

TIAFT mourns the loss of Golo Meyer, first trainer participant of TIAFT's Method Development Grant

In early December 2015, the world's toxicologists and the entire TIAFT family was shocked by the untimely death of our colleague and friend Golo Meyer. Forensic toxicology lost a brilliant and promising scientist and we lost a good friend. Our deepest sympathy is with Golo's family and friends.

Just before his passing, Golo visited the Universidade Feevale (Novo Hamburgo) in Brazil, as part of TIAFT's Method Development Grant, starting in late October 2015. After a short meeting with the laboratory staff headed by Prof. Rafael Linden, a plan for the upcoming days was set up and activities immediately started driven by Golo's enthusiasm, knowledge, and approachability.

The first week of work was devoted to the implementation of a GC-MS screening procedure for urine based on hydrolysis, liquid-liquid extraction, microwave assisted acetylation and GC-MS analysis, with data analysis made through the AMDIS software. About 70 urine specimens from different clinical toxicological cases were processed and analysed. Golo, together with at least two scientists from the host organization evaluated each chromatogram in detail, using either the MPW mass spectral library or the AMDIS software. The presence of Golo and his significant contributions were celebrated at a Welcome Reception hosted by the International Relations Office of Universidade Feevale on 21 October 2015. Golo's presence in Brazil will be long-lasting. He gave a lecture on Systematic Toxicological Analysis to a group of 30 pharmacy students from Universidade of Santa Maria that were visiting the Analytical Toxicology Laboratory of Universidade Feevale and recorded a short interview to the University's television channel.

The second week was devoted to the analysis of plasma specimens, also using liquid-liquid extraction and GC-MS analysis with AMDIS data evaluation. Approximately 50 plasma specimens from the cases previously analyzed as part of the urine procedures were evaluated. Also, the principles for a fast semi-quantitative GC-MS method for 40 drugs commonly found in clinical toxicology were discussed and its implementation was started. During this week, Golo presented several small seminars to the laboratory staff, mainly focusing on systematic toxicological analysis, applications of mass spectrometry to toxicology and clinical toxicology. By the end of TIAFT's Method Development Grant training, and under the watchful eye Golo, the local team of scientists were able to successfully process and evaluate both urine and plasma specimens.

Golo Meyer singlehandedly helped the laboratory at the Universidade Feevale set up several analytical procedures that otherwise would take much longer to develop. He was very focused and target-oriented but also very friendly. We hosted a farewell dinner in a typical Brazilian barbecue house, giving Golo the opportunity to experience the real "capirinha," a very popular Brazilian drink. Golo returned to Switzerland on 31 October 2015 leaving us with a great deal of wonderful memories and invaluable knowledge.

As the first laboratory to be awarded this grant, we would like to thank TIAFT's Members and TIAFT's Board for this opportunity. This initiative is a great opportunity for laboratories in developing countries to improve their practices in a timely and scientifically valid way and it is our hope many other sites in the World will benefit from the support of TIAFT's Method Development Grant. One final note of appreciation is extended to the chair of TIAFT's Young Scientist Committee Dr. Jochen Beyer and TIAFT's President Dr. Heesun Chung.

Our eternal gratitude is finally extended to our good friend and knowledgeable and inspiring scientist Golo Meyer whose memories will forever be with us.



Golo being interviewed by the University's TV channel



Golo with staff from the Analytical Toxicology Laboratory



Golo lecturing to visiting students of the Universidade de Santa Maria



Farewell dinner at the Brazilian barbecue house