



# WSPR SPRING NEWSLETTER

March 2024

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**2025 Annual Meeting - Carmel-by-the-Sea, California**  
**Thursday, January 16th, 2025 - Saturday, January 18th, 2025**



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**THE WESTERN SOCIETY FOR PEDIATRIC RESEARCH**

c/o Shanlee Davis, MD, PhD

Secretary/Treasurer

Children's Hospital Colorado

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## President's Letter

Dear WSPR Members,

It was great to see many of you who attended the 2024 Western Medical Research meeting this past January. This year's conference had the highest number of abstract submissions and attendees in the history of WMRC! During our planning sessions we had to become really creative to try fit as many presentations as we could so that most all junior investigators and trainees had an opportunity to attend and share their research.



Mariana Baserga, MD, MSCI  
WSPR President, 2024-2025

The WSPR annual conference has a very special place in my heart. It was the first conference I attended in 1996 when I became a neonatology post-doctoral research fellow in UCSF, after moving to the US from Argentina. The following year, the WSPR gave me the first opportunity to present my research as a trainee and after 28 years continues to be such an important meeting for networking, career development and mentoring for students, trainees, and junior faculty across so many disciplines. I have had the honor to serve as Council member, as Secretary Treasurer and now as this year's President. If you have not had the chance in the past, I would like to encourage you to consider serving this incredible organization as an abstract reviewer and/or conference moderator or even become a Council member. If you are interested in serving the WSPR in any capacity, please reach out to me, Shanlee Davis, or a fellow Council member. I would also like to encourage the nomination of your department trainees for the WSPR trainee membership and other qualified colleagues for WSPR full membership so that we can continue to grow our society.

As you may be aware the WSPR is a rather small nonprofit organization that relies upon members and sponsors' support. Membership annual dues are being invoiced starting in July so please look out for that notice in your email (QuickBooks invoice). We also owe the success of our conference to the continuous support of generous sponsors who make our meeting possible, including Reckitt/Mead Johnson Nutrition, Abbott Nutrition, Chiesi, and Prolacta Bioscience Foundation. We are beyond grateful for their enthusiasm for the WSPR and their continued support of pediatric research. We also need to recognize the ongoing funding for the State-of-the-Art lectures from the following academic centers: University of Colorado, Stanford University, University of Utah, University of Southern California, University of California Davis, University of California Los Angeles, and Cedars-Sinai.

The WSPR sessions in 2024 included 11 Neonatology sessions, 2 Adolescent Medicine & General Pediatrics sessions, 2 Behavior, Development & Psychology sessions and 4 Genetics sessions. We continued the tradition of recognizing the top abstracts submitted by medical students, trainees, and junior faculty with awards from our generous sponsors.

I would like to thank all the abstract reviewers, session moderators, WSPR Council members, and Past Presidents Nicole Tartaglia and Henry Lee. A very special thank you to our new Secretary-Treasurer Shanlee Davis from the University of Colorado who did a fantastic job organizing her first WSPR conference!!! Shanlee's right-hand Kayla Molison

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merits a special recognition for a job well done as our new WSPR administrator. Finally, our annual conference would not be a great success without our organizers Lori Ennis and Bonnie Adams.

The dates for the next Western Regional Medical Conference are set for January 16-18, 2025. Mark your calendar! At next year's meeting we will continue to host outstanding state-of-the-art lectures and have the opportunity to sponsor many trainee travel and abstract awards, as well as the annual Young Investigator, David W. Smith Pediatric Trainee, St. Geme Jr. Education, Abbott Pediatric Resident Research, and Lowell Glasgow Student Awards to well-deserving trainees. Please encourage your trainees and junior faculty to submit abstracts – the **abstract deadline will be September 20, 2024**.

I believe that together we can continue the great tradition of the WSPR to give our students, trainees and junior faculty the opportunity to present their research, create new collaborations, and foster their career development. I look forward to seeing everyone for some great science, mentoring, and networking at WSPR 2025.

Sincerely,  
Mariana Baserga, MD, MSCI  
President, WSPR 2024

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**2024 WSPR Award Winners:** From left, **Andie Gonzalez** (Abbott Nutrition Representative), **Jane Stremming** (Young Investigator Awardee), **Paula Dias Maia** (David W. Smith Awardee), & **Danielle Liu** (Lowell Glasgow Awardee)

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## **2024 WSPR Award Winners**

### ***WSPR Abbott Nutrition David W. Smith Pediatric Trainee Research Award***

Paula Dias Maia, University of Colorado

### ***WSPR Abbott Nutrition Lowell Glasgow Student Research Award***

Danielle Liu, Loma Linda University

### ***WSPR Abbott Nutrition Outstanding Resident Research Award***

Aimee Juan, University of Pennsylvania, Stanford University

### ***WSPR Abbott Nutrition Subspecialty Award***

Cheri Chambers, University of Washington, Seattle Children's Hospital

Emily Dunn, Stanford University

Evan Giusto, University of California, University of California, Davis

Ahmed Moutwakil, University of Colorado

Sofia Pesantez, Stanford University

Crystal Tam, University of Washington, University of Washington

Jingshing Wu, University of California, San Francisco

### ***WSPR Abbott Nutrition Young Investigator Research Award***

Jane Stremming, University of Colorado

### ***WSPR Reckitt/Mead Johnson Subspecialty Award***

David Blair, University of California San Francisco, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland

Page Calvert, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center

Faith Myers, Stanford Medicine

Andrew Rebentisch, University of Utah

Cadence Seymour, UC San Diego

Desiree Starzyk, University of Colorado School of Medicine

Tasha Wainstein, University of British Columbia, BC Children's Hospital Research Institute

### ***WSPR Prolacta Bioscience Research Award***

Arjun Anumula, Sharp Mary Birch

Shiyu Bai-Tong, Rady Children's Hospital, University of California, San Diego

Alexandra Carl, Children's Hospital of Colorado

Tessa Gillespie, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Mihai Puia-Dumitrescu, Seattle Children's Main hospital

Juan Ramos, Stanford University

Frank Strnad, University of Utah

Jakob Van Boerum, University of Utah

Lan Weiss, University of California, Irvine

Sean Wickers, University of California, San Francisco

Lijun Zheng, University of Colorado School of Medicine

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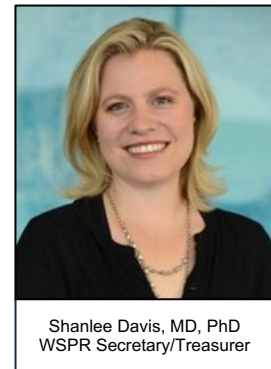
**Congratulations to Daniah Belefard, winner of the  
2024 WSPR/SPR Award to Enhance Diversity in the Research Workforce**

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## Secretary/Treasurer Notes

Thank you to those that participated in our 2024 conference! It was a record year for number of abstract submissions and registrations - and by all measures a huge success. We are also excited to share some important updates that came out of the 2024 conference:



### **Qualtrics Membership Application**

Beginning in 2024, we will transition to using Qualtrics to collect WSPR membership applications. Prospective WSPR applicants will need submit all application materials to the Qualtrics application form to be considered for membership. A link to the membership application is available on the WSPR website ([www.westernspr.org/](http://www.westernspr.org/)), and a QR code linking to the application is also included here for your convenience.



### **Membership Self-Nomination**

Beginning in 2024, we will allow self-nomination for active and trainee WSPR membership. Applicants choosing to self-nominate should include in their application a self-recommendation letter detailing their involvement in pediatric research and other relevant accomplishments that would make them an ideal WSPR member.

### **Elimination of Dues for Trainee Members**

Starting on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, we will no longer be requiring dues payments for trainee members. This change is designed to make WSPR membership more accessible for trainees involved in research.

### **By-Laws Amendments**

A total of four by-laws amendments were proposed at the 2024 meeting. All four amendments were passed by the WSPR council and hence sent to active members for voting. Voting by active members occurred online between January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024. A total of 77 active members voted. We are pleased to report that all four amendments were approved by active membership.

Additionally, we have a few important “asks” for our WSPR members:

1. **Nominate your colleagues and trainees for membership!** WSPR has a lot to offer, including sponsored awards, discounted WMRC registration, and networking opportunities. Consider colleagues both within and outside your home institution. Membership applications are accepted year-round and will be evaluated on a quarterly basis. Details on the application process for full and trainee membership are available on the [WSPR website](http://www.westernspr.org/).
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## 2. Nominate your colleagues and trainees for one of our sponsored awards!

These awards enable us to showcase some of the best pediatric research in the West. The awards available for 2025 include:

- i. The **WSPR Abbott Nutrition Young Investigator Award**: This award is conferred every year to an outstanding pediatric scientist in the early phase of their career. The nominee must have a junior faculty academic appointment. The winner receives \$1,000 and an engraved plaque, which will be presented to them at the annual meeting. The award winner will be asked to present a summary of their work at the combined plenary session. Nominations can only be submitted by an active or emeritus member of WSPR.
- ii. The **David W. Smith Pediatric Trainee Research Award**: This award is conferred every year to an outstanding pediatric resident or fellow conducting original pediatric research. This award includes a plaque and a \$1000 honorarium. Nominees are expected to submit an abstract to WSPR and present their work at the annual meeting. Nominations can only be submitted by an active or emeritus member of WSPR.
- iii. The **Joseph W. St. Geme Jr. Education Award**: This award is conferred annually by WSPR in recognition of outstanding achievement in pediatric education. The award is presented to a winner at the plenary session of the meeting and is accompanied by a \$1,000 award and a plaque. Nomination can be submitted by an active or emeritus member of WSPR. There is no age limit on this award.
- iv. The **Award to Enhance Diversity in the Research Workforce**: This award is conferred annually by SPR/WSPR to an outstanding pediatric scientist with an under-represented background. SPR will provide travel support and complimentary PAS registration to the recipient. The awardee will be acknowledged for their research at the Joint SPR Research Showcase & Reception during the annual PAS meeting. Self-nominations are accepted and encouraged.

Please refer to our website ([WSPR Awards](#)) or email us at [wsprcouncil@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:wsprcouncil@cuanschutz.edu) if you have questions about any of the awards or the nomination process.

3. **Volunteer!** We are always in need of additional abstract reviewers and session moderators. If you want to help in either capacity for the 2025 meeting, please email us at [wsprcouncil@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:wsprcouncil@cuanschutz.edu) and note what your interests are.
  4. **Lead!** We are seeking Council Members that represent diverse institutions and specialties to serve starting in 2025. Council members serve a 3-year term with the role of promoting the WSPR mission within their own institution, reviewing abstracts, and attending two virtual council meetings per year. Please email us if you would like to be considered for this leadership role.
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5. **Pay your dues.** Dues for the 2023 financial year were invoiced on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. If you have not paid your annual dues, please pay using the QR codes below or contact us at [wsprcouncil@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:wsprcouncil@cuanschutz.edu). Additionally, dues for the 2024 financial year will be invoiced on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Once invoiced, please pay these promptly, as paid dues are required to receive discounted registration for the annual meeting.



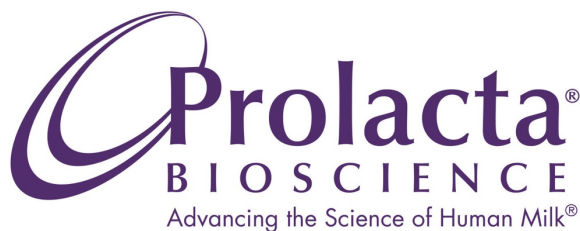
QR Code for Active Members



QR Code for Emeritus Members

Sincerely,  
Shanlee Davis, MD, PhD  
WSPR Secretary/Treasurer 2023 - 2027

**We would like to thank the following companies for their generous support:**



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## New WSPR Members

**We would like to offer a warm welcome to the individuals granted active or trainee membership in 2023/2024!**

### New Members:

- **Nana Matoba, MD** - *UCSD*
- **Jill Chang, MD** - *University of Colorado*
- **Hemananda Muniraman, MD** - *University of Arizona*
- **Mark Brittan, MD** - *University of Colorado*
- **Dena Matalon, MD** - *Stanford*
- **Talia Thompson, PhD** - *University of Colorado*
- **Katie Strobel, MD** - *University of Washington*

### New Trainee Members:

- **Igbagbosanmi Oredein, MD** – *Stanford*
- **Tristan Dear, MD** - *University of Colorado*
- **Julie Mei Law, MD** - *UC Davis*
- **Daphne Darmawan, MD** - *Stanford*
- **Cristina Gutierrez, MD** - *Stanford*
- **Jingshing Wu, MD** – *UCSF*
- **Adriana Gomes, MD** - *UCSD*

## 2024 WSPR Leadership

**President:** Mariana Baserga, MD – University of Utah

**Secretary – Treasurer:** Shanlee Davis, MD, PhD – University of Colorado

**President – Elect:** Kathy Angkustsiri, MD – University of California Davis

**Past President:** Nicole Tartaglia, MD, MS – University of Colorado

### **Off Council:**

Marilyn C. Jones, MD – University of California San Diego

Robin Ohls, MD – University of New Mexico

### **Council Members:**

Bianca Russell, MD – University of California Los Angeles

Timothy Bahr, MD – University of Utah

Alison Chu, MD - University of California Los Angeles

Camille Fung, MD - University of Utah

Anita Beck, MD - University of Washington

Cassidy Delaney, MD - University of Colorado

Eniko Sajti, MD, PhD - University of California San Diego

Rowena Cayabyab, MD – University of Southern California

Katie Strobel, MD – University of Washington

Jessie Maxwell, MD – University of New Mexico

Kristen Wigby, MD – University of California Davis

Talia Thompson, PhD – University of Colorado

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# Save The Date for the 2025 Western Medical Research Conference January 16-18, 2025

