

Inaugurating Our Latin American EBM/SEBM Office in Campinas Brazil: Three Perspectives

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From June 6th through the 8th 2018, Peter Stambrook SEBM President and Steve Goodman *Experimental Biology and Medicine* (EBM) Editor-in-Chief had the opportunity to meet our Latin America Editor, Nicola Conran, during our inaugural visit to our EBM/SEBM Office at the University of Campinas (UNICAMP). During his long flight back Steve Goodman thought that the EBM readership might be interested in hearing about this memorable visit from all three of our perspectives.

Nicola Conran: The Inaugural Visit of Professors Goodman and Stambrook to the Latin America Office of the EBM, in Campinas, Brazil, in June of 2018 was a terrific success. I had not had the fortune to meet either Steve or Peter before, as our contact had been via mail and conference calls, so I will admit that I was somewhat nervous, but meeting Steve and Peter was like meeting with two lifetime friends who soon made me feel a part of the SEBM family.

During the visit, during which we met numerous young scientists, faculty members and institutional leaders, Steve and Peter's commitment to globalizing the EBM and the SEBM and diversifying the journal's global outreach and its already fantastic scope impressed me enormously. From my point of view, I learnt a lot about the values and objectives of the EBM and the society; in addition to being a leading publisher of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary biomedical science, the society focuses on helping young scientists develop their careers, with mentoring opportunities, and travel awards to its meetings. On the other hand, it was a real privilege for me to be able show Steve and Peter just some of the really Great Science that we are doing in Latin America, with visits to various departments at the University of Campinas (UNICAMP) and other excellent scientific centers, such as the nearby Brazilian Biosciences National Laboratory (LNBio) and the Brazilian Synchrotron Light Laboratory (LNLS) based at the Brazilian Center for Research in Energy and Materials (CNPEM).

The EBM is already a major destination for biomedical publications from Latin America and submissions from Latin America currently make up about 10% of all of the

manuscripts that the EBM receives, so it makes great sense that the journal should be investing in its Latin American contributors and inviting them to play a role in the society for Experimental Biology and Medicine. I for one am very excited about promoting Latin American Science in the EBM and look forward to seeing even more submissions and membership to the EBM and SEBM in the near future.

Steve Goodman: Due to flight delays, I arrived in Campinas at 8PM instead of 10AM on June 6th. Therefore, I missed the daytime trips to LNBio and LNLS based at CNPEM. I will leave it to Peter to explain that experience. When I arrived late at the hotel, Nicola and Peter were kind enough to wait so that we could eat a late dinner together. Nicola was a terrific host and the three of us quickly bonded during the first of our wonderful meals in Brazil.



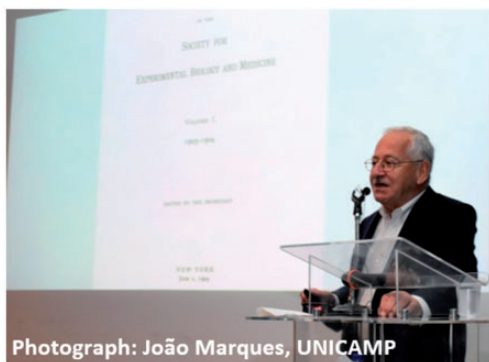
On June 7th, Nicola introduced Peter and me to two extremely interesting UNICAMP leaders. First we met Professor Munir Skaf, Dean of Research, pictured to the right in the upper panel below. Munir introduced us to the Research and Innovation occurring at UNICAMP making it a leading academic Research University in Latin America and a major contributor to the Brazilian economy.



We then had the pleasure of meeting Professor Fernando Costa, who was President of UNICAMP from 2009 to 2013 and is currently part of FAPESP, the major Research funding body in Sao Paulo. I had previously known Fernando only through the literature, due to our common interests in Hematology and Sickle Cell Disease. It was a pleasure to learn about the operation of UNICAMP from Fernando, who is pictured to the left in the panel below. We finished this day with discussions with Faculty in the Department of Genetics.



On June 8th, Peter and I tag teamed a presentation in the morning, to the Faculty of Medicine, on the Value Proposition for EBM and SEBM. I then followed with a research presentation on "Steps Towards Precision Medicine for Sickle Cell Disease".



Photograph: João Marques, UNICAMP



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In the afternoon we repeated the EBM/SEBM presentation for the Institute of Biology, followed by Peter's research presentation on the "Genomic Integrity in Mouse Embryonic Stem Cells and Somatic Cells." This was a profile in courage as Peter was losing his voice, due to something he picked up during his flights.

What I will take away from my first visit to Brazil was the friendship that rapidly developed between Nicola, Peter and myself, and that we could not have picked a more enthusiastic and committed Latin America Editor than Dr. Nicola Conran. It was also a pleasure to interact with the faculty and administration of UNICAMP. EBM and SEBM is off to a great start in Brazil.

Peter Stambrook: My travel experience was somewhat less traumatic than Steve's. Our original plans had been to fly from Cincinnati and Memphis, respectively, and to meet in Atlanta for our overnight flight to Sao Paulo. As I left for the airport I received notification that my flight to Atlanta was delayed by 40 minutes, which meant that I would barely have time to catch the Sao Paulo flight. In fact, my Atlanta flight arrived a few minutes early and I had time to spare to get to the plane for the international journey. I had checked on the arrival time for the flight from Memphis and saw that it was now scheduled to land about 10 minutes before our departure for Sao Paulo. I asked the flight crew if there was any chance of delaying departure for 10 minutes so that my colleague, Steve, could join us. They responded that if I was a party of 30, they "might" hold the plane, but any other request of this nature was ill-advised. So we left without Steve.

I arrived in Sao Paulo around 8:30 in the morning and was met by a driver who drove me to Campinas, about one-and-a-half hours away, arriving at our hotel around 10:00 AM. After a quick wash up, lunch and rest, Nicola picked me up for a full afternoon visit to the Brazilian Center for Research in Energy and Materials (CNPEM), a private research and development institute overseen by the Brazilian Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation and Communication (MCTIC). Our very attentive host was Dr. Kleber Franchini, the Director of the Brazilian Biosciences National Laboratory (LNBio), which is part of

the CNPEM. The Center is heavily focused on material science and the LNBio lab is primarily directed towards structural biology. The facility has within it an operational synchrotron and a new more powerful synchrotron, called Sirius, that will become operational within this year. The LNBio lab has several multiphoton microscopes available to investigators and two high-end cryo electron microscopy facilities, at the LNNano (Brazilian Nanotechnology National Laboratory, coordinated and excellently presented to us by Dr. Rodrigo Portugal), to complement the existing X-ray diffraction approaches to dissect protein structure. The picture below is an aerial view of the CNPEM campus.

Steve has already described our second day's activities, but somewhat underplayed my struggle with loss of voice. By the afternoon, I had virtually lost my voice and barely managed to finish my scientific talk. One of the delights of that day, however, was a visit from a Brazilian colleague from the DNA repair field, Carlos Menck, who drove from Sao Paulo to join us for the day. Carlos is a Professor at the Sao Paulo University and a member of the Brazilian National Academy of Sciences. He was greatly impressed with what our Society and the EBM were doing and how we were globalizing. Based on what he heard from me and Steve, he has decided to join the SEBM and hopefully convince his and other students to do likewise. In all, the visit



Of particular note is that the personnel running the day to day operations of the Facility were exceptional. The tour was informative and the whole enterprise was exceptionally well run. One of the deliverables of the first day's visit was our recommendation to recruit Dr. Ana Carolina Zeri, a crystallographer and a Principal Investigator at the Brazilian Synchrotron Light Laboratory (LNLS) to become a member of the editorial board for the Structural Biology Section of EBM. She has outstanding scientific credentials and is well published in high impact journals.

to Campinas was a smashing success, and the selection of Nicola Conran to head our Latin America Outreach Office and to be the EBM editor for Latin America was a stroke of brilliance. We are fortunate to have her.