The 95th annual Radiological Society of North America (RSNA) assembly was held this year, as is every year, in Chicago, Illinois. This conference is attended by radiologists, physicists, technologists, and students across the world. The primary purpose of the conference is to attend courses, present individual research projects and educational exhibits, and stay up-to-date on various advances in technology within the field of radiology in order to continue to provide excellent care to patients. Researchers were able to present their scientific posters, educational modules involving PowerPoint presentations as well as give oral presentations in the various seminars held throughout the week.

My primary focus at this conference was to assist in answering questions related to an exhibit entitled “Temporal Bone Anatomy & Pathology” which I co-authored. This included an interactive PowerPoint presentation set up as a technological exhibit. Some of the topics covered in the presentation included temporal bone anatomy on illustrations, computed tomography images as well as magnetic resonance images and associated pathology seen at St. Luke’s Hospital on the Plaza in Kansas City. Pathology discussed in the presentation included Schwannomas, cholesteatomas, fenestral and retrofenestral otosclerosis, and large aqueduct syndrome.

Through this experience, I was also able to attend courses regarding various research related to radiology being performed across the world today. The course on chest radiology involved presenters from institutions discussing their research as it related to pulmonary embolism, and of note, were two presentations. One was regarding multi-detector computed tomography images in its ability to detect higher rates of pulmonary embolism and whether or not the use of this technology actually resulted in patients becoming anticoagulated unnecessarily versus saving a life. The other involved research being
done in order to determine the best means of detecting pulmonary embolisms in pregnant women while limiting radiation exposure to the mother and fetus.

Besides the courses and research exhibits, there were numerous technical exhibits as well set up by vendors of various companies involved in designing the newest technology in the imaging world. This allowed me to be able to learn about the newer technology that would be available in the future and that I would likely need to be trained in using.

One of the key ways this conference achieved its goal in providing educational opportunities for physicians to improve their knowledge about radiology was by having a “Case of the Day” presentation for each of the various sub-specialties, including nuclear medicine, chest, obstetrics, pediatrics, neuroimaging, musculoskeletal, and ultrasound. Each participant was given the opportunity to view that day’s case and enter their impressions onto a computer and winners of the cases were recognized the following day.

This trip also afforded me the ability to meet with various radiologists across the country in order to help with residency interviews and the application process. It also gave me a glimpse of what I had to look forward to in the field of radiology after graduating medical school and how I could contribute positively to improving technique and patient care, which was one of the themes related to this year’s conference in particular. I very much appreciate being given the opportunity to attend this conference and would be glad to discuss it with any students who are interested in attending in the future.