

APF ATS Report

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The 2019 American Thoracic Society International Conference was held in Dallas, Texas, USA, at the Kay Bailey Hutchinson convention centre. The ATS hosted abundant presentations, a large poster session and a vast exhibit hall of industry experts, spanning all three floors of the convention centre (as well as creeping into two other hotels!), over the course of six days.

Though the size seemed daunting for a first-time attendee, this scale meant that the conference offered many fantastic opportunities. There were both clinical and science focussed sessions and talks relevant to my research, such as the sessions 'Cell fate determination in the lung in health and disease' and 'Using the basic biology of IPF to design new therapies'.

Large thematic poster sessions spanned three days and covered a wide variety of respiratory topics. This is where I also had the opportunity to present my research 'Dexamethasone Induces Senescence in A549 Cells: Relevance to Pulmonary Fibrosis'. I received lots of positive feedback and ideas from other fellow scientists from different institutions across the globe.

The ATS also provided spaces for young professionals to connect and network, as well as improve skills with relevant skill focused workshops in the 'Science and Innovation Centre'. I also took advantage of the mentor/mentee programme offered and was able to get career and research advice from an inspiring female research scientist.

Overall, the opportunity to attend the ATS has been invaluable in improving my knowledge and skills as a young scientist in the respiratory field. This would not have been possible without funding awards which I am very thankful and grateful for. I would encourage anyone with the opportunity to attend future ATS conferences to do so!

