

# **International Bone Research Association (IBRA)**

## **Cranio Maxillofacial Surgery Fellowship Report IBRA Scholarship Program B**

**Training Center : Hôpital Roger-Salengro**

Department of Cranio-Maxillofacial Surgery

Lille, France

**Director: Professor Joël Ferri**



**Fellow: Christine Sauvé**

**Period: 4 weeks (28.5.2012 – 23.6.2012)**

---

Recently graduated from the postgraduate training program in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at Laval University (Quebec City, Canada), I was looking for a higher educational opportunity, further clinical exposure and advanced learning under the tutorship of experimented surgeons outside my native academic grounds. Wishing to learn new schools of thought, expand the boundaries of my knowledge and see different technical skills, I wanted to travel overseas for a fellowship, and experience a European clinical

perspective. When I looked at the IBRA website, I was pleased with what the training centers had to offer and particularly interested by the program from Hôpital de Lille.

Contacts with local authorities and gratifying stimulation from Professor Ferri strongly encouraged me to pursue my goals and helped me through the necessary steps to gather all required documentation to fulfill my quest. Of course, the IBRA scholarship constitutes a fantastic help for all the expenses encountered. I finally flew, end of May, from Quebec City to Lille. First time in France and first moments of an incredible experience...

On my first day of duty, I received a warm welcome from all the clinic members, interns, staff and of course, Professor Ferri. Within a very short period of time and in the most hospitable manner, I was introduced to all the activities of the department, such as the operative room, the out-patient clinic, the case-discussion meetings and rounds.

In the operative room, I was able to witness a wide variety of treatments and even participate by giving an extra hand. Almost every day, three maxillofacial operative rooms were running full time. In orthognathic surgery, I had the opportunity to visualize a lot of innovative techniques and to learn alternate treatment philosophies. In those four weeks, I familiarized myself with some procedures less frequently performed in my home grounds, such as segmental mandibular osteotomy, total maxillary setback osteotomy and midsymphyseal distraction. Instruments and hardware systems were different from those I was experienced with. As for Professor Ferri, he was well known in the European medico-surgical community for the correction of dentofacial difformities. He was always available and pleased to share his thoughts and experience with all visitors in desire to deepen their knowledge. As a very open minded physician, Professor Ferri was interested by alternate and challenging opinions, frequently asking advice from colleagues and fostering discussions on treatment plans.

At Hôpital Roger-Salengro, there is a significant workload of traumatized patients and suspension wires are currently practiced to reduce facial fractures. Being used to “screw and plate” osteosynthesis, this treatment modality added yet another technical approach to my surgical armamentarium. I also learned about the modified Risdon approach, which is favoured for subcondylar fracture reduction and fixation. In preprosthetic surgery, I was aware that contemporary European practices made ample use of calvarial bone grafts either to restore maxillary bone atrophy in addition to a Lefort 1 osteotomy or to cure alveolar defects in clefts. I was surprised by the ease and rapidity of bone extraction, the low postoperative morbidity and of course, the subtle and hidden scar.

At Laval University in Quebec City, one of the less prominent aspects of our education curriculum is the time allotted to the practice of oncologic reconstructive surgery. I got involved in microvascular flap procedures, bone flap surgeries to restore jaw defects and even aesthetic intervention such as lipofilling to restore facial volume. It was really gratifying to attend surgeries underdeveloped in our institution as well as to participate into interdisciplinary meetings where the most prominent aim and interest was to provide the best treatment option in order to rehabilitate the patient.

During my stay, I had the opportunity to be exposed to many surgical procedures in all fields of oral and maxillofacial surgery. Consequently, I am now apt to compare treatment strategies issued from what I have learned under my North American training to the European practices common in Lille. There is no doubt in my mind that this fellowship oriented me to refine my clinical judgement and to expand the array of treatments I can now consider for patients.

Another worthwhile aspect of my fellowship is that I had the chance to tour and sample a unique socio-geographical panorama while working. Lille is a charming city, fulfilled with arts and cultural activities. I was amazed by the vivacity of “La Grande Place” and the Flanders influence in its

architecture. Walking through the Citadel and “Le Marché de Wazemmes” on Sundays even became a ritual.

Finally, I will address most sincere thanks to Professor Ferri and his team for the great opportunity they provided under their personal and professional hospitality. As a young maxillofacial surgeon, this fellowship not only allowed me to acquire new knowledge and gain valuable tools, but it also expanded and influenced positively my own person and mind. I will also extend my gratitude to IBRA for the scholarship through which this wonderful experience was made possible.