IBRA Fellowship report
Keikichi Kawasaki MD, Japan

Fellowship period: 21st April 2014 – 31st July 2014
Place: Department of Hand, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Kantonsspital St. Gallen, Switzerland.
Supervisor: Professor J. Grünert

Introduction

I am a Japanese orthopaedic surgeon and my specialty is hand surgery.
After I heard Prof. Grünert's lecture in the annual meeting of Japanese Society of Surgery of Hand, I started to use APTUS plate. So far, I used more than 500 plates of polyaxial locking plate (PLP) and I presented the PLP in the many meetings and congresses. I reported them in English Journal (J Orthopaedic Traumatology). I reported vascularized bone graft for scaphoid nonunion and pedicled flap for severe Dupuytren's contracture.
I heard about IBRA program from Dr. Kozo Morita. He experienced this fellowship and he said it was a very good program. I approached directly Prof. Grünert when he came again to Japan and I met him at the presentation.
I came to St.Gallen in order to study radius fracture (with arthroscopic operation), Scaphoid non-union, SL instability, flap operation and others.
And I am happy to study in Kantonsspital St. Gallen now.

About the department
In the department of Hand-, Plastic- and Reconstructive Surgery (Klinik für Hand-, Plastische und Wiederherstellungschirurgie) there are six hand- and plastic surgeons (specialists) and six young doctors in-training. The head of the department is Prof. J. Grünert. The number of operations is about 1800 a year in the department. The department is well staffed by physiotherapists (PT) and occupational therapists (OT). So this is a very big and brilliant specialist team for hand in the hospital.

Weekly schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:15				meeting	
7:30	meeting	meeting	meeting	round inner patient	meeting
8:00	operation	operation	operation		operation
9:00				out patient	
12:00					
14:00	out patient		out patient	operation	
17:00					
18:00	(tumor bord)				

During the morning meeting, the cases of previous days, admissions and emergency cases are discussed with relevant imaging reviewed using projector. The operation plans are also considered.
Every day there are many operations in the two lanes, especially on Thursday there are long operations, for example flap operation for skin defects.
Prof. Grünert and I went to the children's hospital near Kantonsspital and operated congenital hand once.
In the outpatient clinic, Prof. Grünert speaks German, but he explained the details to me in English.
The professor, other doctors, OT, PT and I took rounds visiting all patients of the hand team in the hospital on Tuesday morning. He checked and talked to every patient in the department. He also checked all wounds and discussions were held during this time about therapeutic strategies for cases.
I could watch a lot of operations, and not only hand operations of orthopaedics but also plastic surgeries.
I experienced many local flap and free flap operations that I could not have watched if I had stayed in Japan.

Most interesting operations for me
ORIF for distal radius fracture with arthroscopic
Ligamentoplasty for treatment of chronic scapholunate dissociation
Trapeziectomy-tendon interposition ligamentoplasty for 1st CM arthritis
Local flap for excision of tumor and decubitus
Free musclus latisumus dorsi flap and skin graft
Trapezium flap and skin graft
Total PIP joint replacement, Swanson
Excision of Osborne ligament for Cubital tunnel syndrome

FESSH in Paris
I participated FESSH congress in Paris on 19-21th June and gave a presentation by E-poster.
My poster is "Distal radius fracture far distal to the watershed line".
I watched many interesting presentations.
I participated IBRA's workshop for radius distal fracture. Prof. Krimmer and Dr. Pezzei showed me difficult cases of distal radius fractures and I was excited.
It is very interesting for me to participate this congress.

Acknowledgement
I am much obliged to the IBRA staff and Professor Grünert for this fellowship and opportunity to visit KSSG. Also, many thanks to all the doctors and staff in the Department of Hand Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery of KSSG and IBRA for explanations, kindness, hospitality and helpfulness.