**CMF Feedback**

This was my first CMF conference and was a spiritually challenging experience. Common themes included integrating faith into Medicine, discussing Christianity with others, ethical scenarios and the challenge to take faith beyond medical school into the mission field, both in our communities and globally.

There were a number of excellent speakers in both the student pre-Conference and the main conference. Dr Christine Rawlings described how her faith and support from Christian peers helped her through medical school. I will always remember this: how Christine recalled walking into an important assessment for her paediatrics training, filled with confidence as she thought, “How can I be afraid when I know God is alive?” Chris Clarke, CEO of World Vision discussed the need to integrate one’s public persona (‘front stage’) and private life (‘back stage), so the latter provides a strong foundation, while acknowledging the business of life. His second talk focused on the paradox of a broken and a beautiful world, including a moving story about a young Syrian refugee boy and his family. Carolyn Kelly-Johnston challenged some of the artificial dualities we create: divinity and humanity, earthly and heavenly life and between animals and humans. Carolyn’s literary background provided an interesting lens to view Medicine.

Dr Peter Saunders’ examined ‘Keys to successful evangelism’ and offered practical tips, supported by scripture regarding how to share our faith with others. Another talk on ‘Serving in Babylon, Christians in a secular world’ used the book of Daniel and examined parallels between medical training and practise. He further discussed Christian engagement with society, the need to obey but challenge authority and how social reform is an imperative of our faith. His humorous, yet important tale ‘Do not eat the porcupine’ succinctly captured the concept of lifestyle temptations.

Dr Bethany’s talk on missionary medicine, followed by the panel on choosing an elective in a developing country and missionary work, was extremely relevant. While acknowledging the spiritual requirements and the practical realities of such work, we were reminded that we are ultimately blessed to bless others. Anthony Hill, Health and Disability commissioner spoke on ‘Flourishing the City’, including Christchurch after the earthquake (our broken world). He emphasised the importance of courage to question authority in ethically challenging situations.

As well as these formal talks, I greatly enjoyed meeting and networking with doctors from a variety of medical and personal backgrounds. I was surprised at how open and willing people were to share their experiences. There are some stories I will always remember when I question my identity as a Christian medical student. It was also great meeting students from different years and from our ‘rival’ the University of Otago. In our free time, students were able to do some sight-seeing around Rotorua; this was a good chance to develop friendships and have further meaningful conversations.

How was this conference difference from others I have attended? The speakers, the unique conversations with others, the morning prayers, worship sessions, Communion and much more. Wherever you are in your journey of faith, CMF conference is a fantastic opportunity to learn more Medicine, Christianity and God’s love for us.