faculty members from the USA and Austria
26 lectures given by faculty
30 interesting case presentations by fellows
4 excellent case presentations by fellows

Group Photo of Faculty and Fellows



		Sunday 16.10.2022	Monday 17.10.2022	Tuesday 18.10.2022	Wednesday 19.10.2022	Thursday 20.10.2022	Friday 21.10.2022	Saturday 22.10.2022
07:00	08:00		BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	DEPARTURES
08:00	09:00		Introductions Pre-Seminar Test	Genodermatoses Johann Bauer, MD, MBA, HCM	Drug Eruptions Stefan Woehrl, MD, MSc	Birthmarks Karen Chernoff, MD	Atopy, Allergy and Irritation of the Skin Georg Stingl, MD	
09:00	10:00		Overview of the Skin Immune System Georg Stary, MD	Autoimmune Bullous Disorders Wolfgang Bauer, MD	Allergy Skin Tests Stefan Woehrl, MD, MSc	Surgical Therapy for Malignant Melanoma Kira Minkis, MD, PhD	Rosacea and Acne Georg Stingl, MD	
10:00	10:30		COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	
10:30	11:30		Skin Signs of COVID-19 George Varghese, MD	Vitiligo Andrew Alexis, MD, MPH	Stress and Skin Diseases Richard D. Granstein, MD	Surgical Treatment of Non- Melanoma Skin Cancer Kira Minkis, MD, PhD	Pediatric Inflammatory Skin Disorders Karen Chernoff, MD	
11:30	12:30		Skin Signs of Internal Disorders George Varghese, MD	Psoriasis Andrew Alexis, MD, MPH	Neuroimmunology of the Skin Richard D. Granstein, MD	New Drugs for Skin Cancer Kira Minkis, MD, PhD	Pediatric Skin Infections Karen Chernoff, MD	
12:30	14:00		LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	
14:00	15:00		Skin Diseases in Immunosuppressed Patients Simona Saluzzo, MD, PhD	Dermatology in Skin of Color: Clinical and Therapeutic Nuances Andrew Alexis, MD, MPH	Free Afternoon	Connective Tissue Diseases Georg Stingl, MD	Trans-Atlantic Video Conference "Monkeypox" Verena Isak, MD	
15:00	16:00		Brief Review of the Physiology of the Skin Richard D. Granstein, MD	Adverse Skin Effects of Chemotherapeutic Agents George Varghese, MD		Workshop Fellows' Case Presentations	Sexually-Transmitted Infections Georg Stary, MD	
16:00	17:00		Workshop Case Presentations by Faculty to Fellows	Workshop Fellows' Case Presentations			Post-Seminar Test Evaluation & Discussion	
17:00	18:00		<u>17:00 - 17:15</u> OMI Presentation					
18:00	19:00	FACULTY MEETING TO REVIEW THE WEEK					FAREWELL RECEPTION	
19:00	20:00	WELCOME RECEPTION & DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	GRADUATION DINNER Certificates Awarded	
20:00	21:00					<u>20:30 - 21:30</u> CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT		



OPEN MEDICAL INSTITUTE

FACULTY BOOKLET

DERMATOLOGY SEMINAR IN SALZBURG

October 16-22, 2022

A Global Educational Initiative by the
American Austrian Foundation



Wolfgang Aulitzky, MD

Director, Open Medical Institute
American Austrian Foundation

Associate Dean and Gerhard Andlinger Professor
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Adjunct Professor of Clinical Urology
Adjunct Professor of Clinical Reproductive Medicine
Weill Medical College of Cornell University

Adjunct Professor of Pediatrics
**Perelman School of Medicine at the Children's Hospital
of Philadelphia**

Associate Professor of Urology
Medical University of Innsbruck, Austria

Wolfgang Aulitzky, MD is the Medical Director of the American Austrian Foundation. He is Associate Dean for International Medicine and Distance Learning, Adjunct Prof. of Clinical Urology and Adjunct Prof. of Clinical Reproductive Medicine at the Weill Medical College of Cornell University/New York Presbyterian Hospital. In 2016, he was appointed Adjunct Professor of Pediatrics in the Associated Faculty of the Perelman School of Medicine at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. He is also Associate Prof. of Urology at the Medical University of Innsbruck and Visiting Professor at the Medical University of Vienna. Amongst others he is a member of the American, German and Austrian Societies of Urology and was awarded the Zuckermandlpreis of the Austrian Society of Urology in 1989. In 1995 he received the Silver Medal, in 2007 the Golden Medal for Merits to the Republic of Austria and in 2014 the cross of honor of the Land Salzburg. As Director of the Medical Program of the American Austrian Foundation he has initiated the Open Medical Institute, a scientific and educational collaboration of Weill Cornell and the NewYork Presbyterian Hospital, the Children Hospital of Philadelphia, Duke University, Columbia University, the Cleveland Clinic and leading hospitals in Austria. Dr. Aulitzky earned his medical degree at the University of Innsbruck in 1977, was a research associate at the University of Uppsala, Sweden and the Rockefeller University, New York. He received his training as an urologist at the University of Innsbruck and the General Hospital of Salzburg. He is the author of more than 140 publications on Urology, Andrology and Health Care issues and is co-author of books on basic and clinical urology/andrology.



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Richard D. Granstein, MD (Course Director) obtained his undergraduate education at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his medical education at the UCLA School of Medicine. After completing his internship in 1979, he trained in dermatology at the Massachusetts General Hospital. Then, as a Research Fellow, Dr. Granstein studied immunology and tumor biology at the National Cancer Institute-Frederick Cancer Research Facility and, subsequently, at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Granstein joined the faculty of the Department of Dermatology at Harvard Medical School and the Massachusetts General Hospital in 1984. In 1995, he left Harvard to become chairman of the Department of Dermatology at the Weill Medical College of Cornell University and Dermatologist-in-Chief at the New York Weill Cornell Medical Center of the New York-Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Granstein's research interests center on the regulation of immunity within the skin and the relationship of the skin immune system to the development of skin cancers. He and his co-workers demonstrated that epidermal Langerhans cells can present tumor antigens for in vivo antitumor immunity. He also has a special interest in the regulation of the immune system by stress and the nervous system and, along with his colleagues, was the first to show that Langerhans cell function could be regulated by products of nerves. His clinical interests include autoimmune disorders of the skin, skin cancer and psoriasis.



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Georg Stary, MD (Co-Course Director) is a dermatologist who specializes in infectious and immunological disorders. Dr. Stary grew up in Vienna, Austria and graduated from the Medical University of Vienna. He completed his residency at the Vienna General Hospital/Medical University of Vienna and performed several research projects under Prof. Stingl's supervision. After his residency, Dr. Stary worked for four years as a post-doctoral research fellow in Prof. von Andrian's lab at Harvard Medical School in Boston. Dr. Stary's research interests include the cellular immune system of the skin and mucosa, host-pathogen interactions, and clinical translation of his findings. Recent publications include a major paper on a new mucosal vaccine design in *Science* and the evaluation of tissue-resident immune cells in *Blood*, the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*, *Science Immunology* and *Science Translation Medicine*. He is a peer reviewer for multiple major journals in dermatology and immunology. Dr. Stary's research efforts have earned him grants from the Austrian Science Fund, Vienna Science and Technology Fund, Max-Kade Foundation and Austrian Central Bank. Dr. Stary is currently on the faculty of Medical University of Vienna as Associate Professor of Dermatology and examines dermatological patients as senior physician. He is Co-Director of the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Rare and Undiagnosed Diseases and Adjunct Principal Investigator at CeMM – Center for Molecular Medicine of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. He lives in Vienna with his wife Victoria and children Simon, David, Anna, and Benjamin.



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Andrew F. Alexis, MD, MPH is the Vice-Chair for Diversity and Inclusion for the Department of Dermatology and Professor of Clinical Dermatology at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York City. He is the former Chair of the Department of Dermatology at Mount Sinai Morningside and Mount Sinai West. Having served as Director of the first-of-its-kind Skin of Color Center for over 15 years, his work has helped to advance patient care, research, and education pertaining to dermatologic disorders that are prevalent in populations with skin of color. Dr. Alexis received his medical degree from Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians & Surgeons and his Master of Public Health at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. He completed his dermatology residency at Weill Cornell Medicine, followed by a fellowship in dermatopharmacology at NYU Langone's Ronald O. Perleman Department of Dermatology. Dr. Alexis has published more than 90 articles in peer-reviewed journals including the British Journal of Dermatology, Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology, and JAMA Dermatology among others. He has co-edited two textbooks and authored over 10 book chapters. Dr. Alexis is a frequent lecturer at national and international conferences and has been invited as a Visiting Professor or Grand Rounds speaker at many prestigious academic institutions. Dr. Alexis has held numerous leadership positions in professional organizations including Past President of the New York Dermatological Society, Past President of the New York Academy of Medicine Dermatology Section, Secretary/Treasurer of the Skin of Color Society and Chair of the Diversity Task Force Committee for the American Academy of Dermatology. He currently serves as Co-Chair of the Scientific Committee of the Skin of Color Society, and is a member of the Board of Directors of the American Dermatological Association and the Cicatricial Alopecia Research Foundation. Dr. Alexis has appeared on ABC, CBS, NBC, and FOX television news programs and has been quoted in numerous leading publications, including the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Forbes, Vogue, Allure, and Essence. He is listed in Castle Connolly's Top Doctors™ and Super Doctors®.



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Johann Bauer, MD, MBA, HCM is a board-certified dermatologist, professor, and chair of the Department of Dermatology at the General Hospital of Salzburg. He is the principal investigator in the Division of Molecular Dermatology, General Hospital of Salzburg, and the Scientific Director of the EB House Austria, the national center for epidermolysis bullosa in Austria. He has long-standing experience in molecular diagnosis, management and research on skin biology/blistering diseases, skin aging, and neurobiology of the skin. He was the coordinator of the EU Interreg IV project “Therapie für Schmetterlingskinder-therapy for epidermolysis bullosa”. Dr. Bauer earned his medical degree from the Leopold Franzens University of Innsbruck and has published numerous papers on EB, including a first author paper in “Nature” in 2017.



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Wolfgang Bauer, MD is a dermatologist from Vienna with a keen interest in the skin immune system. Dr. Bauer grew up in Germany and Austria, graduated from the Medical University of Vienna, and completed his dermatology residency at the Division of Immunology, Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the Department of Dermatology of the Medical University of Vienna. His main research interests include cellular and molecular immunology of the skin with a focus on work relying on ex vivo isolated cell populations. In addition, he has been working on cutaneous lymphomas and myeloproliferative skin diseases. Recent publications include a microscopic evaluation of innate lymphoid cells in human skin as well as works on rare subtypes of cutaneous lymphomas. Dr. Bauer currently serves as a senior physician at the Department of Dermatology. He lives in Vienna with his wife Verena and their children Pauline and Levi.



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Karen Chernoff, MD received her undergraduate education at Harvard University. She attended medical school at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and completed her internship at Mt. Sinai Hospital. After her internship, she completed dermatology residency at Weill Cornell Medicine. Following her residency, she completed an additional year of specialized fellowship training in pediatric dermatology at New York University Medical Center. This advanced training makes her distinctly qualified to treat skin disorders in children and adolescents. Dr. Chernoff's practice includes pediatric and adolescent dermatology. She treats a wide array of skin conditions and has a particular interest in complex skin disease in children, including severe forms of common disorders as well as skin signs of internal disease. Her research interests include skin manifestations of rheumatologic and hematologic/oncologic disease.



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Verena Isak, MD is a resident physician specializing in Dermatology. Dr. Isak grew up in Austria and completed a bachelor's degree in Journalism and Media Management at the FH University of Applied Sciences in Vienna. She went on to receive her medical degree at the Medical University of Vienna, and was then appointed to complete a research fellowship in Dr. Richard Granstein's lab at Weill Cornell Medical College. She collaborated on research projects that primarily focused on ultraviolet radiation effects on immune responses within the skin. Dr. Isak then trained at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City for her intern year in internal medicine, and is now completing her dermatology residency at New York Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical center.



Kira Minkis, MD, PhD

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Kira Minkis, MD, PhD specializes in the treatment and prevention of skin cancer. The Mohs micrographic surgical technique allows for the highest potential cure rate for high-risk non-melanoma skin cancers while removing the least possible amount of tissue. Dr. Minkis also has extensive training in surgical removal of early-stage melanoma with precise microscopic examination of the surgical margin. Due to her extensive research experience in the role that the immune system plays in skin cancer, Dr. Minkis is very interested in caring for patients at high risk for skin cancer development, such as those with altered immune systems following organ transplantation. Dr. Minkis has published in multiple peer reviewed journals, has co-authored numerous book chapters and has lectured at many national meetings. Dr. Minkis received her Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry with Honors at the New York University. She pursued her medical education and doctorate in molecular oncology and immunology at New York University School of Medicine. Her doctoral dissertation research focused on studying the immune response to melanoma and development of a therapeutic vaccine for melanoma. Dr. Minkis completed her training in dermatology at New York Presbyterian Hospital – Weill Cornell Medical Center, where she was awarded the Distinguished House Staff Award. Following her residency training, she completed a fellowship in Procedural Dermatology and Mohs micrographic surgery at Northwestern University and, in addition, was one of the first seven dermatologists in the US to have completed the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Cosmetic Dermatologic Surgery Fellowship. As a Weill Cornell-trained dermatologist, Dr. Minkis strives to continue the tradition of excellence in patient care and scholarly pursuits that distinguishes the Weill Cornell Department of Dermatology.



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Simona Saluzzo, MD, PhD is a clinical scientist interested in skin and mucosal immunology. Dr. Saluzzo grew up in the city of Turin, Italy, where she completed her medical degrees at the Medical University of Turin. She then started a PhD in Vienna, at the department of infection biology and CeMM (Center of Molecular Medicine of the Austrian Academy of Science) where she focused on basic research in innate immunity at mucosal level. She performed part of her PhD at the LMB (Laboratory of Molecular Biology) in Cambridge, UK, where she deepened her understanding of innate mucosal immune responses, particularly studying Innate Lymphoid Cells (ILCs) and type 2 immune responses during infection. Her research efforts revealed new understanding on ILC2s-mediated immune changes in the lung at the time of birth and its consequences in the responses to lung infections. She received different prizes, the most recent being the Clemens von Pirquet Prize of the Austrian Society of Allergology and Immunology (OeGAI). Dr. Saluzzo completed her PhD in July 2018, and she is currently a third year resident at the department of Dermatology and Venereology of the Medical University of Vienna and is interested in the immunological changes at skin level during HIV, as well as in the establishment of the HIV reservoir at mucosal and skin tissue level. For this research topic she earned the Clinical Scientist Grant of the Austrian Academy of Dermatology and Venereology.



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Georg Stingl, MD is Professor Emeritus at the Department of Dermatology, Medical University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria. Dr. Stingl earned his medical degree from the Medical University of Vienna in 1973. After his internship and residency training at the Department of Dermatology of the Medical University of Vienna, he worked as a postdoctoral fellow at the Dermatology Branch of the National Cancer Institute (1977-1978) and as a guest scientist at the Laboratory of Immunology, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (1985-1986) of the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, USA. From 1978-1981, he served as a faculty member of the Department of Dermatology of Innsbruck's University Medical School and then moved to Vienna where he ultimately became Professor and Chairman of the Department of Dermatology at the Medical University. Dr. Stingl's major scientific accomplishments include the discovery of Langerhans cells as immunocytes and their role as targets of physicochemical agents, drugs and HIV; the first identification of the indigenous T cell population of rodent skin; the detection of anti-FcεR1 autoantibodies in the sera of patients with chronic urticaria; the use of genetically modified melanoma cells as vaccines for patients with far advanced disease; the induction of lytic molecules on dendritic cells after stimulation with TLR 7/8 ligands and the phenotypic characterization of innate lymphoid cells in normal and diseased human skin. In addition, he conducted many clinical trials investigating safety and efficacy of different immunomodulatory compounds. His work is documented in more than 300 original publications, 200 reviews and book chapters as well as four books. Over the years, Dr. Stingl has appeared as guest professor at several medical universities and as invited speaker at many symposia and conferences. He is a member of the board of several scientific societies and organizations, advisory panels, scientific journals, and committees. During his career he has received several prestigious awards such as the William Montagna Award and the Stephen Rothman Award of the Society for Investigative Dermatology and the Lifetime Achievement Award of the American Skin Association. In 1999, he received the Honorary Doctorate from the Semmelweis Medical University in Budapest and the Silver Decoration of Honor for Services to the Republic of Austria in Vienna. He is an Honorary Member of the Society for Investigative Dermatology, the European Society for Dermatological Research, and The Japanese Society for Investigative Dermatology. He is also a Member of the Austrian and the German Academy of Sciences as well as Foreign Associate of the US National Academy of Medicine.



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George Varghese, MD is a dermatologist who practices general (adult and pediatric), surgical and cosmetic dermatology. His clinical interests include complex medical dermatology particularly with patients with neurocutaneous issues, particularly chronic itching. He received his Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience from the University of Rochester. He finished medical school at SUNY Stony Brook Medical School and completed his internship in Internal Medicine at Winthrop University Hospital in New York. He completed his residency in Dermatology at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center where he served as Chief Resident in his final year. Dr. Varghese led a clinical trial evaluating the efficacy of wearable ultraviolet (UV) sensor in reducing UV exposure in elderly patients at high risk for skin cancer. He is an active educator of residents and students. He lectures to health care providers around the community and is active collaborator with the AIDS Education Training Center. Dr. Varghese is on the faculty as an Associate Professor at Weill Cornell Medicine and New York Hospital. He lives in Long Island, NY with his wife Suja and his children Luke and Lily.



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Stefan Woehrl, MD, MSc graduated with a master's degree in Science in Biology/Genetics from the Universities of Salzburg and Vienna in 1996 and earned an additional Medical Degree from the University of Vienna in 1999. From 2000-2006 he did his residency in dermatology and venereology at Prof. Georg Stingl's Division of Immunology, Allergy and Infectious Diseases (DIAID) in the Department of Dermatology, Medical University of Vienna. In 2007, he became Assistant Professor ("Privatdozent") for Dermatology & Venereology at the DIAID and wrote his habilitation thesis on "Improvements in the clinical diagnosis of allergic diseases of the skin and the respiratory tract". From 2009 to 2011, he was an assistant and in 2012 he became Associate Professor at the DIAID. In 2012, he left the medical university of Vienna to become a full member of the Floridsdorf Allergy Centre (FAZ), Central Europe's biggest allergy outpatient clinic. Between 2013 and 2017, he re-joined Prof. Stingl's DIAID as part-time senior consultant. Dr. Woehrl is member of several academic organizations and international societies. His research interest mainly lies on the diagnosis of the whole range of allergic diseases in clinical allergology including allergic contact dermatitis, hymenoptera venom allergy, component resolved allergy diagnosis of allergic rhinitis and asthma and the clinical management of drug hypersensitivity.

Fellow Booklet Dermatology



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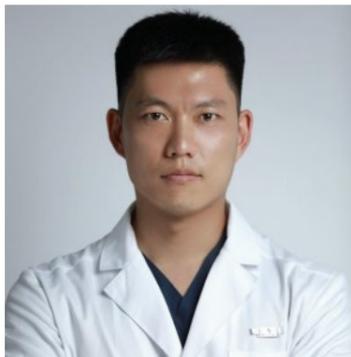
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Sunday, October 16, 2022

I embarked on my journey from Brno by train in the morning and arrived in the early afternoon. The weather in Salzburg was sunny and unexpectedly warm. I was immediately taken aback by how pretty and inviting Schloss Arenberg looked. Some quick paperwork was done at the reception, and I got a key to my cozy room. In the evening, we started a round of introductions in the lobby. The anticipated welcome reception with the faculty members followed and after the welcome speech, dinner was served. The whole evening was very pleasant and relaxing. I was surprised to meet fellows from a lot of different countries including central and eastern Europe, Africa, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, West Indies, and Mexico.

Monday, October 17, 2022

The program started at 8:00 in the morning with the dreaded pre-seminar test, but our worry was not necessary since the test would be re-taken at the end of the seminar. The first lecture on skin immune system given by Dr. Stary, which set a high standard and was followed by Dr. Varghese's presentation on skin signs of COVID-19, a very up-to-date topic which I also spent

a lot of time documenting in my practice. After a delicious lunch, we dove into topics like skin physiology, signs of internal disorders, and HIV. Dr. Varghese also showed us several ways of presenting a case report using his own interesting cases. In the afternoon, a group of us explored the surroundings of the castle and discovered a beautiful lookout point from where the Hohensalzburg Fortress can be seen.

Tuesday, October 18, 2022

On Tuesday, Dr. Bauer guided us through the complicated topics of genodermatoses and autoimmune bullous disorders, followed by Dr. Alexis and his excellent lectures on vitiligo, psoriasis, and skin of color. During my medical training I received very little training on treating patients of color, so I really appreciated the overview. In the afternoon, half of the class, including me, presented case reports, and I very much enjoyed all of them.

Wednesday, October 19, 2022

In the morning, we began talking about drug eruptions and allergy skin tests. Dr. Woehrl created a very thorough and useful presentation. I was excited to learn from a dermatologist that also practices allergology. After a short coffee break, we continued with presentations on stress and neuroimmunology by Dr. Granstein, who exposed us to the complexity of this topic. After these enriching presentations, many of us decided to use the only free afternoon to explore the city. We walked and shopped, tried the pretzels, bought Mozart kugels to take home, and visited many of the local sights. The highlight for me was a boat ride on the Salzach River, with a very unexpected ending - the boat started spinning around to the rhythm of waltz music for several minutes. To finish off the day, we decided to try the famous Salzburger Nockerl and our heads started to spin once again after seeing how huge this dessert was!

Thursday, October 20, 2022

The day started with a highly anticipated pediatric dermatology talk given by Dr. Chernoff, followed by three fantastic skin cancer related lectures by Dr. Minkis. I take a particular interest in surgery techniques and was quite amazed by the results that can be achieved using Mohs surgery, which is unfortunately not used in my country. I spent my lunchbreak chatting with the cheerful Croatian fellows, talking about their country which I have visited many times. The afternoon program commenced with a lecture on connective tissue diseases by Dr. Stingl, who challenged us with many thought-provoking questions. After that, we enjoyed another round of interesting case reports, many of them from the African region. The day ended with a beautiful chamber music concert.

Friday, October 21, 2022

The week flew by very quickly. Our last day included lectures on atopy, acne, pediatric dermatology, monkey pox, and STIs. After taking the post-seminar test, we could finally relax and enjoy the farewell reception and graduation dinner. I am truly grateful for this unique experience. I met so many diverse and wonderful people from around the world, enjoyed the city of Salzburg in Autumn, and most importantly expanded and strengthened my knowledge in many areas of dermatology. I would like to express my gratitude to the faculty members for

teaching us invaluable lessons and to the whole OMI team for making this week at Schloss Arenberg so special. Thank you!



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Sunday, October 16, 2022

I was eagerly looking forward to starting the seminar which I had waited for months to attend. I arrived in Vienna yesterday with my colleague, Dr. Kelvin Mponda, from Malawi and Dr. Alice Amani from Rwanda. We started our two-and-a-half-hour journey from Vienna to Salzburg by train. It was so relaxing in the train; the view was so beautiful and green, and we had enough time to chat and update each other about our lives. We were warmly welcomed at Schloss Arenberg's reception, where we filled some paperwork and were given keys to our rooms. The rooms were so nicely designed, well-furnished, and clean. Around 7:00 pm, everyone met in the lobby, where I met fellows from many other countries. We chatted with two ladies from Romania, Dr. Anca Chiriac and Dr. Adriana-Mihaela Mosor. They had attended the seminar in the past, so they gave me an idea on what to expect, which helped me to relax. We received some speeches from the OMI staff and faculty members, and I felt welcomed. Some faculty came from the USA, which proved to me we would have a rewarding seminar. Later, we ate dinner, and the food was very nice. I sat at a lively table with Dr. Nataliya Reznichenko from Ukraine and Dr. Audrey Mun from Uzbekistan. We discussed so many things about our countries and our practice, until they had to tell us to leave the restaurant because it was late. Before I went to bed, I researched more on the country Uzbekistan.

Monday, October 17, 2022

I was awake by 5:30, then went to breakfast with my friend Kelvin and Alice. I went to the grand hall and found everything arranged very nicely, with a seat which had my name on it. At 8:00, we were welcomed by Dr Georg Stary. We took the pre-seminar test, which I found difficult, but I was relaxed when I found out it is only meant to assess how much we know. We had a wonderful introduction on the skin immune system, which was very informative since the last time I had learned about this topic was many years ago. The next two lectures by Dr George Varghese on Skin signs in COVID-19 and Internal diseases were very lively and relevant for me. After lunch, we had two virtual presentations, as the faculty members could not make it to Austria. The skin diseases in immunosuppressed patients were of much interest to me, as I see a lot of such patient in my practice. At the end of the day, we had a presentation about the OMI and the different trainings they offer. It was good to know that there is a program like this which helps doctors get updated on current information, as it is true that after our educational training, most of us get so busy with work and may not have privileges to get updates in the medical field. At 6:00 in the evening, I went for a walk in the garden.

Tuesday, October 18, 2022

I woke up at 5:30 and called my husband back home. I was looking forward to the topics that were on the schedule today. I made friends with a doctor from Ethiopia who told me she was presenting her case today. When I checked the list, I was scheduled to present on Thursday. Lectures started at 8:00 sharp, and I really liked the presentation on genodermatoses, as it was very relevant for me. Dr. Johann Bauer focused on epidermolysis bullosa, which was great, as it is a condition that pediatricians consult with me on a lot on. The rest of the day focused on conditions that I see in my daily practice, such as vitiligo, psoriasis, and challenges in skin of color. In the afternoon, half of the fellows presented their cases, which were all very interesting.

Wednesday, October 19, 2022

Today was a colder day, which was a bit sad because we had a free afternoon, and everyone was looking forward to going outdoors. I woke up and called to speak to my three kids, it was great to hear their stories. This morning's breakfast was so special because Kelvin and I ate with our two friends from Croatia, Dr. Mata Prtajin and Dr. Lovre Pedic. They wanted to know more about Malawi, and we wanted to know more about Croatia. They told us about how they have a beautiful lake and how many doctors are still leaving their countries to go work in other countries, which was a shock to me. We encouraged one another to come for a visit to our countries. The first two topics of the day, focusing on allergology, were the ones I was really looking forward to, as that is one of my main interests. Dr. Stefan Woehrl from Vienna explained the topic so well. The two hours he spoke seemed like a few seconds. I had a short talk with him at the end of his lecture, but since there was not enough time, I told him I would email him regarding the topic. The next two topics were challenging, so having free time afterwards was a great stress reliever. I decided to go shopping with a couple of friends. This was fun for me since in Malawi we do not have as many shops to select things from. We came back at 6:30 in the evening and ate a lovely supper.

Thursday, October 20, 2022

Today I would be giving my presentation. I was a bit nervous, but also excited about what I was going to share. My topic was on skin cancer in a person affected with albinism. We had some lectures which were more related to my field, focusing on cancer and surgery. Time went by so fast and soon we started to do the presentations. Fellows presented both simple and complicated cases, and it was interesting that some conditions considered to be rare are actually very common in my country. Most cases were pediatric and surgical. I presented my case, and one of the faculty members made a comment that it was a sad case. In fact, it was clear that if my patient had access to the health services in Europe, things would not have been so bad. My friends said it was a great presentation, and I was so happy that it was over. In the evening after dinner, we had a chamber music concert by Laura Laila Gfrerer and Patrick Leung. It was very beautiful and relaxing music. I am sure that is why I slept so peacefully!

Friday, October 21, 2022

Time has flown by so fast. I have received so much updated information in such little time. We had pediatric topics today, including atopy. Then Dr. Georg Stary gave a presentation on sexually transmitted infections. He taught it so well for such a huge topic in one hour. When doing the post-seminar test, though I was nervous, I got comfort from the fact that I was attempting the same exam as on Monday. The evening was beautiful but sad knowing that we shall be saying goodbye to our new friends. Dinner was so nice, and we were all happy to be awarded with our certificates. I am so grateful for this experience, which has not only made me rich in knowledge but has also given me friendships and allowed me to experience different cultures around the world. I will forever be grateful to Tumaini Austria for recommending and supporting my participation in this seminar, and mostly to the OMI for having such goals to enrich us with knowledge.