Name: Mehdiyev Turkhan, MD

Country of Citizenship: Austria

Name and Country of Training Center: Banner University Medical Center, Phoenix, Arizona, US

Name of Fellowship Director: Scott Edwards, MD

Scholarship Type: B

Scholarship date: 01.11.2021-30.11.2021

1) What were your professional and personal expectations of the scholarship?

Through this international experience in Phoenix, I expected to further improve my knowledge and expertise in the management of acute and elective hand surgery. It was interesting to experience hand surgery in a different health-care system and compare it with my practical experiences gathered in Innsbruck. I also expected to establish and consolidate professional contacts and clinical research collaboration.

2) What is the main focus of the IBRA training center (in general and of the department) you assisted in?

The Banner University Medical Center provides an emergency orthopedic care for patients as a Level I Trauma Center from metro Phoenix area and beyond (Fig. 1)

Figure 1.: Banner University Medical Center Phoenix

3) What did you do during your scholarship/how were you incorporated in the training center's daily routines/activities?

This scholarship in Phoenix was an exceptional opportunity to observe hand surgeon Dr. Scott Edwards, the Program Director for the Hand, Upper Extremity, and Microsurgical Fellowship Training Program, and his team treating patients with different conditions of upper extremity. I was allowed to accompany Dr Edwards in the first and last week of my scholarship in his practice. He has a team that consists of a Physician Assistant, a Resident, a Hand fellow, and an Intern. Three days a week, Dr. Edwards has outpatient clinics in various medical centers throughout Phoenix. In the outpatient clinics the patients were initially examined by a resident or a fellow and a treatment plan was then discussed with Dr. Edwards. I had the opportunity to witness the examination and be involved in the treatment discussion. On 1 or 2 days a week the team performs upper extremity surgeries in special surgery centers. I was able to observe plating of distal radius fracture with a spanning plate

(Fig.2), osteosynthesis of a metacarpal fracture with a dorsal plate, carpal tunnel release, tendon transfer, elbow fractures and trigger finger release in the OR.

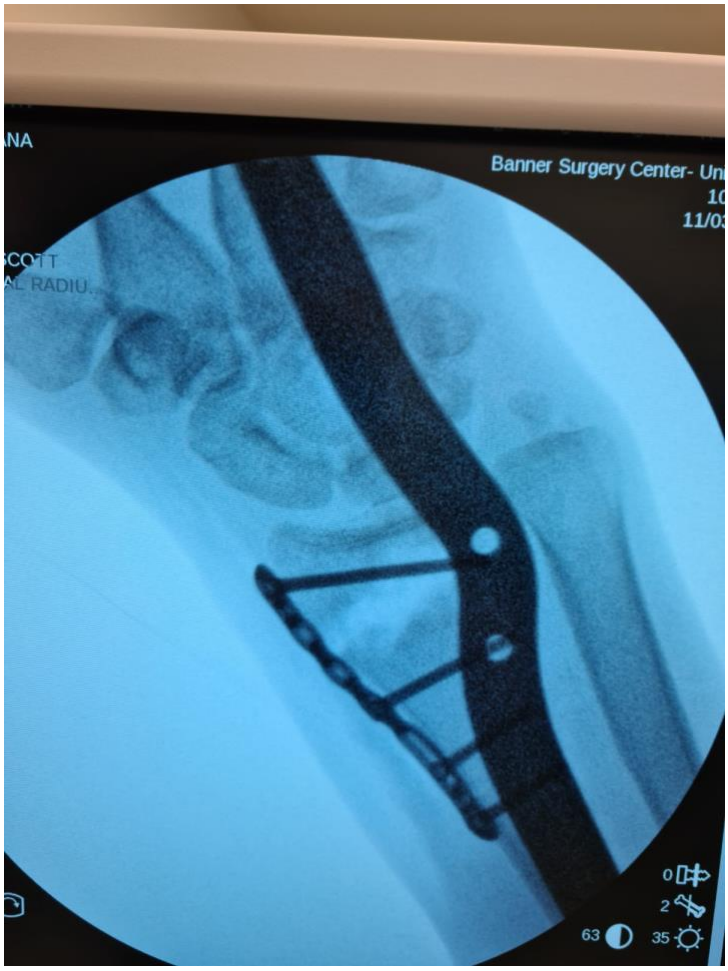

Figure 2.: Osteosynthesis of the forearm fracture with a radial styloid and spanning plate

On one day I could follow a hand fellow and join Dr. Timothy Schaub in the children's hospital and to observe him doing a correction of radius and ulna in a patient with hereditary multiple exostoses (Fig. 3) and reconstructing a severe forearm fracture with a soft tissue defect (Fig. 4), which was very interesting.

Figure 3.: Correction of radius and ulna in a young patient with hereditary multiple exostoses.

Figure 4.: A severe forearm fracture with a soft tissue defect.

For another two weeks, I had the chance to join the plastic surgeon Dr. Andrew Blount and his team at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center. Dr. Blount is an experienced microsurgeon and hand surgeon. I followed him in the clinics and observed him performing microsurgical reconstructions with free flaps after tumor resections or traumas, proximal

raw carpectomy, De Quervain's tendon release, endoscopic carpal tunnel release and microsurgical reconstruction of a nerve with allograft. It was interesting to share and discuss the similarities and differences in plastic and hand surgery trainings and patient in Phoenix compared to Austria.

Educational events were very well integrated into the hand surgery training program. Every Monday there is either an ASSH Self-Assessment or M&M/Indications Conference or Green's Chapter Review, which were very educational and in a relaxed atmosphere.

4) Tips for future scholars

It's essential to plan the trip to Phoenix in advance, especially the housing, which is not provided by the host facility and had to be organized by myself. Best months for visiting Arizona are from October to April due to very high temperatures in summer months. It is essential to rent a car in Phoenix beforehand, as it is not possible to get to all the medical and surgical centers by public transport. Phoenix and surroundings are great destinations for those, who are interested in nature, hiking, good food and museums. You should not miss Sedona and Grand Canyon, once you are in Arizona.

5) Acknowledgment

I am grateful to IBRA as well as Dr. Scott Edwards for this unique chance to complete this scholarship despite the pandemic. Special thanks to Dr. Dana Cruz as well as to Dr. Andrew Blount for their efforts and help.

I would also like to thank Prof. Robert Zimmermann for supporting my application and Prof. Gerhard Pierer, the Head of the Department of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery Innsbruck, making it possible to pursue this scholarship.