



ACG GRANT RECIPIENT RECEIVES ADVANCED TRAINING IN ENDOSCOPIC SUBMUCOSAL DISSECTION IN TOKYO

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WITH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE 2016 ACG NORTH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL TRAINING GRANT, I had the honor of learning endoscopic submucosal dissection (ESD) from the endoscopic masters at Jikei University School of Medicine in Tokyo, Japan. After my general gastroenterology fellowship, I will be completing a fellowship in therapeutic endoscopy, as the field provides an array of techniques that allow for both early detection of malignancy and curative interventions. I have developed a keen interest in ESD, as it is a technique that may provide an ideal method for en bloc resection of early colorectal and other gastrointestinal neoplasms. While I wish I could have stayed for a longer period at Jikei, the weeks that I spent there were incredibly educational and inspirational.

While I initially felt trepidation about training in another country where I was unable to speak the language, my fears were allayed immediately once I met the individuals who would serve as my primary mentors during the experience. Drs. Hisao Tajiri, Kazuki Sumiyama, Tomohiko Ohya, and Naoto Tamai were the architects of my experience at Jikei University. They immediately set out to make me feel welcome and developed an engaging schedule for each day. Every person I encountered—from faculty to trainees to the endoscopy staff—was extremely helpful and eager to ensure that I achieved the objectives of my trip.

During my time at Jikei University, I learned about the performance of ESD through didactics, observation of procedures, and practice in porcine models with direct guidance from one of the ESD masters at Jikei. The Jikei endoscopists relied heavily on visual diagnosis using advanced imaging techniques and, with their guidance, I have incorporated many of these principles into my own

practice. One of the most valuable conferences was the weekly multi-disciplinary conference during which time providers would discuss the following week's scheduled ESD cases and follow up on previously performed ESD cases. During these sessions, I learned the nuances of ESD indications, pre-procedural assessment, complications, and the importance of a strong collaboration with surgical colleagues.

I cannot adequately express my gratitude to the American College of Gastroenterology for providing me the support for this opportunity, my hosts at Jikei University for making me feel like a part of the Jikei family, and my mentors at the University of Pennsylvania for encouraging my pursuit of this unique opportunity. Not only have I gained an invaluable skill, but I am also proud to have gained many lifelong friends and colleagues at Jikei University. Domo arigato gozaimasu!

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Photos courtesy of Dr. Gene Ma (center).

