

EFOMP ESMP Bursary 2005 – Gabriella Pasquali

Browsing the website pages of the Italian Association of Medical Physics (AIFM), my attention was captured by the opportunity of a travel award for a week at the European School of Medical Physics (ESPM) in Archamps. I've already heard of this school from other my colleagues and from the linked website (www.cur-archamps.fr/esi) I learnt that I could choose one or more of the five course weeks, each week dealing with different medical topics. The first two weeks dealt with Medical Imaging (Ultrasounds, MR, Digital radiology CT, PET), the third week was about Medical Computing and the last two weeks concerned with Radiotherapy and Brachithrapy.

I thought it was a great opportunity for me, mainly for two reasons: I could improve my knowledge in a field where I was only recently involved for my job in hospital and I could meet physicists from everywhere.

So I sent my application form to EFOMP, explaining that I would like to learn something about Nuclear Medicine that was the topic of the second week of the school. When the positive answer of the award arrived, I was really enthusiastic.

On the 2nd November 05, I arrived at Geneva and after ten minutes at Archamps village, that is in France just close to the customs. Actually, it was a little strange, because it was evening and around me there were only commercial buildings and hotels. The day after I was excited, I arrived at the school site just in five minutes' walk and I realized that the location is in the middle of nowhere, in a strategic position for Geneva and other important centres, also for tourism as Mont Blanc and Annecy. The true Archamps is a small and nice village reachable by bus.

At the welcome coffee I met a very friendly man, Prof. Yves Lemoigne, the director of the school. His first care is that every student feels at ease, but he mainly is the mind of the school. After him I met Haidi and Severine, two wonderful girls with an answer to any question from students and teachers, and other Italians, just to make me feel at home.

The director gave the start to the second course week explaining that ESPM is a partnership between the European Scientific Institute (ESI) and the European Federation of Organisations for Medical Physics (EFOMP) with the support of other scientific societies, like CERN and NATO (and the first two weeks on medical imaging are shared in cooperation with the Nato Advanced Study Institute).

The week was supervised by Dr Robert Ott and many high level teachers, experts of Medical Imaging with Ionising Radiation, came to introduce us highlights and problems. In particular, they explained us principles and new trends of SPECT and PET imaging, regarding also the data acquisition processing and the used radioisotopes. In the second half of the week topics were digital radiology, mammography and CT, going through the image quality theory, and the course was concluded with image management (PACS and DICOM) and data fusion. Lessons ran from Thursday to Tuesday with a break on Sunday. Each school day was organized with lessons in classroom and practical exercises at Geneva University. On Saturday afternoon we went to visit CERN, the Nuclear Medicine Department at Geneva Hospital and a cyclotron facility for the production of ^{18}F for PET.

Many interesting topics were treated, perhaps too many. Personally I think that it would be interesting to share them in two weeks, going deeper in each of them.

Students were encouraged to ask questions to lecturers, who were very open giving us references and suggestions.

On Sunday we visited a beautiful town on the lake, Annecy, and sometimes in the evening we could meet the other students for the dinner or for a drink. These were chances to know different people and different histories, because some students came from Europe (East and West) but others were

from Turkey, Israel, Morocco, Egypt, Usa. Somebody was a student, others worked in hospital and others came from universities. Truly ESMP is an international school! As suggested by the Egyptians, it was also organized a discussion about the situation of the physicists in hospital and it was a bit strange to discover that sometimes difficulties are the same.

It's hard to summarize all the emotions, but I think that this international breath makes the school unique. The ESMP could also be seen as an opportunity to create a network among students to exchange ideas beyond the school weeks.



For all these reasons I am grateful to EFOMP for the chance to attend the second week on Medical Imaging at ESMP. And I think it would be a good chance for many other physicists!

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