

WMG *Continued*

more senior women to discuss anything. Those desiring mentorship submit key questions in advance, are matched with a mentor and introduced via email so that they can set up at least two occasions to meet during the annual meeting. The demand was incredible and a great experience for all parties.

ViOptix has generously funded two travel scholarships for the Women's Microsurgery Group, in order to foster early interest in reconstruction microsurgery for women medical students or residents who would not normally be attending the meeting. The successful recipients were Katherine Santosa, a Plastic Surgery Resident at University of Michigan Hospitals who is currently completing a post-doctoral fellowship at Washington University, and Jeanette Man, a medical student from Medical College of Wisconsin Class of 2017. Jeanette has provided her reflections in a column to follow this report, and we look forward to their continued success.

Moving forward, ViOptix has graciously committed to continued support for two WMG Travel Scholarship Awards for the next 5 years. Information for submitting an application is available on the ASRM website, both through 'Women's Microsurgery Group' and 'Grant Opportunity & Awards' links. Applications should be submitted by October of 2016.

One of the charges of the WMG is to enhance networks among other society's women's groups. With this in mind, I would like to bring to your attention a session that will be held on Friday, September 23, 2016 at "Plastic Surgery: The Meeting 2016" in Los Angeles. This is a special 3-hour symposium about Diversity and Cultural Competence in the Workplace that has been designed by the American Council of Academic Plastic Surgeons (ACAPS) Women Academic Surgeon Task Force in collaboration with the American Society of Plastic Surgeons Women Plastic Surgeons (ASPS WPS) Forum and the ASRM WMG.

The WMG Committee needs more female members to serve as mentors. This is an enriching opportunity—please contact me directly at [joan.lipa@sunnybrook.ca](mailto:joan.lipa@sunnybrook.ca) if you are interested in getting involved as a mentor at the 2017 ASRM annual meeting or have suggestions for shaping the future of the WMG. **RM**



*Jeanette Man, MD Candidate*

## Reflections from a ViOptix Travel Fellowship Winner

Attending the ASRM 2016 Conference as one of the Women's Microsurgery Group ViOptix travel scholarship recipients was the most humbling and reaffirming experience I have had so far as a medical student. Since high school anatomy, I have always seen plastic surgery as the ultimate artwork and this meeting confirmed that microsurgery was the necessary technique. I am forever grateful for this opportunity and cannot express my gratitude enough. I am determined to one day take a more active role in both WMG and ASRM by becoming a mentor to the younger generation, a leader in discovering new research findings, and an innovator of new techniques.

The most important message I received from this experience is to believe in myself. It was a theme that was constantly present in everyone I talked with and in several talks I attended. As a third year student who is close to applying for residency that will determine her future career, I have at times felt self doubt in face of all the stress and uncertainty. However within minutes of meeting Dr. Julie Park, who I was fortunate to be paired with as my WMG mentor, what she said that struck me the most was to believe in myself. As one of the chosen recipients out of many undoubtedly qualified applicants, I

**TRAVEL FELLOWSHIP WINNER***Continued*

realized there is a reason why they decided to give me this opportunity and thus not only have hope for me but also invest in me. They gave me confidence which is one of the greatest gifts I can ask for.

Subsequently, one of my favorite meetings was “Negotiating from a Chief’s Perspective” which was held by WMG. There was a fantastic, fiery debate between Dr. Susan MacKinnon and Dr. David Song that focused on different gender views. It was incredible seeing through the eyes of such an admirable female and male pioneer whose presence you can both feel from tables away. Dr. Susan MacKinnon

**The most important message  
I received from this experience  
is to believe in myself.**

emphasized that you have to want something in order to continue to pursue it as a passion—to keep enduring despite suffering. Dr. David Song emphasized understanding your self-worth and never selling yourself short—you always deserve better. These are key points I will hold dearly to myself as I advance further in my career.

Last but not least, I was most shocked by all the support, advice, and opportunities I received through the countless people I met from all different steps in their career—from the chair of WMG (Dr. Julie Park), a fellow (Dr. Kuylhee Kim), a resident (Dr. Katherine Santosa), an upcoming fourth year medical student (Afaaf Shakir), and many more of their acquaintances. Having understanding and supportive mentors has been critical for my growth and I

am fortunate to have met so many in various stages of their career. Their impact on me was substantial, whether we talked for only a few minutes in the hallway, over dinner, or through the night long after our bedtime. I have formed so many connections, mentorships, and friendships that I will never forget. Their encouragement and belief in me were sincerely heartwarming and soothing. It is my goal to have such an impact on others throughout my career.

I want to say thank you again to WMG, ViOptix, and everyone that has influenced me for this life altering opportunity, for confirming my dream to become a plastic and reconstructive microsurgeon, and for making me believe in myself in times of uncertainty. And to all those aspiring to become something greater, I ask you to believe in yourself as well.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Man, MD Candidate  
*Medical College of Wisconsin  
Class of 2017*



*Jeanette Man (right), with Dr. Isao Koshima (center) and Dr. Kuylhee Kim*