

# Resident Opportunities

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Educational opportunities abound for dermatology residents, ranging from conferences to board review courses to cosmetic forums. Although cost may be an initial concern, there are ample opportunities for scholarships and grants to help fund attendance at numerous national and international conferences, board review courses, and elective rotations without breaking the bank. Many scholarships that are available to dermatology residents will waive registration fees and/or cover room and board, often in exchange for a small obligation such as presenting research or an interesting case report at the conference. In this article, I will describe some of the opportunities I have participated in during my dermatology residency as well as others that have been recommended by my colleagues.

The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) charges residents a nominal registration fee for the annual and summer meetings. Because these are the premier dermatology events of the year, attendance is a must. There are no fees for students, so take advantage of this amazing opportunity. The AAD offers many other opportunities for residents, such as the resident international grant, a 4- to 6-week elective in Gaborone, Botswana,<sup>1</sup> and the Native American health service resident rotation program in Chinle, Arizona.<sup>2</sup> Both of these opportunities offer unique learning experiences for dermatology residents.

One of the highlights of my career thus far has been volunteering with Camp Discovery, a 6-week summer camp sponsored by the AAD for children with chronic skin conditions.<sup>3</sup> There is no cost for volunteers to attend, as all fees (including transportation) are covered by the AAD. Be prepared to work hard, get dirty, and have a ton of fun, as well as have a life-changing experience with some incredible kids and dedicated counselors and staff members.

A scholarship program also exists for the Orlando Dermatology Aesthetic & Clinical conference

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Advanced Resident Training & Education (ARTE) in Dermatology Annual Summit.<sup>4</sup> Residents must apply, and if accepted, the conference registration fee is waived and a shared hotel room is provided; however, residents are responsible for their own travel arrangements. The conference is always held in mid-January at the Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate in Florida and offers diverse advanced cosmetic training for residents and practitioners as well as some general dermatology courses. There is a poster competition at the conference, but participation is not required for scholarship recipients.

The Cosmetic Surgery Forum, held every December in Las Vegas, Nevada, offers grants covering airfare, hotel accommodations, and registration for up to 75 residents.<sup>5</sup> To be considered for a scholarship, residents must submit an application as well as an abstract on any dermatology or cosmetic surgery topic that will be allotted 4 minutes at the presentation session. All scholarship recipients are required to participate in the resident presentation competition. The competition is friendly and provides a great opportunity to practice presenting in front of an audience. The slight anxiety leading up to your presentation is well worth the opportunity to attend this world-class event. Not only are the lectures outstanding, but there also are live demonstrations and opportunities for residents to practice using neurotoxins, fillers, and laser devices.

The National Psoriasis Foundation hosts its annual residents meeting each fall in Chicago, Illinois, with all expenses paid for all accepted applicants.<sup>6</sup> Residents must fill out an application in the spring to be considered. It is a 1.5-day program that focuses on educating dermatology residents about recent advances in treatments and the management of psoriasis. When I attended this event, the highlight was interacting with the faculty. The meeting hosts a limited number of residents, making it a very intimate environment and therefore allowing plenty of time to chat with experts about treatment and management of difficult psoriasis cases. In addition to attending lectures, participants have the

opportunity to interact with distinguished faculty and other chief residents during workshops, social functions, and scheduled free time.

Each year, the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery (ASDS) offers a partial scholarship to attend the annual meeting.<sup>7</sup> I have never attended this meeting but have heard wonderful things about the event. The ASDS also offers a weeklong preceptorship program in which graduating residents can visit the practice of an established dermatologic surgeon to perfect skills in core areas of practice and develop skills in procedures and techniques not previously learned.<sup>8</sup> The ASDS approves a budget for each accepted applicant to help cover travel costs and living expenses during their rotation. The program provides a unique opportunity for residents to learn new techniques and perspectives, observe a successful practice in action, and develop valuable career networks. As part of the ASDS preceptorship program, I had the unique opportunity to rotate with David J. Goldberg, MD, at Skin Laser and Surgery Specialists of New York and New Jersey in Hackensack, where I learned some novel uses of lasers.

The American Society for Mohs Surgery typically holds its annual meeting in May, and there is no registration fee for residents.<sup>9</sup> From my experience, the group rate for hotel rooms usually is very affordable. I found the 2013 meeting to be an outstanding experience. It is an intimate meeting with wonderful faculty and tremendous lectures; for me, the highlight was the elective microscope sessions featuring challenging histologic slide reviews, with interpretative assistance from experienced laboratory faculty such as Ronald P. Rapini, MD, Houston, Texas.

The Dermatopathology Laboratory of Central States offers *Dermpath 100*, a 2-day workshop of challenging cases and clinical training relevant to board preparation and everyday practice.<sup>10</sup> The event, which is held in April in Dayton, Ohio, is open to all dermatology residents free of charge, but attendance is limited to 100 residents and participants are responsible for covering travel expenses. I have not participated in this course, but I have heard positive reviews from colleagues who have attended.

If you are training in the Florida area, the Florida Society of Dermatologic Surgeons offers a unique opportunity each fall for selected residents to present their research or an interesting case report at the organization's annual meeting in exchange for free hotel accommodations.<sup>11</sup> In 2013, the meeting was held at the famed Breakers Hotel in Palm Beach. The South Beach Symposium is another must for Floridians, and registration is free for residents; the meeting features renowned faculty and a fabulous schedule with a variety of cosmetic and general dermatology lectures.<sup>12</sup> Although

the focus is cosmetics, there is a pediatric panel the first day of the conference and plenty of content on general dermatology to satisfy a diverse audience.

There are many wonderful educational opportunities that are available to dermatology residents. I encourage everyone to apply early for scholarships and to reapply if you are not accepted the first time. When you receive funding to attend meetings and conferences, remember to be respectful and grateful for the scholarship or grant, as many people have worked hard to provide the funds and learning experiences to enhance our residency training and to facilitate our growth as young dermatologists. Most of all, have fun and network, as these will be your colleagues for the duration of your career.

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