

HKU Spine Surgery Fellowship 2018

A photoessay of people, places and pastimes

By Jewel T. Sadiang-abay MD

November 30, 2018



Left: Professor Ken Cheung reviewing his slides before his TED talk that concluded to a roomful of standing ovation. Professor Ken is more than a skilled spine surgeon, as chair of the department, he is a strong leader and a visionary, harnessing people's strengths to produce coherent teamwork and progressive outputs.



Right: The spine fellow with Professor Ken at the AO Spine Symposium in Manila, Philippines, November 2018.



Left: Dr Wong Yat Wa in his natural element. He is an ambidextrous tumor and deformity surgeon among others. As chief of the spine division, he directly supervises day to day activities and decision making.

Right: The spine fellow with Dr Wong during the 2018 Hong Kong Orthopedic Association convention. Members of the spine team has delivered short lectures and presented their research outputs during the forum.



New Year's Lunch January 2018, the spine fellow with her mentors (left to right) Drs Jason Cheung, Paul Koljonen and Kenny Kwan.



Pictured here with Mr. Aldous Cheng, of the physiotherapy department during the annual Sandy Bay Charity Fair held every first Saturday of November.

The robust rehabilitation team at DKCH ensures that each patient receives appropriate pre- and post-operative care.



Photo courtesy of Dr Timothy Knight



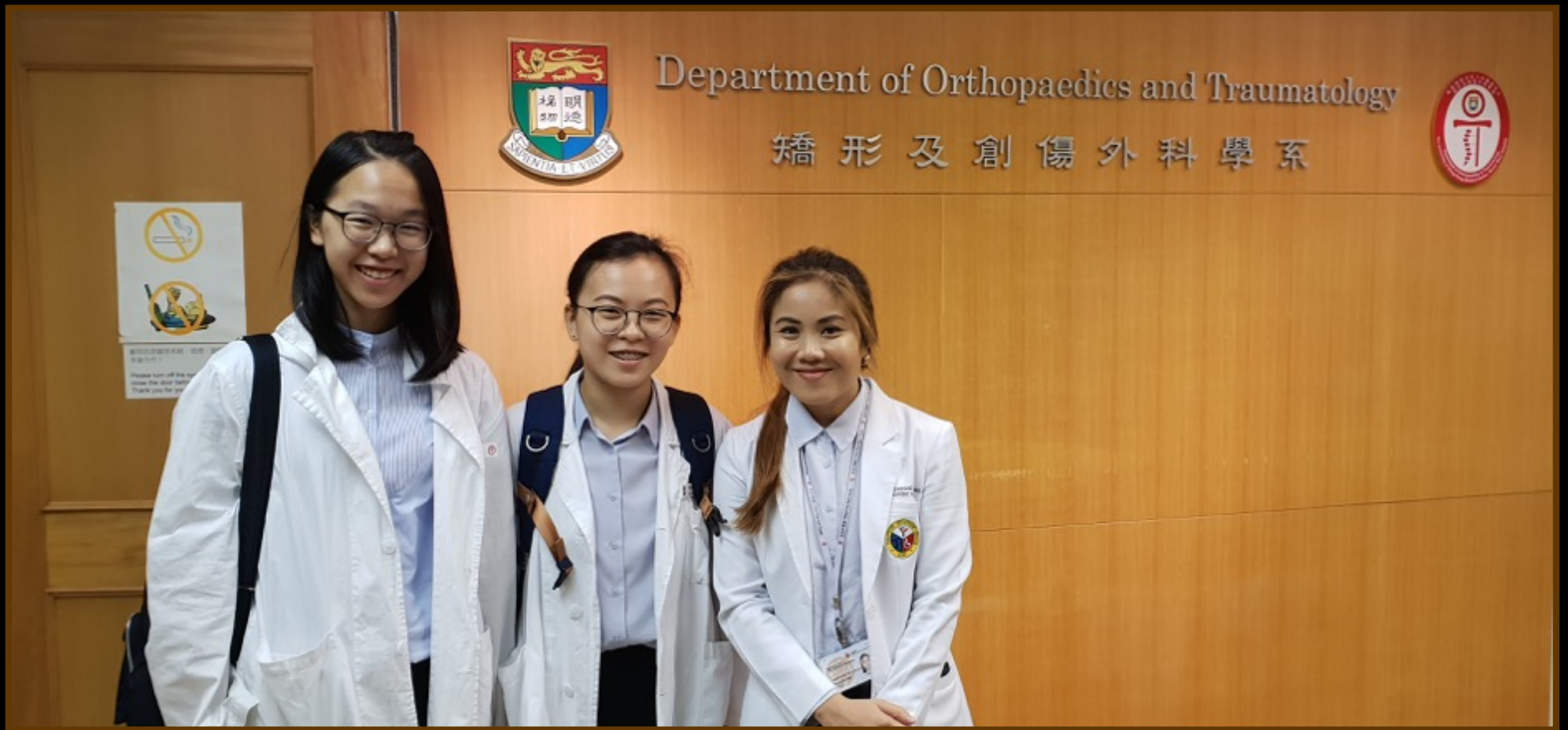
Wednesday grand rounds at DKCH is attended by the spine team, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, prosthetist and orthotist and the social worker. This allows a wholistic approach to patient care. Also present are HKU medical students and international medical students from other countries doing their attachments with the team. Pictured here is the spine fellow presenting a case for discussion during the grand rounds.



At any given time, spine surgeons from different places would come and join the team to experience the routine. Pictured here are visiting surgeons from Japan, China and England.
Back row: Drs Yoichi Iizuka , Jason Cheung, Huang Yangliang, So Kato.
Front row: Drs Paul Koljonen, Jewel Sadiang-abay, Wong Yat Wa, Timothy Knight, Peter Siu.



Enjoying brunch at a **cha chaan teng** after a Friday morning grand rounds at QMH. Local favourites include twisty macaroni soup, side of ham and cold milk tea for drinks. Pictured here with Ms Lau Sin Ting and Dr Felix Leung.



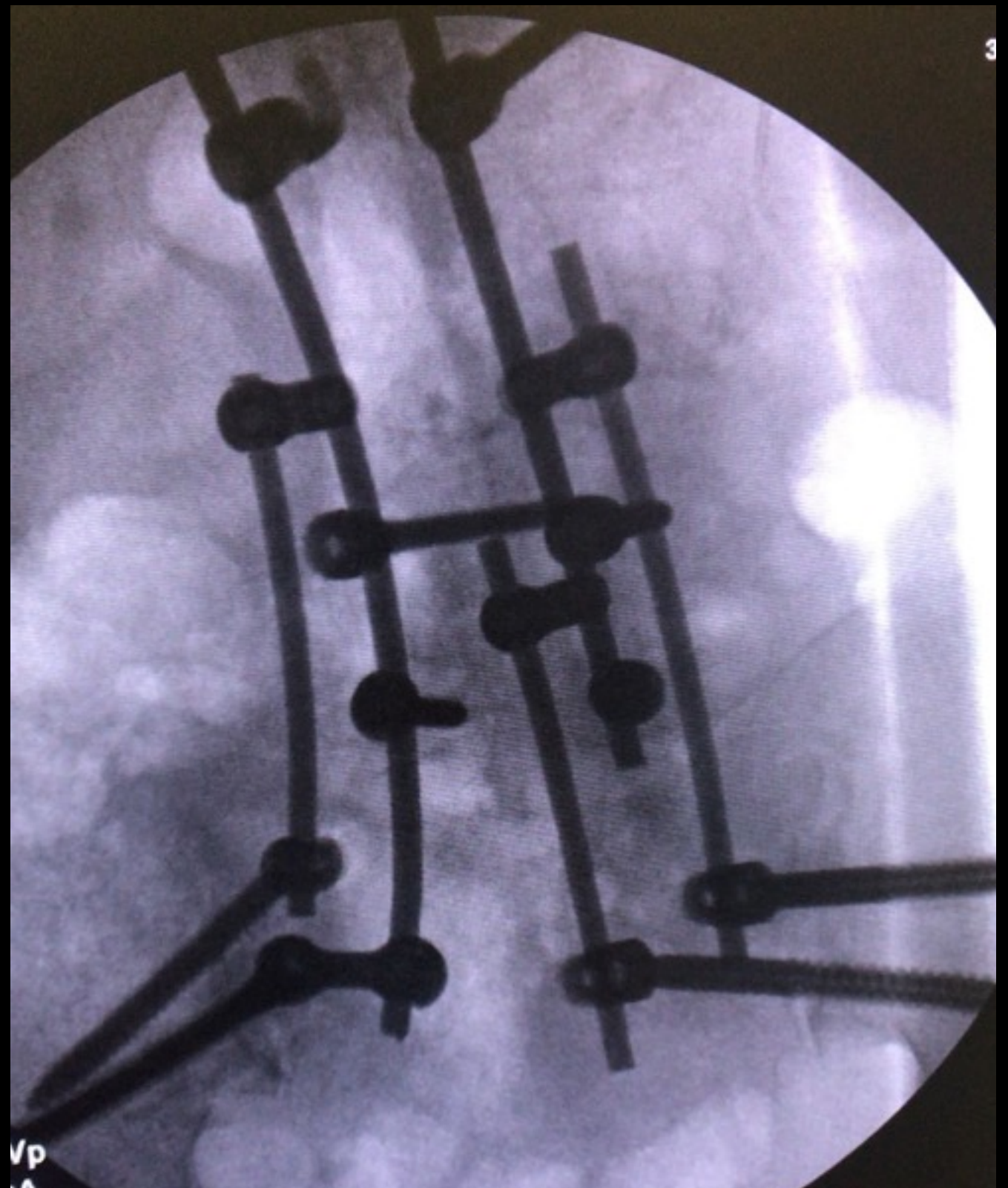
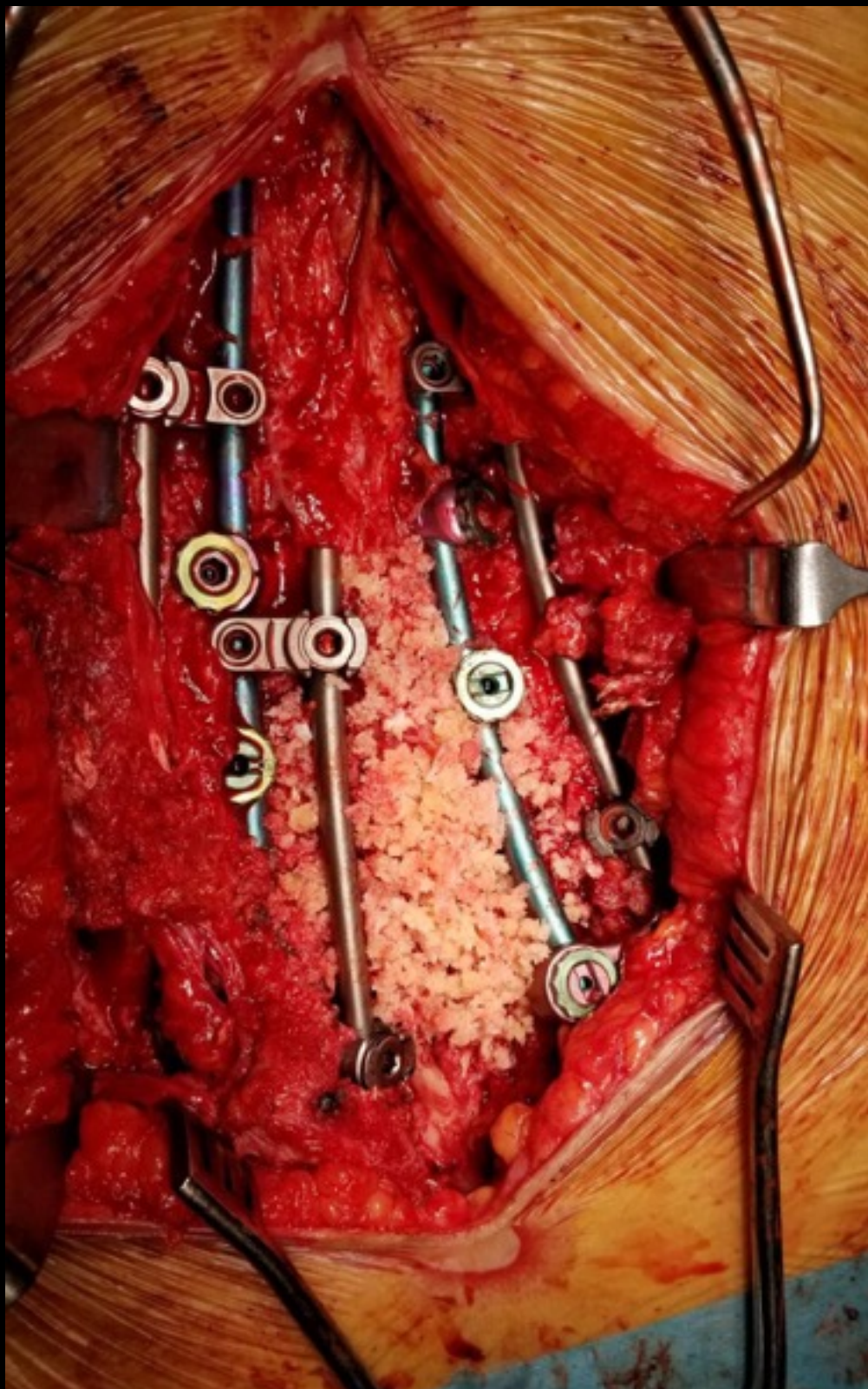
In a highly competitive selection process, the department allows a few high school students to experience the day to day activities of a surgeon. This is a yearly program called Teenage Orthoped Scheme (TOPS). Pictured here is the spine fellow with aspiring doctors Natalie Yau and Anabelle Lim.



The spine division in coordination with the MacLehose Medical Rehabilitation Centre explores the use of assistive devices, in this case the exoskeleton, in paraplegic patients. This initiative is spearheaded by Dr Paul Koljonen (inset).



The spine team occupies two operating theaters at DKCH and has a full list every Tuesdays and Thursdays. The fellow is exposed to adult and paediatric deformities, tumor, lumbar and cervical degenerative diseases, congenital and neuromuscular scoliosis, etc. Two subsequent cases are shown as examples.



This is a case of a long segment fusion from thoracic to sacrum for a congenital kyphoscoliosis. Five years after the index surgery the patient developed a symptomatic pseudoarthrosis at L5/S1 and a broken rod on the left. In this revision surgery, the distal broken rod was removed and the construct was augmented with rods placed lateral and medial to the main rods.

Photo courtesy of Dr Paul Koljonen

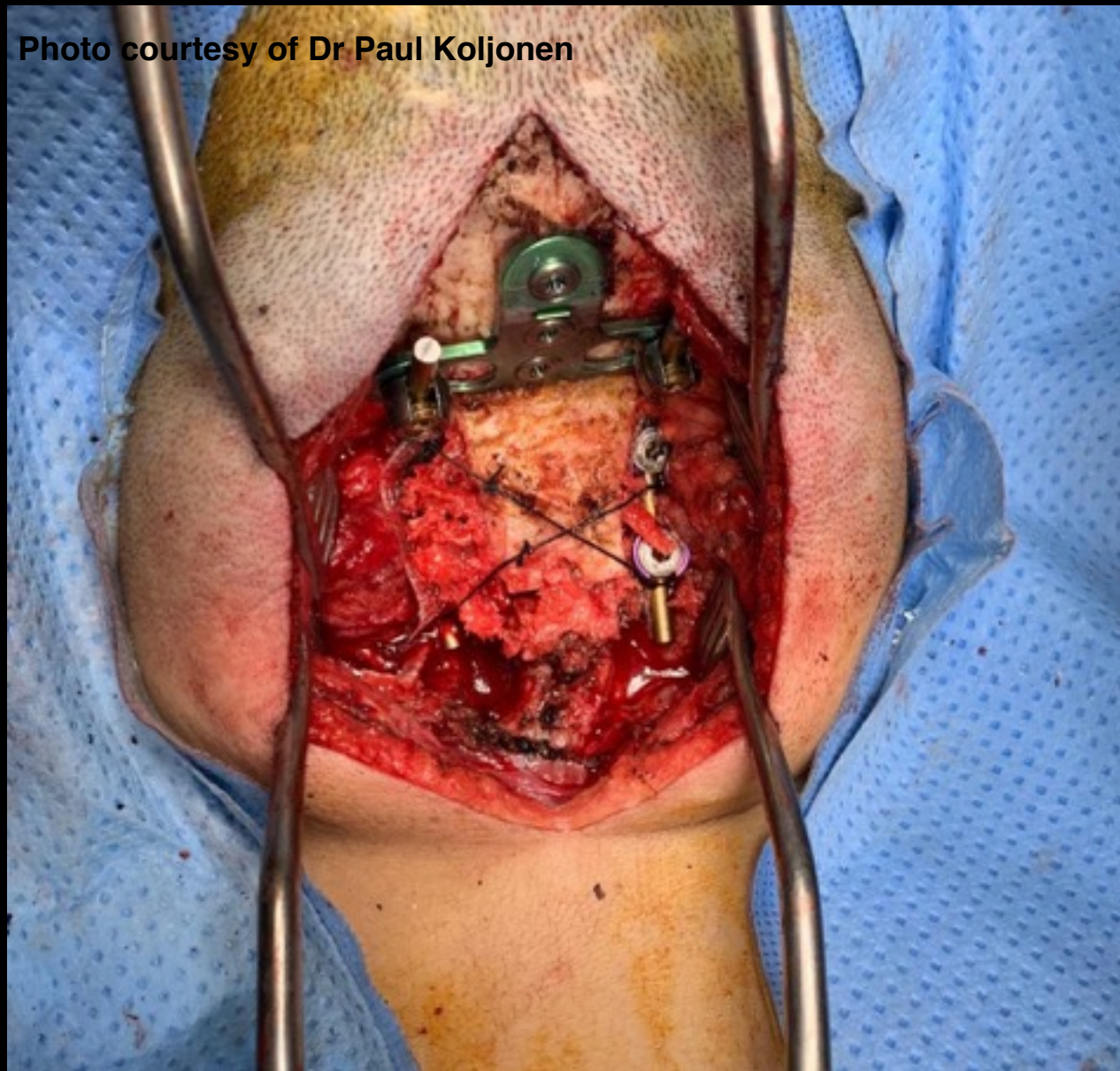


Photo courtesy of Dr Paul Koljonen



This is a case of a rheumatoid arthritis with basilar invagination and C1/2 subluxation presenting with myelopathy. C1 posterior arch excision and atlanto-occipital fusion was done. To ensure proper fusion, the C1/2 bilateral joint surfaces were properly taken down and grafted. A hammock was created using prolene mesh sutured across the two rods. Autologous cancellous graft was applied and a rectangular piece of unicortical bone graft was overlaid bridging the occiput and C2. At two months follow up, fusion was evident on radiograph.



The HKU anatomy laboratory at Sassoon Road is the venue of the 2018 SRS cadaveric workshop. Pictured here is Professor Ken Cheung (third from left) teaching the participants about access and surgical approaches.



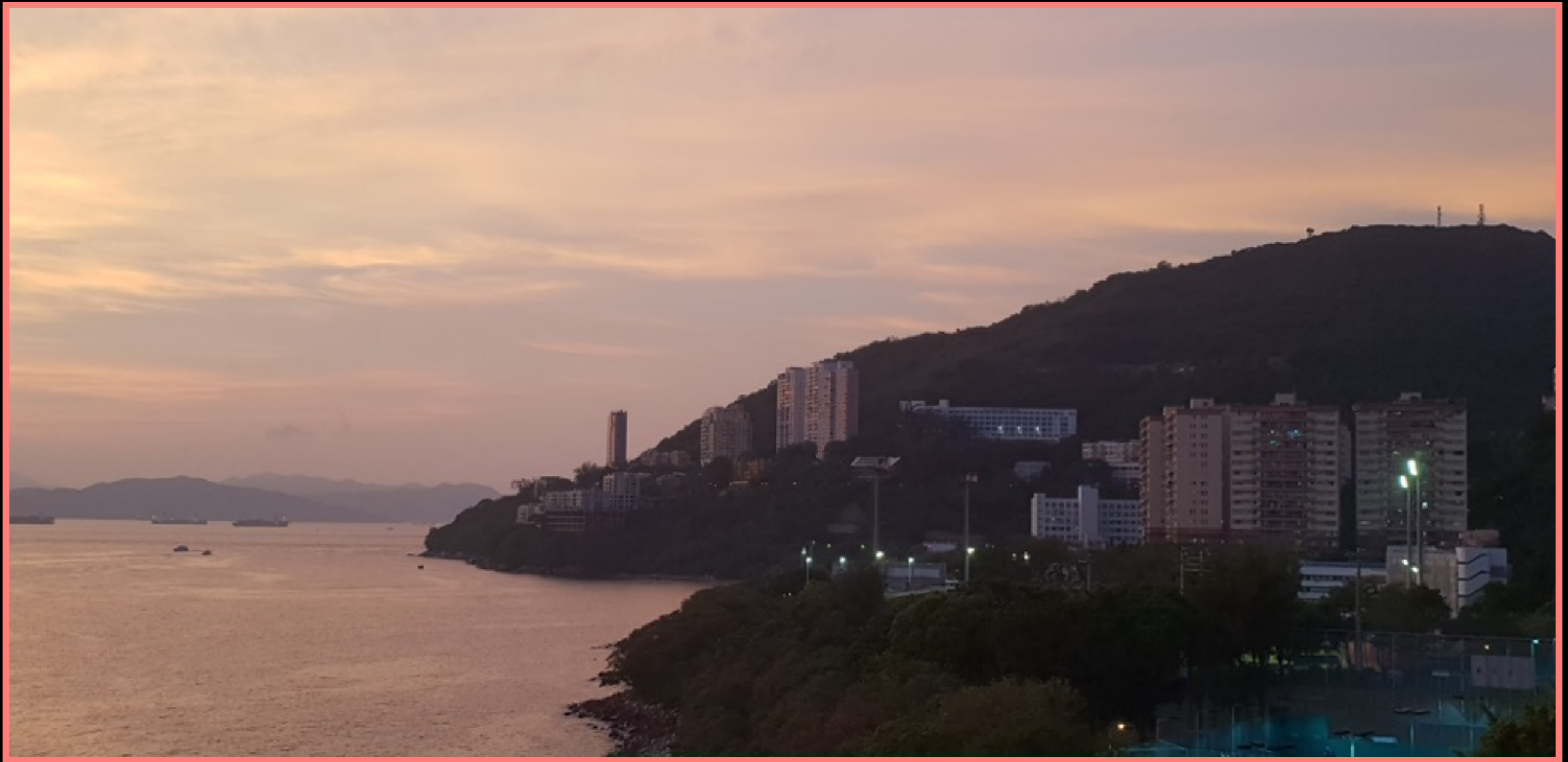
Yu Chun Keung Medical Library located at the medical school compound in Sassoon road is one of the libraries under the HKU umbrella. The fellow is entitled to borrow 400 books across all HKU affiliate libraries for the duration of the rotation. The fellow is also granted full access to journals, publications and literature via the HKU online library.



The lecture theater at the 5th floor Professorial Block of Queen Mary Hospital is the venue for the department's Wednesday conference and the Spine team's Friday pre- and post- operative conference. It is equipped with a webcast to HKU Shenzhen campus.



The fellow's suite faces Sandy Bay. Although remote, the DKCH's quiet neighbourhood includes lush greenery, birds chirping in the morning, and pavements conducive for running.



Sandy Bay at sunset.



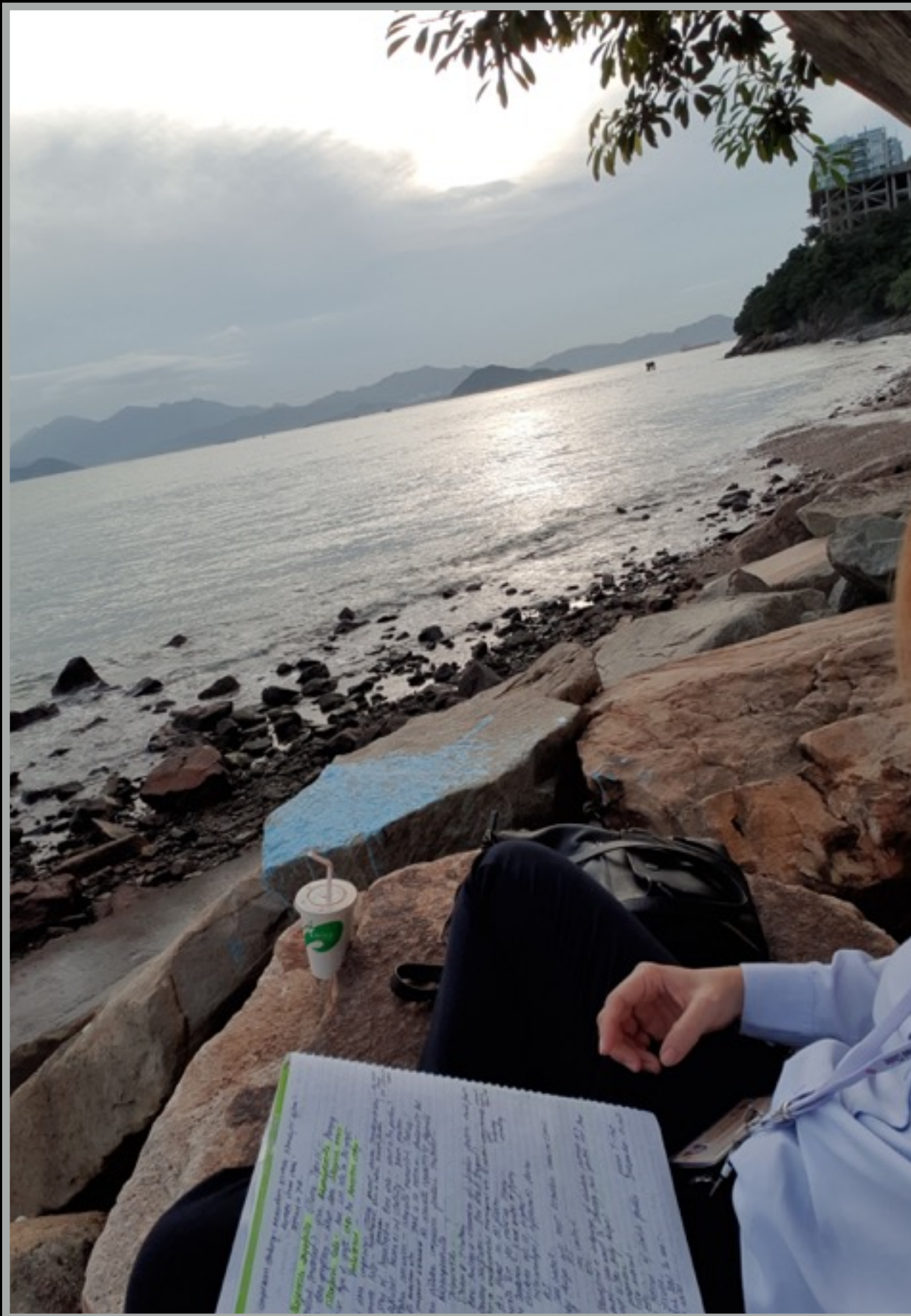
The University of Hong Kong Stanley Ho Sports Centre Complex gives the fellow access to use the fully equipped gym, track oval, climbing wall, tennis court, swimming pool and other amenities. It is a five-minute walk from the Duchess of Kent compound and is open seven days a week from 7am to 9pm.



In addition to its thriving local food scene, Hong Kong is home to international cuisines. Six months is a good span of time to sample some them .



Dimsum is a staple in this clinical rotation and the spine team finds time to have lunch together usually on a Wednesday. In this photo, a typical dimsum lunch spread.



This fellowship is about learning the craft, digesting cases, acquiring the surgical skill and understanding the rationale.

It is also about meeting wonderful personalities. Mentors worth emulating in their intellect, skill, discipline, dedication, and professionalism.

It is about soaking in the culture, the food and the nuances of Hong Kong.

It is a period of my life that I have fully enjoyed and have made great memories of.

-Jewel Sadiang-abay MD
Nov 30, 2018
HK

In this photo, the fellow enjoying the sunset at Sandy bay shore.