Alejandra Ovalle-Rodriguez

In July 2026, I had the honor of completing the AEGIS/CWIG Traveling Fellowship, which allowed me to spend one month with the Pectus team at Cleveland Clinic in the United States. It was an outstanding experience, both academically and professionally.

During my stay, I worked alongside world leaders in the treatment of chest wall deformities: Dr. Hyung Joo Park, Dr. John DiFiore, and Dr. Manuel López. Taking part in their clinical work in the operating room, the outpatient clinic, and the inpatient ward was an exceptional opportunity to learn from those who have shaped much of our current understanding of pectus deformities.
The rotation gave me first-hand insight into the entire care pathway for patients with pectus deformities, from evaluation and preoperative work-up, surgical technique pearls, postoperative management, multimodal analgesia to follow-up.
The team's approach and the generosity with which they share their expertise are also a model to follow.

This experience has made a significant contribution to my training and clinical practice. I return with concrete tools to improve the evaluation, surgical technique, and pain management of patients with pectus deformities in Chile, with the goal of providing care at an international standard.

One of the most valuable aspects of the fellowship is the bond it creates with international leaders, which continues well beyond the visit. It helps build an international community in which we can discuss clinical cases, share experiences, and keep up with advances in the field. This is complemented by the experience gained through one's own surgical practice and by attending the CWIG annual meeting, a key forum for staying current with the latest techniques and technologies.

I am deeply grateful to AEGIS and Chest Wall International Group for this fellowship and to the Cleveland Clinic team for their warm welcome and dedication to teaching. I highly recommend this fellowship to colleagues devoted to chest wall surgery.

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