Experience from the inaugural TSRA traveling fellowship award

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I was fortunate to receive the inaugural Thoracic Surgery Residents Association (TSRA) traveling fellowship award and chose to visit Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Heart Institute to observe Dr Joseph Coselli.

Dr Coselli has an unparalleled experience in the treatment of thoracoabdominal aortic disease, and I was thrilled when he agreed for me to visit. During 11 cases in 5 days (in various combinations), he performed 2 coronary artery bypass graft operations, 2 surgical aortic valve replacements, 1 transcatheter aortic valve replacement, 2 aortic root replacements, 1 valve-sparing root reimplantation, 5 ascending/hemiarch replacements, 3 ascending/total arch replacements, 3 elephant trunk operations, 2 open antegrade

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Central Message

Dr Arminder Jassar visited Houston for a 1-week observership with Dr Joseph Coselli. This was funded by the TSRA traveling fellowship.

FIGURE 1. With Dr Coselli in his massive library.

stent-graft deployments into the descending aorta, and a thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysm repair for a mycotic aneurysm—it was a whirlwind tour of the entire breadth of advanced aortic surgical techniques at the hands of a master surgeon. I participated in morning rounds and office hours with Dr Coselli and got an insight into his decision making and surgical approach. Dr Coselli operates every day, heads a very busy clinical service, and has obligations toward several national and international academic societies—it was very instructive to watch him balance his time between all these commitments.

At my request, Dr Coselli's staff arranged a meeting for me with Dr Denton Cooley. To hear Dr Cooley recount stories from his trip to India (where I was born and raised) is something that I will always cherish. I visited Dr Scott LeMaire's laboratory; he shared his thoughts on how to set up a successful clinical and basic science research endeavor. On my last day, Dr Coselli took me to his house (Figure 1), and I got the chance to meet his family. During that conversation at his kitchen table, I felt that Dr Coselli was truly interested in who I was and what my future aspirations are. I will certainly remember his words of advice as I work to build my career.

I thank Dr Coselli and the TSRA for this tremendous learning opportunity and a spectacular mentorship program.