BDIAP Bursary Recipient Report – IAP 2024

Katie Allen | ST5 Histopathology | Clinical Research Fellow
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust | University of Leeds

I would like to thank the BDIAP very much for awarding me a trainee bursary to attend the XXXVth IAP Congress in Cancun, Mexico. I was keen to attend this congress for two main reasons. Firstly, the programme included multiple symposia and sessions, with world-renowned experts, that I was eager to go to. Secondly, I submitted two abstracts as it was a great opportunity to present my research during the final year of my PhD studies on an international stage, and to connect with peers and experts from my research area.

All of the sessions that I attended really extended my knowledge and gave a valuable insight into entities that I have had little or no experience of before. In particular, I enjoyed attending the gynaecological pathology slide seminar, as this is the area I hope to subspecialise in after completion of training. The calibre of the speakers was excellent, and it was enlightening to hear about new entities such as the GLI-1 altered mesenchymal tumour presented by the inspirational Prof Malpica. Another great example of these experts' clear and thorough approach to complex cases in context, was Prof Rabban's approach to yolk sac tumours, and demonstrated the importance of distinguishing them from carcinoma with yolk sac tumour features. I will definitely be applying these approaches, new-found awareness and understanding into my day-to-day practice going forward.

Another session that will significantly influence my own work in future, as a researcher focusing on this area, was 'Pixels to Predictions: Navigating the Application of Digital Imaging and AI in Pathology'. There was a really comprehensive mixture of talks covering really inspirational use of telepathology as well as the very forefront of developments in AI applications to histology and cytology.

The Plenary Lectures were, quite predictably, a real highlight of the Congress. In particular, Dr Reuter's lecture was very motivational. Although it is an area I find particularly tricky, I found Prof Jaffe's deep dive into the classification of lymphomas really fascinating and so informative in terms of understanding the current position in the context of how things have progressed in recent decades.

I had the opportunity to present my own research in the application of AI to the digital pathology of ovarian carcinoma as an oral presentation in the AI and Digital Pathology Proffered Papers Session, as well as a poster presentation. This was a very valuable experience in terms of my own professional development and gaining confidence, as well as affording me the opportunity to network and foster collaborative links.

The Congress far exceeded my expectations of the event. Both in terms of the quality of the sessions and the breadth of material covered. My only complaint would be that there were so many good sessions coinciding with one another that it was hard to decide which to attend! I would absolutely recommend attending the Congress to my colleagues, particularly more senior residents who would really benefit from the expert symposia.