



## **Report on the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland International Bursary Award, 2009**

**Dr Miriam Maimbo**

I went through medical school not quite knowing what to specialize in until I did a rotation in General Surgery under the supervision of Dr R Zulu and realized at the end of it that I did not want to leave. The desire to acquire surgical skills has grown ever since and I have not regretted the decision to become a surgeon.

The department of surgery at the hospital where I am training is organized and offers a postgraduate program that is well coordinated and offers numerous opportunities.

This year I had the opportunity to apply for an International Bursary Award that is offered by the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland in conjunction with the Overseas Surgical Fellowship Group and the British Journal of Surgery Society and I was delighted when I got the news that I had been given this award.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May I left for Scotland to attend the International Surgical Congress in Glasgow at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre. The award allowed for us to be hosted at two hospitals (by us I mean the five other recipients that were from Kenya, Uganda, Ghana and Sri-Lanka) in Glasgow for two days.

I was part of the group that went to The Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley where we met by Mr. Ken Mitchell. He showed us around the hospital and introduced us to other members of staff. There after we were allowed to join different groups that were of interest to us. I joined the group of doctors performing colonoscopies, they taught and guided me through how procedures are performed. I also had the opportunity to have a go at the simulator that teaches one how to perform colonoscopies, endoscopies, and laparoscopic surgery. I had only had an opportunity to use an endo-trainer previously through a course organized by Ethicon and the surgical society of Zambia so this was a huge opportunity for me.

There were several things that I learnt and got a chance to observe that I had only read about. The members of staff were very friendly and really took time to teach us and

answer questions that we had. We were also hosted by Mr. Ken Mitchell at a restaurant in Princess Square for dinner on the first night. This gave me an opportunity to mingle with the consultants and other surgical trainees from the hospital over a lovely meal.

The Conference was for three days and was so well organized. It gave me the opportunity to meet with other people in surgical training and listen to papers that were presented that were very well researched. It was an eye-opener for me as I had not attended a conference of this magnitude before. This was a huge opportunity for me. I could go on and on but one of the highlights for me was the Gala Dinner that was held at the Oran Moor. This was an opportunity to meet our sponsors as well as observe the auction that was held. I have no words to describe the dinner, it was elegant, the food exquisite and I was amongst great company. The speeches were definitely not dull and so full of humour.

I learned a great deal from this trip and am so grateful for the opportunity that this award gave me to gain such exposure. To all other surgical trainees if you ever come across the ASGBI poster requesting applications for the International Bursary make sure you apply. It is a wonderful experience that one never forgets. 2010 it's in Liverpool!

A big thank you to the ASGBI committee that organize all this for the bursary award recipients.

***Dr Miriam Maimbo***