**Report on DC2012: The 12th International Symposium on Dendritic Cells, EXCO, Daegu, Korea**

**October 7th – 11th 2012**

The DC2012 meeting was always going to have particular poignancy. In 2011 Ralph M. Steinman - an inspirational Scientist, Immunologist and Physician - shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his discovery and characterization of dendritic cells (DCs)- a critical population of innate immune cells. Sadly this immense achievement occurred almost simultaneously with Prof. Steinman’s death. Nevertheless, the DC2012 meeting highlighted the vast strides made in the DC field since his seminal work in the 1970’s, and the travel award from the Pathological Society allowed me to participate in this historic event.

The meeting was held in Daegu, Republic of Korea, which proved a unique and extremely interesting city to explore and experience. Investigating the vast array of (incredibly spicy!) foods on offer was particularly enjoyable. The programme comprised a mixture of clinically focused and fundamental immunology presentations from invited speakers, short talks by early-career scientists and several highly interactive poster sessions.

There were several scientific highlights of the meeting. **Ira Mellman** (Genentech, USA) and **Jacques Bancheraeu** (Baylor University, USA) discussed their work investigating the potential of targeting DC *in vivo* for effective anti-cancer therapies and vaccines against infectious disease, showing the true translatability of fundamental DC biology to the clinic. **Caetano reis e Sousa** (CRUK LRI, UK) gave a fascinating lecture on new work from his laboratory re-defining the DC developmental lineage in mice and **Steffen Jung** (Weizmann Institute, Israel) described studies revealing the novel contributions of monocytes, macrophages and dendritic cells to intestinal immunology at homeostasis and during inflammation. **Li Wu** (WEHI, Australia & Tsingua, China) presented data concerning the regulation of DC development and function by micro-RNAs, which had particular relevance to projects that form part of my postdoctoral fellowship at Oxford. **Frank Nestle** (King’s College, UK) and **Matthew Collin** (Newcastle University, UK) presented their work on human DC subsets, with Prof. Nestle describing a new subset of immunoregulatory CD141+ IL-10-producing DCs that is found in human skin and Prof. Collin focusing on data concerning the developmental origins of human DCs. Other highlights included **Marco Collona** (Columbia, USA) speaking on IL-34 and microglial cells, **Wenjun Ouyang** (Genentech, USA) presenting new data on the regulation of intestinal inflammation by IL-18 and NRROS and **Bart Lambrecht** (Ghent, Belgium) discussing his work on DCs in pulmonary inflammation.

I am extremely grateful to the Pathological Society for the opportunity to attend and present my work at such an enjoyable and international meeting.

***Dr. Benjamin M.J. Owens*** *is an**Oxford – UCB Pharma Postdoctoral Fellow, Translational Gastroenterology Unit, Nuffield Department of Medicine, University of Oxford, John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford.* *benjamin.owens@jesus.ox.ac.uk**.*