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Cancer Research

American Association for Cancer Research was founded in 1907 by a group of 11 physicians and scientists interested in cancer research in the Washington, DC. Today, the AACR is the largest professional organization in the world with a membership of 37 000 researchers from 108 countries. This year, AACR Annual Meeting was organized from the 1th to 5th of April in the birthplace of the organization. I am grateful to the Norsk Biokjemisk Selskap for the support and opportunity to attend that meeting.

Nowadays, AACR Annual Meeting gathers researchers to provide research programs and services expedite the spread of new research findings, promotes science education and training to prevent and treat cancer. Cancer is a generalized name of the more than 200 diseases. The meeting program started with social activity such as “The AACR Runners 5K Run/Walk” to join all participants and their friends and family members to raise funds for cancer research and enjoy a run timing with the sun rises over the American nation’s capital.

The Opening Ceremony of the 108th Annual Meeting marked the start of five days filled with outstanding and innovative science. The AACR President Nancy E. Davidson addressed attendees and discussed the great progress the AACR has made in cancer research over the past year, and today’s challenges in



the cancer field. The meeting was divided into different sessions such as educational, plenary, meet-the-expert, professional advancement, and methods workshops, mini- and major symposia. Each of these sessions consisted of lectures and oral communications. In addition, many exhibiting companies with latest

products and services and more than 1000 posters daily of the poster sessions contributed to the educational value of the meeting.

From the first day I planned my participation in this large conference to get experience, learn and meet with people working on similar is-



sues as me. I am particularly interested at the role of inflammation on cancer development and the effect of immune system in response of tumor cells to anti-cancer therapies. Thus, I participated at the educational session “Cancer Immunology for the Non-Immunologist” and the plenary session “The Immune System and Cancer”. It is clear that inflammation plays an important role at the tumor cell grow initiation and promotion, cancer development and metastasis. The immune system in homeostasis have a distinct influence help to fight infection and cancer and you have a negative result if the immune system is weak or strongly respond to tumor cells or anti-cancer treatment. A human cell dependent on its specificity expresses a few thousand genes from the more than 30 000 genes within our chromosomes.

The minisymposium “Chromatin Structure and Function” was very interesting and informative for me. My doctoral work is to study Merkel cell carcinoma (MCC) and the exosomes released from these cells. I have performed the proteomics characterization of MCC exosomes and I am continue working with their effect on the cell genome. The major symposium “Proteomics Landscape

of Cancer” and the meet-the-expert session “Exosomal MicroRNAs Shape the Immune Response and the Biology of the Tumor Microenvironment” gave me many idea what to do to keep me motivated, use the results from my previous work and how to continue the work to able to confirm the findings.



I presented a poster with results of the exosomal proteins study and their role in Merkel cell polyomavirus-dependent and -independent MCC tumorigenesis. During the session, I had the interesting discussion with people from Center for Cancer Research National Cancer Institute, Washington, DC whostudy the biology of neuroendocrine Merkel cells and the oncogenesis of MCC on mouse

models that I am planning to do. The poster’s sessions were an unique chance to meet researchers with similar topics and challenges as mine and share with experiences and knowledge.

My participation in the AACR meeting gave me a good opportunity to discover the Washington, the political center of USA and a national center of the arts. Many museums such as the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum of Natural History and the National Air and Space Museum located along the National Mall in the Washington City center. Many known monuments such as the Washington Monument, the National World War II Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool located on the mall. Unforgettable days when the flowers of cherry trees are bursting and the city is buried in a pink sea of flowers left a fabulous impression of the Washington, DC.

I would like to thank the NBS and my working group Molecular Inflammation Research Group at the University of Tromsø for funding my participation at this AACR Annual Meeting. I appreciate the opportunity to present my work to an international audience, and to meet other scientists in the same research field.