

## The 19<sup>th</sup> ISRRT World Congress 2016: Lessons and Opportunities for Ugandans

Representing Uganda at International Society of Radiographers and Radiologic Technologists (ISRRT) world congress 2016 was so rewarding not only to me as an individual but also to my fellow colleagues in the country. ISRRT is a professional body that brings together radiography practitioners world-wide. It convenes a world congress every two years in a selected country. At this congress, practitioners from over 98 member countries sit to discuss the latest developments and challenges in our field. Unfortunately, not many Ugandans know about the congress.

In October 2016, I had a chance to attend the 19<sup>th</sup> ISRRT world congress at Coex in Seoul, South Korea. I acknowledge the ISRRT, the Society of Radiography of Uganda (SRU), my family and friends for the travel support. I represented Uganda in the council meetings and I was so proud to have an input to the laws, regulations and practice guidelines that govern our profession. I am also happy to acknowledge our contribution, as Uganda, in conjunction with South Africa in nominating the Radiographers Association of Malawi to join the ISRRT family.

In addition to participating in the high level meetings, I presented a paper on “Measurement error of mean sac diameter and crown-rump length among pregnant women at Mulago hospital, Uganda”. It was so humbling to see delegates from all over the world assiduously listen to a common man from the pearl of Africa. It was also pleasantly surprising and uplifting when delegates acknowledged my input to their research on social media platforms such as Facebook (Figure 1).

As a country representative to the ISRRT and Secretary General of SRU, I looked for more opportunities that could benefit my country. Through casual chats with specialists in the field, some offered to mentor the professionals in Uganda. They expressed the will to present in our local professional capacity building activities when called upon. I also discussed with the Society and College of Radiographers of United Kingdom the possibility of extending their online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program to us. For more info on this, visit: <https://www.eintegrity.org/e-learning-healthcare-course/image-interpretation.html>.

I also learnt more about the ISRRT and many other radiography organizations, and the many



Figure 1: A delegate acknowledging Ali Sam’s input to her research on Facebook.

opportunities that they offer. These include but are not limited to: travel scholarships; bursaries to either make an educational visit or to attend a conference; free books and research grants. More information on such opportunities can be found on these websites: <http://www.isrrt.org/> and <http://www.wretf.org/>.

Mr. Dimitris Katsifarakis was announced as new chief executive officer (CEO) of ISRRT. I glimpsed through a presentation of Dr. Alexander Sandy Yule's journey as CEO; from a humble beginning and through hard work to glory in the field that he is passionate about. This was rousing (Figure 2). Apart from the high number of ground breaking research, trips around top notch hospitals in the city and thrilling Hutchison lecture, we also had a fun-filled Gala dinner and many other social events (Figure 3). Every moment was pleasurable and unforgettable.



Figure 2: Dr. Alexander Sandy Yule (L) and Ali Sam (R) at council meeting. Figure 3: Gala dinner dance time. Togetherness and friendship beyond borders.

I now believe that any radiographer/radiologic technologist can represent Uganda at ISRRT congress and can even take up CEO office or become president of this highly respected international professional body. The lessons one can learn from the congress are immeasurable. All the above highlighted opportunities are for all to take. I therefore encourage all the radiography professionals in Uganda to seek these opportunities to build a robust career in medical imaging. This guarantees the citizens of Uganda the best diagnostic care and better treatment outcomes since diagnostic imaging is the heart of medicine.

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