

Min Song – GWIS Travel Award Report

The Graduate Women in Science Travel Award funded my trip to the Retrovirus Meeting in Cold Spring Harbor in May of 2007. This meeting was a platform for discussing new discoveries about retrovirus. Conference attendees represented the research on retrovirus from a variety of different aspects. Since I am working on retroviral replication, attendance at this meeting enabled me to remain updated of the latest progress in my field, which was instructive and helpful for our research in the future.

The meeting consisted of a series of seminars, which were categorized into a number of sections, including three poster sessions. Each seminar series included the latest research in a specific field. I was pretty impressed by how exciting their work was and how clearly they presented it within a limited amount of time. Not only did I learn a lot within my specific field, but I also leaned a lot from the broader field of Retrovirology. In addition, the question session after each talk was very important since I could learn how to view the results from different perspectives. The poster sessions provided all the attendees with a great opportunity to communicate with each other, and exchange ideas on specific questions, particularly with those working in my field.

I was chosen to present a poster on my latest project. This was a great chance for me to practice how to prepare and present my work to an audience of experts. Also, communicating with those experts and talking about science was an invaluable experience. I spoke with students, post-doctoral fellows, and even some faculty members that I had always been looking forward to talking to from other scientific institutions all over the world. I walked them through my poster, explaining the result, and answering their questions. Excitingly, the back-and-forth discussion always brought in new ideas from a different perspective, which was of great importance for my future research.

In addition, I benefited a lot from talking to people during the intermission or over dinner. It was very nice talking about science in such an easy and relaxed atmosphere. Also, it was a great chance to set up collaborations with the experts attending from all over the world, keeping updated of what was going on for each side, and coming up with the best plan for future cooperation.

Finally, I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Bambara, my lab mates, and all of our collaborators, for their tremendous help on my scientific research. Also, I am grateful for the support from Graduate Women in Science to allow me to attend this stimulating meeting.