

INTERNATIONAL

South America and Scandinavia were on the fall itinerary



ASGE's strategic initiative to increase the society's presence internationally took the ASGE Learning Center and Exhibit booth to South America and Scandinavia this past fall.

For the first time, videos from ASGE's Endoscopic Learning Library and the ASGE Exhibit booth traveled to Gastro 2011 Rosario, the Argentinean Congress of Gastroenterology and Digestive Endoscopy, held Sept. 1–3. During the Congress, attendees visited the ASGE Learning Center and Exhibit booth to sign up for ASGE membership, gather information on ASGE activities and view eight DVDs from the ASGE Endoscopic Learning Library. Attendees were delighted that the ASGE Learning Center was present during the workshops and returned to watch many videos throughout the meeting.

In October, the ASGE Exhibit Booth traveled to Stockholm, Sweden, for the first time to participate in the popular United European Gastroenterology Week, UEGW Stockholm 2011. The event drew more than 14,000 attendees.

In November, ASGE participated for the first time in X-SBAD, Brazilian Digestive Disease Week, which was held in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Over 5,000 attendees were present at the Congress, and attendees were able to purchase DVDs onsite and sign up for membership.

The society continues to look at countries outside of the U.S. that can benefit from the videos in the ASGE Endoscopic Learning Library, along with other international initiatives. Look for ASGE in your area!

If you have any questions regarding international membership initiatives or the ASGE Learning Center being presented at your local conference, please contact Holly Becker, manager, International Member Relations at hbecker@asge.org.

First-hand reports from Ecuador



Kulwinder S. Dua, MD, FASGE

"Having started my career in a hospital with limited resources and then having the opportunity to train in centers of excellence, it was always my desire to offer my services to those in need of additional training. Rather than invite one or two candidates to our centers, I knew that the impact would be much greater if we could travel to countries where such training is not readily available and teach a cohort of gastroenterologists who, in turn, could then mentor others. This is precisely what we accomplished through the opportunity given to us by the ASGE Ambassador Program in Ecuador.

Through lectures, video clips and live procedures, the program successfully achieved its goal. In three days we performed over 55 endoscopies, which included basic to complex procedures (removal of large colon polyps, variceal banding and glue injection, treatment of refractory esophageal strictures, ampullectomy and complex pancreatico-biliary interventions). Besides live transmission, participants were also given opportunities for individualized instructions. The support staff were excellent, and very soon the clinical setting became a family atmosphere."

Dayna Early, MD, FASGE

"Being a practicing academic gastroenterologist for over 15 years has certainly provided me with many opportunities to feel enriched and enthused as a physician and an educator. Few experiences, if any, however compare to my recent experience as an ASGE Ambassador to Cuenca, Ecuador. Certainly every day was full of new experiences and included meeting many interesting people.

One of the most delightful aspects of the trip for me was the camaraderie we developed with the Ecuadorian gastroenterologists. I really admired their experience, knowledge and zeal for learning. They were committed to learning as much from us as they could in three days, and we tried to teach them as much as we could.

Attendees included 30 gastroenterologists from all over Ecuador, representing a variety of practice settings and with diverse access to technology. They all shared an intense desire to learn and to interact with us during live cases and to provide the best care for their patients. Many of the live cases were patients referred by physicians who attended the course, allowing for dialogue about patient management during the live case. During breaks between lectures and cases, we talked about technology, diseases and endoscopic techniques and tried to learn a little about one another. By the conclusion of the course, the ASGE Ambassadors and the Ecuadorian gastroenterologists embraced each other as colleagues, knowing that we had just had a once-in-a-lifetime experience." ●