Report on Christian Bezenar Travelling Fellowship

Having recently returned from the CB travelling fellowship, I thought I'd share some thoughts on it. Firstly, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone that helped fund and put it together (yourself, Joint Operations, JRF / Allosource & Rachel Frank.)

We started in Denver with Rachel Frank. Rachel was a delightful host. She had a couple of OCAs to observe which was great but equally as useful was having the time to chat about interesting cases and her approach to managing soften tissue injuries. It was interesting to see her quadriceps ACLRs using the latest Arthrex equipment. While visiting Rachel, the AOSSM meeting was being held in Denver (about a 2 minute walk from our hotel.) This was a great meeting (one of the best I have been to) where, again, I learnt a lot. As part of the AOSSM, I was taken on a tour of the JRF / Allosource processing facilities to get a better idea of the processes that are involved in graft production.

While we were in Denver, JRF organised a dinner out with Christian's family (mother, wife & 2 daughters.) This was a lovely evening, after which, Christian's mother sent us a touching email saying how much she appreciated it.

Next stop was San Diego with Bill Bugbee. Bill was a tremendous host, taking us out on a snorkelling trip the weekend we arrived. As well as observing Bill perform a number of OCAs, he showed us round his facilities, discussing interesting cases. From this, I feel I have a better idea of where the limits of OCAs lie. We also had the opportunity to visit the team of scientists he works with (from the University of San Diego), where they were conducting research into MSCs and printing meniscal replacements.

The last stop was with Brian Cole in Chicago. Unfortunately, the Rush team did not have any OCAs on while we were there but there was plenty to learn from watching how Brian's practise works. We also had an evening out with the Rush team which was great and gave me the opportunity to chat about how they treat cartilage defects.

Overall thoughts were that this is a brilliant trip and I was very fortunate to have been chosen for it. I was very well looked after, JRF could not have been more welcoming and Darragh Cullen (my travel buddy from Joint Operations) was tremendous company. I would highly recommend it's continuation.




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Pictures (from top left to right)

JRF / Allosource team after tour around their facilities

With Rachel Frank by the wall of tributes to Christian at JFR headquarters

Dinner with the Bezenars

At sea with Bill Bugbee & Keith Byers (CEO JRF)

The equipment Bill uses to perform at OCA (Arthrex megaOATs)

With Darragh Cullen & Bill

With Brian Cole

Farewell pints with Darragh