

**Keystone Symposium: Epigenetics and Human Disease: Progress from Mechanisms to Therapeutics
January 29—February 2, 2017, Seattle, Washington, USA**

I attended the Keystone Symposium “Epigenetics and Human Disease: Progress from Mechanisms to Therapeutics” in Seattle. This meeting was organized to discuss the most current knowledge on epigenetic events (gene expression regulation, enhancer modulation, regulatory domains, and structural organization), and to relate this to developmental and disease models. Additionally, this meeting focused on the use of epigenetic therapeutics in preclinical and clinical studies for the treatment of several diseases. The meeting was set-up with an everyday morning program (8.30 -12.00) and a late afternoon/evening program (16.30 – 22.00). This was a very good schedule, as the afternoon break allowed me to explore the city, interact with other attendees, and ensured that I was energized again for the evening program.

The meeting was very relevant for my personal research, which focusses on understanding the epigenetic alterations associated with autoimmune diseases. In addition, I am exploring strategies to target epigenetic alterations within autoimmune disease patient-derived cells. Therefore, the presentations focusing on the use of epigenetic therapeutics were highly interesting for me. Many speakers shared recently published or unpublished work, often obtained by novel, state-of-the-art techniques, which motivated the audience to ask questions. This, together with the relatively small scale of the meeting (approx. 300 participants) generated a positive and interactive atmosphere.

I was given the opportunity to present my work in an oral presentation as well as a poster presentation. As there were many experts in the field of epigenetics and all sessions were plenary, it was a great opportunity to share my results and to get valuable feedback. The majority of the participants was working on epigenetics in relation to cancer or neurological disorders, and therefore it was interesting to compare and discuss my results on autoimmune diseases with their findings. During the conference, there was ample opportunity to interact with other attendees who were working in academia, industry or at scientific journals. Especially the latter was interesting since I never had a chance to talk with a scientific editor before, and I did not know exactly what tasks and competences this job required.

Altogether, I really enjoyed attending this Keystone Symposium as it greatly improved my knowledge on epigenetics and made me aware of all kinds of research that is being done within this field. Therefore, I thank the Dutch Society for Immunology for their financial support which allowed me to participate in this meeting.