

## FEBS/IUBMB Workshop: “Eukaryotic Lipids: Treasure of Regulatory Information” June 19-24 2010, Spetses, Greece

Sponsored by the **Federation of European Biochemical Societies** and the **International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology**, Professor **Gerrit van Meer** from the Institute of Biomembranes at Utrecht University in the Netherlands organizes workshops and lecture courses in lipid biochemistry alternately in Cargese (France) and in the island of Spetses in Greece. This year, Prof. van Meer together with FEBS organized a workshop in lipid signaling in the Spetses-island, located in the Saronic Gulf, about one hour boat-trip from Athens. Spetses is a small island that has a rich history from the times of pirates to the outbreak of the Greek war of independence, nowadays being a popular summer resort.



[grecetravel.com](http://grecetravel.com)

The lipid workshop was held in the Victorian buildings of the Anargyrios and Korgialenios School of Spetses, located adjacent to a beautiful beach. The workshop included lectures, student talks, poster presentations and group discussions, covering many aspects of the regulatory and

signaling roles of lipids in cell biology. The workshop was mainly focused on lipid topology and transport, lipid signaling and metabolism, and lipids in health and disease. The lectures were given by senior scientists whose work is well-known in their respective fields of research, including e.g. Gerrit van Meer (the Netherlands), Daniela Corda (Italy), Peter Edwards (USA), Patricia Bassereau (France), Miriam Greenberg (USA) and Gennaro De Libero (Switzerland). The ambiance in the workshop was very international since many different nationalities were represented among the participants. The participating lecturers and students were mainly from different countries of Europe, but also USA, Canada and Taiwan were represented.

The workshop succeeded surprisingly well in bringing young students closer to the senior scientists, enabling open, but at the same time intensive discussions between the students and the professors. Lively discussions arose after some of the lectures, and discussions were also organized in the beautiful surroundings of the school and at the beach. The poster sessions were also well organized, giving all students a possibility to present their research and data. Overall, this course gave a broad overview, spiced with some detailed information, about the research going on in the field of lipid signaling. At best, after spending the morning in the lecture room one could take a swim in the refreshing Aegean Sea just besides the school building, and after the afternoon poster sessions and discussions, the delicious Greek dinners were waiting for us in the beautiful terraces and restaurants.

I warmly recommend these workshops and courses, especially the one held in Spetses, for everyone interested in learning lipid biochemistry and in meeting great professors from the field of lipid research. Support for participation in these courses can be applied directly from the FEBS Youth Travel Fund which, for Western Europeans, covers 80 % of the travel expenses and the entire course fee.

I gratefully acknowledge **ISB** and **FEBS Youth Travel Fund** for supporting my participation in this workshop.

Terhi Maula  
Biochemistry, Department of Biosciences  
Åbo Akademi University