



Gordon Research Conference (February 12-17, 2023)



The Gordon Research Conference is an international event focused on biological, chemical, physical and engineering sciences and is held every two years, this year taking place in Galveston, Texas. The topic this year was “The Cellular Effects and Regulation of Phosphate Homeostasis”, which was especially relevant for me, as my PhD project focuses on the intestinal paracellular absorption of phosphate. As the organizers only allowed 200 attendees, the conference had more of a relaxed atmosphere than I had expected, with professors, grad students and postdocs all sitting randomly next to each other during meals and presentations. Apart from scientific discussions, I have met several very nice fellow grad students whom I’m still in contact with on social media.

While the program of the 4.5 day-conference was tight, with presentations going on until 9:30 in the evening (made harder to follow by the jetlag from traveling between continents), I had the chance to listen to several genuinely great talks. Of course, of these talks I enjoyed most the ones overlapping with my project (that is, the presentations focusing on intestinal phosphate absorption), and it was very interesting for me to listen to presentations detailing papers that I had read only shortly before the conference, and to hear the results explained by the author himself. I presented a poster on the first two days of the conference, and I had the chance to discuss my results and further research plans with several professors in the field. Additionally, a professor discussing my results raised my hopes up quite a bit by telling me he recently had very promising preliminary results with a protein we are also planning to investigate in the very near future.

To be able to attend the Gordon Research Conference as a first year-PhD Student was definitely a privilege. It is something that I’m incredibly thankful for, to both my supervisor, Prof. Carsten Wagner, as well as the BioMed PhD Program who, by awarding me the Travel Grant, made it possible for me take part in a prestigious conference that I certainly will not easily forget.