

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

**Expedition/Project/
Conference Title:** 2010 Biennial Congress of the Anaerobe Society of the
Americas

Travel Dates: 7-10 July 2010

Location: Philadelphia, USA

Group member(s): Kelly Jobling

Aims: To present a poster entitled: Bacteriophages and horizontal gene
transfer in *Bacteroides fragilis* and to attend the conference lecture
sessions.

OUTCOME (not less than 300 words):-



I am grateful to the James Rennie Bequest for providing me with funding to attend the 2010 Biennial Congress of the Anaerobe Society of the Americas, which was held in the historic quarter of Philadelphia in July this year. Attendance at my first international conference allowed me to gain valuable skills in the preparation of a poster and the presentation of my work to a wide audience of people.

My poster entitled "Bacteriophages and horizontal gene transfer in *Bacteroides fragilis*" allowed me to present novel data to experts in my field and to obtain feedback outside of that normally available to me. It was also able to obtain advice on the direction of my project as well as suggestions on improvements which could be made and areas to focus on. The other posters presented provided me with an overview of the interesting work currently being carried out in my field, particularly in the area of antibiotic resistance in *B. fragilis* from a number of students present from the University of Rio de Janeiro. I was able to question other students on their work and to discuss the scientific methods they are using to determine if they would have any benefit to my own research.

The conference had a number of seminar sessions covering a wide range of topics, allowing me to gain a general overview of the work being carried out with anaerobic organisms other than my own. There were a number of diagnostic based presentations allowing me to learn about the clinical aspects of anaerobic infection and the current methods being employed to contain and treat them. This has greatly helped to expand my background knowledge on my organism. I thoroughly enjoyed the sessions, particularly those by Shelia Patrick (QUB) on *B. fragilis* fibrinogen interactions and Jeffery Sherwood (Walter Reed Army Hospital) on a multi-drug resistant strain of *B. fragilis*, which has a huge impact on future treatment options for *B. fragilis* infection after bowel surgery.

The conference was well organised and included a number of events for delegates to meet each other. This was invaluable as it gave me an opportunity to introduce myself to experts in my field, to share current ideas with them and to establish relationships that will hopefully be beneficial to me throughout the rest of my PhD and future career.

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

Overall this was an extremely enjoyable conference set in a wonderful location and I returned to Edinburgh with a number of ideas and a renewed motivation for my project. I would like to thank the James Rennie Bequest for giving me this great opportunity.