



I was so excited to be drawn as an alternate in the contest for funding to attend the CAMRT Annual General Conference. Thanks so much to the SAMRT because the experience didn't disappoint!

I arrived on Thursday April 27<sup>th</sup>, to sunny, 26° C weather. The Conference location was awesome – downtown Ottawa has a lot of offer and I was able to take advantage of the nearby attractions. I toured the Parliament Buildings, The Royal Canadian Mint, National

Art Gallery of Canada, ByWard Market, Rideau Canal and Sparks Street. These were all within walking distance, not to mention the huge mall (Yay!) connected to the Westin Hotel. Lucky for me, I was there during Poutine Festival- Mmmm!

The Conference was held at the Westin Hotel – a beautiful venue with lots of gathering space and some delicious meals and snacks provided during the Conference. As an RT, you know I appreciate my food!

I feel everyone should make an effort to attend a CAMRT Conference. Besides being excellent for networking, it enables you to evaluate your department techniques and procedures against those being used across the country – it inspires you to strive to improve and celebrate your advancements.

One of the most important parts of attending the CAMRT Conference is the self-evaluation you do. The lectures inspire you to want to do research, implement change within your department, pursue education opportunities and better yourself professionally. Seeing what others are doing makes you want to strive higher for patients in your own department.

I attended many intriguing and thought provoking talks. 3D Printing Techniques to Improve Radiation Treatment and Patient Care – which gave some interesting insights into the future applications and spurred discussion on who is currently using 3D Printing for bolus applications. I attended a couple of lectures by SAMRT member Joyce Warren: The Learning Curve-Implementing a Prostate HDR Program and Radiation Therapy and Patient Anxiety. She provided some great insight into challenges when implementing new programs with multidisciplinary teams. The second lecture included a demo on hypnotizing, which was fascinating. I was particularly interested in RTT Role Using Image Guidance Ultrasound for Gynecological Brachytherapy Procedures because I work with brachytherapy gynecology patients in our department. I learned so much from other lectures such as Deep Inspiration Breath Hold: Designing a Pilot Protocol-used for left sided breast cancer patients, and many others such as What do Radiation Therapists know about Patient Anxiety- International Results, Radioisotope Therapy of Bone Metastases, Errors In Radiation Therapy, Breast Techniques Comparison, A Good Death-Palliative Care, Patient Adverse Events After Seed Implant (for prostate patients), Breast Cancer Pathology, Reconstructed Doses Delivered to Radiation Therapy Patients. It was a well-rounded offering of topics.

Friday and Saturday were jam packed with tons of speakers and topics. One of my favorite lectures was by a guest speaker from the ASRT-Regina Ley. She was an excellent speaker with a lecture about volunteerism in Nairobi as a Radiation Therapist: Hakuna Matata-My Journey into Community Global Outreach. I didn't realize it was even possible to volunteer as an RT, and she provided some fascinating insight into what is happening in RT in Kenya and some of the challenges they are facing.

Attending the Annual General Meeting was a good way to keep up on current hot topics for the CAMRT. I found it particularly ironic that as I was enjoying the Conference so much, the attendance has been low for several years and the CAMRT is looking for ways to increase attendance including possibly amalgamating with other large conferences.

The Sunday Lectures included two highly entertaining and engaging speakers. The first I attended was Gretchan Conrad, a psychologist who spoke on Technostress – Understanding and Managing the Impact of Technology: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly. A highly relevant topic as we deal with so much technology in both our work and our personal lives. The next was an Oncologist from Ottawa, Dr. Samant who spoke on Cancer and Humor and how humor can be used in the clinic if used appropriately. It was a great way to end off a weekend of learning.

Many thanks to those who organized the CAMRT Conference and again to the SAMRT for this great opportunity. It was a wonderful experience.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Bernauer, RTT