

34th FACSS, Memphis, Tennessee, October 2007 – Sarah Hill, University of Surrey

With thanks to the Atomic Spectroscopy Group Travel Grant, I was able to attend the 34th FACSS (Federation of Analytical Chemistry and Spectroscopic Societies) conference held in Memphis, Tennessee from 14th – 18th October 2007. I gave an oral presentation about my PhD research entitled “Boron in Environmental and Human Hair Samples from Argentina, South America.” My talk raised several questions after the session and I gained some useful advice from the audience.

I also attended the poster sessions which was a fascinating and informal way to see the variety of projects and ideas currently being undertaken in the area of analytical chemistry including deep sea Raman probes, trace element analysis of placental tissue and phosphorus in stool samples. The atomic spectroscopy oral presentation sessions also involved a diverse array of speakers discussing all aspects of the field. There was a strong focus on biological analysis and the use of ETV-ICP-MS.

The grant also helped to fund a workshop entitled “Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry Advanced Topics” given by Prof. R.S. Houk, who is considered to be one of the pioneers of the technique. It was full of useful information and helped to give an insight into the complexities of the instrumentation.

Overall, the conference was a very valuable learning experience and will certainly be helpful for my future career. It was also a fantastic networking opportunity to meet peers, respected experts and industry reps. I even met Elvis! I am very grateful to the Atomic Spectroscopy Group for the financial support to attend this event.