

The 10th imMed retreat: Science, Sports and Socializing in Solothurn

Marta Bombardó and Gladys Filliat

Any Monday morning in Zurich looks the same - but June 1, 2015 was an exception. Around 65 students from the imMed PhD Program met at Zurich Hauptbahnhof. We all had the same objective: enjoying the long-awaited two days of the → 10th annual retreat of our PhD program.

This year our destination was Solothurn, Switzerland's finest baroque town. At the Youth Hostel in Solothurn we were warmly welcomed with coffee and croissants. The beautiful location at the river Aare and the wonderful weather were ideal for first interactions between the PhD students. After getting to know each other the scientific part of the retreat was opened by the members of the Commission of the imMed PhD Program and Peter Achermann from the Steering Committee of the ZIHP.

The first presentation session where some of us presented their exciting PhD projects covered a broad variety of topics from *in-vitro* experiments to *in-vivo* applications.

A delicious lunch lifted our glucose level and reboosted our energy to discuss our fellow students' posters and discover more about Solothurn's picturesque old town before we met



again in the conference room for the second part of the scientific presentations.

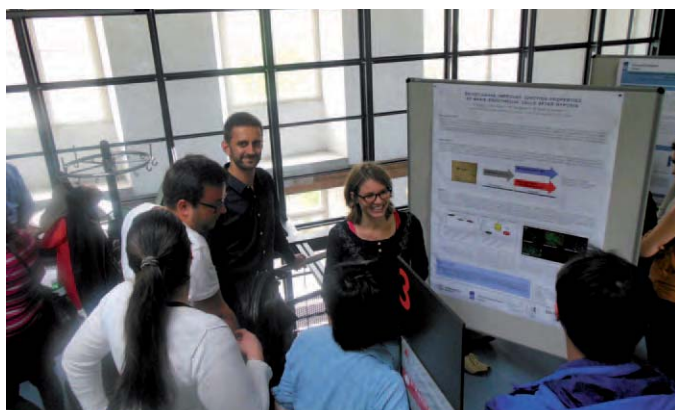
Later in the afternoon Roger Gförer from the Career Services UZH gave an inspiring talk on ways and strategies on how to “push luck” to find an exciting job after our PhD.

To close off the first day of the retreat, we were invited to an outdoor aperitif and award ceremony. The prizes went to Esther Gottwald for the best presentation «The iron chelator deferiasirox induces kidney toxicity via mitochondrial dysfunction or how to make mitochondria flash» and Fabrizio Lucchini for the best poster «The role of apoptosis signal-regulating kinase 1 (ASK1) in the development of obesity-associated insulin resistance». Congratulations to both of them! The evening con-

tinued with a dinner and we were all in a social mood for further scientific and non-scientific exchanges! We had a lot of fun.

Now, we were looking forward to the adventure on Tuesday at Seilpark Balmberg. The second day was fully dedicated to increase our networking. After all the safety instructions and rules such as how to put on our harness and carabineers, we were ready to play like monkeys! All of us had a great time testing our limits on the different routes and memorizing our ancestral origins. The intense morning full of fun and adrenaline ended with an amazing barbecue and a well-deserved rest.

It was a wonderful experience! It is not easy to get to know PhD students from other labs located all over Zurich, personally and professionally. Since all of us have different projects, the exchange of ideas, points of view and experiences was the most valuable point of this imMed retreat. The time away from the lab and the daily PhD schedule was very well invested! One more time, many thanks to all the organizers for these two great days!



Poster session at the Youth Hostel Solothurn

→ Photo album of the 10th imMed Retreat