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## Editorial

## Elsevier/Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism Junior Research Prize in Endocrinology: ENDO 2011 conference report

In June 2011, I was privileged to travel to Boston, MA, to attend ENDO 2011, the Annual Meeting of the American Endocrine Society. Eight months earlier, I had participated in the Elsevier/Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism Junior Research Prize in Endocrinology, a competition open to DPhil students and first-year postdoctoral researchers at the University of Oxford, with a prize of free registration, accommodation, and travel to the ENDO conference. The competition involved the submission of a 300-word abstract describing your contribution to endocrinology research. Four abstracts were selected for oral presentations to a panel of judges and an audience of researchers; and my presentation, entitled "Functional Studies of GATA3 Mutants in Oestrogen Receptor Positive Breast Cancers," was chosen as the winning entry.

ENDO 2011 was a 4-day conference, attended by more than 7800 attendees, with 2600 abstract presentations in addition to plenary lectures, symposia, clinical workshops, meet-the-professor sessions, and career development workshops. The conference examined all areas of endocrinology, from the perspective of basic science, clinical medicine, and translational science, linking the basic and clinical perspective. Topic areas included hormones and cancer, diabetes and metabolism, neuroendocrinology, and membrane receptors and intracellular signaling. The conference included a mixture of new research, summaries of how different areas had changed over the last year, alternative animal models (the use of alligators to study the effects of pollutants on health), as well as a historical lecture on the history of the endocrinology of vitamin D, where the audience was taken on a fascinating journey explaining how studies of vitamin D have progressed over the last 30 years, from both scientific and clinical perspective.

Another large part of the conference was the ENDOExpo, described as the hub of ENDO 2011. This large exhibition area was filled with thousands of research poster presentations, more than 100 exhibiting companies, presentations from The Endocrine Society, cooking demonstrations, and even a relaxation center offering relaxing massages for attendees in between sessions. As part of the social program, we were also treated to "ENDO's Got Talent"—the endocrine world's answer to *Britain's Got Talent*, open to anyone who wanted to perform, and were able to demonstrate our knowledge as part of the ENDO Trivia Cup Challenge.

The Endocrinology Society also demonstrated its awareness of the importance of trainees and early career professionals, such as myself, in the future of endocrine research by providing lots of different opportunities at the conference. These included an Endocrine Trainee Day before the start of the conference; 8 career development workshops, with advice on funding, negotiations, different career paths, and writing a successful career development award application; and a meeting place to exchange ideas, information, and experiences with other young endocrinologists from across the world.

I think that I gained a lot from this opportunity that I was given to attend ENDO 2011. I got to attend many different sessions on both topics relevant to my work, including talks on calcium metabolism, estrogen receptors, and breast cancer, as well as those giving me new perspectives on all the different areas of endocrinology. I was also given the opportunity to present some of my research produced during my DPhil as a poster entitled "The Transcription Factor SOX3 Is a Putative Target Gene of GATA3: Relevance to Hypoparathyroidism and Parathyroid Development." This helped me to develop my presentation skills as well as gave me a chance to discuss my work with different researchers from across the world. Finally, I got to meet with lots of different endocrinologists, discuss new ideas, and see how past research can pave the way to the future.

I am very grateful to Elsevier for funding this opportunity with this very generous prize. Attending a large international meeting such as ENDO is a wonderful experience for any young researcher. I would highly recommend the competition to other graduate students and junior post-doctoral researchers.

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