

# Federation of European Societies for Surgery of the Hand Junior Training Award 2010



April 9th – May 1st 2010  
In the Department of Hand- and Microsurgery, University Hospital of Tampere, Finland  
Prof. Simo Vilkki / Dr. Jouni Havulinna



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## General overview

The Department of Hand- and Microsurgery at the University Hospital of Tampere, Finland is one of the most important hand centres, in Northern Europe. Not only famous for a long history of education but also for the development of several techniques in treating congenital malformations, it piqued my personal curiosity. From the outset Dr. Jouni Havulinna, Consultant and Prof. Simo Vilkki, Head of the Department, provided great support. So I was given the opportunity to take part in Lapland course of the Finnish Society for Surgery of the Hand in Levi from April 10th to 11th 2010 and I was introduced to all Finnish major hand surgeons at the congress dinner.



Tampereen yliopistollinen sairaala (TAYS),  
University Hospital of Tampere, Finland



Prof. Garcia-Elias, F. Winkler,  
J. Havulinna and T. Kotkansalo  
at the meeting of the Finnish  
Society for Surgery of the Hand  
in Levi

In Tampere, Prof. Vilkki took the time for a detailed introduction in the daily life at hand surgery department and led me through the hospital for first orientation. From this day forth I got the possibility to join special outpatient clinics (i.e. congenital malformations and Erb's palsy), the hand surgical ward and operating theatres. I was very grateful to get introduced into Prof. Vilkki's great experience of treating congenital malformations, especially of radial club hand. In addition to these rare cases in hand surgery I took the opportunity to take part in treating more or less common problems of the wrist. Dr. Jouni Havulinna, an expert in wrist surgery, gave me the opportunity to discuss treatments of the wrist intensively. In the course of in-house training sessions I was invited to give a presentation about treatment of CMC-I-joint osteoarthritis.

Finishing this training period I am absolutely convinced that it is not only useful but necessary for young surgeons to achieve as much experience as possible from surgeons like Prof. Vilkki, who shares his amazing lifetime work experience generously.

Prof. S. Vilkki and his team at the Department of  
Hand- and Microsurgery at TAYS-hospital in  
Tampere



## Gain of the fellowship

As a young resident working in a department of hand surgery, that is focused on treating rheumatoid arthritis related alterations of the hand and wrist, I was ambitious to be educated in a different field of hand surgery. Within this fellowship, I did not only obtain thorough information about congenital malformations, brachial plexus reconstruction or general trauma management in hand surgery but also had the opportunity to share experiences in approaches and treatment options and nevertheless themes of different health systems of both countries, including the daily life at hand surgery ward. It was very impressive to find how nurses, physiotherapists and doctors work together. They are all closely involved in pre- and postoperative rehabilitation. Many special mobilization programs and therapists specialized on hand surgery cases assure this high standard.

I am thankful about meeting so many friendly colleagues, during the whole period of this fellowship to talk also about political and sometimes personal and private topics. Finally, I'd like to mention, that I was very impressed by the Finnish health system, the high technology level in hospitals and especially by the system of education in hand surgery.



## Conclusion

I want to emphasize that all my expectations regarding this fellowship were exceeded. Nevertheless and although the health systems of Finland and Germany are different, hand surgeons are facing the same problems and challenges in their daily practice. I cordially thank the FESSH for offering this opportunity of an amazing and exceptional informative experience to me.