

INTERNATIONAL

East meets West through ASGE Ambassador Program in Taipei, Taiwan



In February 2012, four ASGE Ambassadors traveled to Taipei, Taiwan, to train 39 physicians from Taiwan and other southeastern Asian countries during a six-day program, which was carried out in collaboration with the Digestive Endoscopy Society of Taiwan (DEST) and two local ASGE Ambassadors.

The program provided endoscopic training in basic and advanced endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) through didactic lectures, hands-on training using mechanical ERCP simulators and observing local experts and ASGE Ambassadors perform ERCP at seven hospitals throughout Taipei. Approximately 40 patients were treated during the program.



As a result of this program, DEST now has a working model with which to establish a formal ERCP training and credentialing program in Taiwan.

The ASGE members and local Taiwanese doctors who offered their time and expertise were: **Joseph W. Leung, MD, FASGE**, University of California Davis Medical Center, Sacramento; **David Wei-Chih Liao, MD, MSc,*** National Taiwan University Hospital, Taiwan, R.O.C.; **Jaw-Town Lin, MD, PhD**, National Taiwan University Hospital, Taiwan, R.O.C.; **James M.**

Scheiman, MD, FASGE, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; **Shou Jiang Tang, MD**, University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson; and **Andrew Y. Wang, MD**, University of Virginia, Charlottesville. *Dr. Liao was the local ambassador who coordinated all of the educational efforts in Taipei.

Planning is currently underway for future Ambassador Programs. For more information or to contribute to future programs, visit the [ASGE Ambassador Program](#) or contact Holly Becker, assistant director, International Programs, via email at hbecker@asge.org or telephone at 630-570-5631.

The ASGE Ambassador Program would not be possible without the grant funding and equipment provided by ASGE industry partners: Pentax Medical Company, Olympus Corporation of the Americas and Cook Medical.

Reports from the Ambassadors

by David Wei-Chih Liao, MD, MSc

Some trainees mentioned that before attending the program, they often were not sure how to perform an ERCP correctly. The ASGE Ambassador Program greatly improved their understanding and skills.

The ASGE Ambassador Program was the first formal, start-up training program on ERCP in Taiwan, and it was very successful not only in teaching trainees, but also in exchanging ideas and developing new thoughts about ERCP training. I hope this experience will be useful for improving future ERCP training in Taiwan as well as in other countries.

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“The ASGE Ambassador Program establishes a friendship bridge between ASGE and other international endoscopy societies. I grew up in Asia and then received medical training in the West, so the opportunity to go back to the East was particularly important to me.”

Dr. Tang

by Shou Jiang Tang, MD

The whole experience in Taiwan was fascinating. We trained about 40 gastroenterology fellows and practicing endoscopists from Taiwan and surrounding Southeast Asian countries in ERCP.

We also visited several hospitals in Taipei and openly exchanged ideas and experiences with Taiwanese experts and endoscopists. We were overwhelmed by their hospitality. I was also impressed by their local expertise, work ethic and busy clinical schedules. The GI fellows we interacted with were eager to learn and worked very hard.

This “East meets West” experience in ERCP training and education generated many thoughts and ideas among the faculty and local experts about providing efficient and effective endoscopic training. I hope the impact of this program will create long-lasting improvements in endoscopy training, both in Asia and in the U.S.

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by Andrew Y. Wang, MD

It was a joy and privilege to be part of an esteemed group of American interventional endoscopists and ASGE members that included Drs. Joseph Leung, Jim Scheiman and Shou Jiang Tang. As a Taiwanese-American gastroenterologist, I found it particularly fulfilling to meet and work with DEST, its local ambassadors — Prof. Lin and Dr. Liao — and several experienced Taiwanese ERCP endoscopists.



I sincerely believe that the Ambassador Program, which was a true partnership between the ASGE and DEST, had a significant educational impact on the attendees, including Taiwanese GI fellows and experienced non-Taiwanese endoscopists from other Asian countries (many of whom are high-volume ERCP endoscopists who train physicians in their respective countries).

The week-long program concluded with an important “East-Meets-West” forum, during which we shared our observations and suggestions with DEST and Taiwanese ambassadors, with the intent of helping to establish meaningful guidelines for ERCP training in Taiwan and to assist in the eventual development of nationwide quality metrics.

I am grateful to our Taiwanese hosts for their kindness and hospitality and, most of all, for their willingness to exchange ideas. I felt that it was a very opportune time for us to visit Taiwan, as our trip coincided with the Chinese Lunar New Year celebration that signified the beginning of the Year of the Dragon.

