
Highlights from the 2017 Southern Society for Clinical Investigation Nephrology Young Investigators' Forum

The 16th Annual Southeastern Regional Nephrology Young Investigators' Forum (NYIF), sponsored by the Southern Society for Clinical Investigation with support from an educational grant from AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, was held on February 10, 2017 in New Orleans, LA. The NYIF served as a precourse to the Annual Southern Regional/Southern Society for Clinical Investigation Meetings, which occurred from February 11 to 12, 2017.

Postdoctoral fellow trainees in nephrology training programs throughout the Southeast were invited to present their research at the NYIF, which continued in the pattern of previous meetings with all of the presentations representing superior-quality research. This year, 18 fellows representing 8 academic medical centers in 5 states were selected to participate. In addition to the nephrology fellow presenters and the panel of 5 judges, there were a number of mentors present for the meeting. The research presentations were divided into basic and clinical research categories with the morning devoted to basic science presentations and the afternoon program dedicated to clinical research talks. All those present contributed to a lively and constructive question-and-answer session following each of the presentations.

The event was initiated with a particularly excellent and relevant lecture entitled "Career Development in Academia: Advice When You Are Starting Out" delivered by Benjamin Humphreys, MD, PhD, from Washington University School of Medicine. Dr. Humphreys is a young investigator who has exceptional research and administrative skills and he shared his experience and advice with the group.

Subsequent presenters all performed at a very high level, and their knowledge of their area of research and the background literature was impressive. Similarly, their ability to address wide-ranging and probing questions from the audience was equally impressive. This year's program, as with past programs, continued to reflect the superior investigative talent in nephrology training programs in the Southeast.

This year, awards were presented to the 4 top-rated presentations in each of the Basic Science and Clinical Science categories. An alternate was also selected in each category. The winners advanced to the National Nephrology Young Investigators Forum that will be held in conjunction with the 2017 Spring National Kidney Foundation Clinical Meeting. This year's award winners are detailed below.

CLINICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AWARDS (FIGURE 1)

1st	L. Parker Gregg, MD University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center
2nd	Ryan M. Downey, PhD University of Tennessee Health Science Center
3rd	Marc Saad, MD Emory University
4th	Abdul Azeem Mohammed, MBBS, MD Augusta University
Alt.	Alian Al-Balas, MD University of Alabama at Birmingham

BASIC SCIENCE RESEARCH AWARDS (FIGURE 2)

1st	Jessica M. Overstreet, PhD Vanderbilt University Medical Center
2nd	Abolfazl Zarjou, MD, PhD University of Alabama at Birmingham
3rd	Stellor Nlandu Khodo, PhD Vanderbilt University Medical Center
4th	Santosh Yadav, MSc, PhD Tulane University
Alt.	Venkat Ram Rakesh Mundra, MBBS University of Alabama at Birmingham

The SSCI is pleased to announce that Abolfazl Zarjou, MD, PhD from the University of Alabama at Birmingham won the first place award, and Jessica M. Overstreet, PhD from Vanderbilt University received the third place award in the Basic Science Division of the National Nephrology Young Investigator Forum held in conjunction with the 2017 Spring National Kidney Foundation Clinical Meeting.



FIGURE 1. Left to right: Marc Saad, MD, L. Parker Gregg, MD, Ryan M. Downey, PhD and Abdul Aseem Mohammed, MBBS, MD.



FIGURE 2. Left to right: Venkat Ram Rakesh Mundra, MBBS, Abolfazl Zarjou, MD, PhD, Steller Nlandu Khodo, PhD, Jessica M. Overstreet, PhD and Santosh Yadav, MSc, PhD.



FIGURE 3. Left to right: Drs. Ed Ross, Paul Sanders, Jeff Sands, David Ploth, Thu Lee and Dr. Benjamin Humphreys, Keynote Speaker.

The value of the NYIF for the trainees is extraordinary. This unique setting provides a forum where fellows can present original research orally to a small group of peers. This setting provides a novel, nonthreatening environment for presentation and discussion for fellows and among fellows from different training programs in the region. There are no other meeting venues or environments that allow this high level of oral presentation and personal interaction for this level of training. Between and after sessions, trainees are afforded the extraordinary opportunity to interact personally with their peer group of researcher-trainees from the region and nationally if selected to advance to the national meeting. They also interact with a panel of judges who comprise a group of senior nephrologists and program leaders in the Southeast. They have the opportunity to network with other trainees in the region and nationally (Figure 3). It should also be noted that a number of trainee presenters at earlier NYIF programs have graduated to become our new young academic faculty for a number of nephrology programs in the Southeast and elsewhere.

Participants uniformly commented that this type of forum was strongly needed by the community and offered a great opportunity for networking. Many of the trainees spontaneously remarked that the meeting was a resounding success and an outstanding event for fellow participation. All recommended participation in this forum for future nephrology fellows.

The presenters and title of their presentations follows:

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Benjamin Humphreys, MD, PhD

Joseph Friedman Associate Professor in Renal Diseases

Chief, Division of Nephrology

Washington University in St. Louis

Career Development in Academia: Advice When You Are Starting Out

CLINICAL SCIENCE PRESENTATIONS

Alian Al-Balas, MD

University of Alabama at Birmingham

The Clinical and Economic Impact of Vascular Access Selection in Patients Initiating Hemodialysis With a Catheter

Mohammed Alzubaidi, MD

Medical University of South Carolina

Bedside Real-Time Ultrasound-Guided Kidney Biopsy Service Fully Run by Nephrology: Safety and Specimen Adequacy

Faisal M. Arif, MD

University of Tennessee Health Science Center

Outcomes Associated with Inpatient vs Outpatient Hemodialysis Initiation in a Large Incident ESRD Cohort

Deewan Deewan, MD

Augusta University

Assessment of Inpatient Dialysis Adequacy Using On-Line Clearance: A Fellow Quality Improvement Project

Darpan Gandhi, MBBS, MD

Medical University of South Carolina

Rapidly Reversible Contrast-Induced Acute Kidney Injury Does Not Increase the Risk for Worse Long-Term Renal Outcomes

L. Parker Gregg, MD

University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

Cardiac Biomarkers Improve Mortality and Cardiovascular Risk Prediction in Chronic Kidney Disease

Abdul Azeem Mohammed, MBBS, MD

Augusta University

Pre-Dialysis IVC Diameter Predicts Ultrafiltration Goal in Hospitalized ESRD Patients

Sumeet Munjal, MD

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Effect of Severity of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease on Progression of Chronic Kidney Disease

Marc Saad, MD

Emory University

Renal Enlargement in End Stage Liver Disease

Ryan M. Downey, PhD

Emory University

Impaired Functional Sympatholysis in End-Stage Renal Disease

BASIC SCIENCE PRESENTATIONS

Venkat Ram Rakesh Mundra, MBBS

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Development of a Method for Three Dimensional Renal Cyst Segmentation

Stellor Nlandu Khodo, PhD

Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Deleting the TGF- β Receptor in the Proximal Tubule Worsens the Response to Chronic Injury Due to Altered β -Catenin Activation

Jessica M. Overstreet, PhD

Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Role of Lysophosphatidic Acid (LPA)/LPA Receptor in EGFR-Mediated Renal Fibrosis

Renfang Song, PhD

Tulane University Health Sciences Center

Reduced Prorenin Receptor (PRR) Gene Dosage in Nephron Progenitors in Mice Programs Hypertension Later in Life

Pankaj Srivastava, MSc, PhD

Medical University of South Carolina

A Novel Role for the Phosphatase SHP2 in Regulating Glomerular Filtration Function

Santosh Yadav, MSc, PhD

Tulane University Health Sciences Center

Renal Response to Acidosis: RNA-SEQ

Abolfazl Zarjou, MD, PhD

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Myeloid Specific H-ferritin Mediates Sepsis Induced Inflammation and Organ Injury