

Dr James Jin Sup Yun (Immunopathology) 2010 RCPA Foundation Travel Grant

Project title: Investigate the immunopathogenesis of drug hypersensitivity involving in vitro experiments with human PBMC with a focus on T cell interactions with drugs. PhD programme at the University Hospital, University of Bern, Switzerland under the supervision of Prof. Werner Pichler and Dr Daniel Yerly - commencing in March 2011.

“It was a great honour to receive 2010 RCPA Travel Grant for my doctoral studies at the University of Bern, Switzerland, under the supervision of Prof. Werner Pichler, a leading expert in the field of drug hypersensitivity. I considered this a ‘once in a life time’ opportunity as I was able to learn from encyclopaedic knowledge of Prof. Pichler. The Travel Grant was used primarily for relocating to Bern with my family. While it was a financially difficult decision, pursuing PhD in Europe allowed me to establish international networks with the experts in the field which I hope to expand in the future. My project explored how drugs interact with T cell receptors and HLA molecules, using allopurinol and HLA-B*58:01 as a model. As a part of the project, I was able to learn various in vitro methods to study the role of T cells in drug hypersensitivity. Building on these foundations, I hope to establish in vitro diagnostic tests for drug hypersensitivity in Australian setting.”