

2025 Medical Student Research Conference Awards:

François M. Abboud Prize for Best Platform Presentation (U of I Foundation Award)

Fisher, Jake, M2 **Oral**

Title: *"The Influence of Body Composition on Fibrotic Remodeling of the Infrapatellar Fat Pad in Total Knee Arthroplasty"*

Mentor: Jacob Elkins, Orthopedics and Rehabilitation

Donald D. Heistad Prize for Best Poster Presentation (U of I Foundation Award)

Kumar, Vooha, M2 **Poster**

Title: *"Investigating the Role of Cardiac Sodium-Glucose Co-Transporter 1 (SGLT1) in Diabetic Cardiomyopathy"*

Mentor: Ferhaan Ahmad, Internal Medicine

Borts Award (U of I Foundation Award)

Boes, Sam, M2 **Oral**

Title: *"Is intraoperative phenylephrine associated with kidney injury in patients undergoing burn surgery?"*

Mentor: Alexander Kurjatko, Surgery

Co-Mentor: Colette Galet, Surgery

Edward Heath Award (U of I Foundation Award)

Mariman, Britt, M1 **Poster**

Title: *"Bullous Pemphigoid Blister Fluid, Sera, and Antibodies Drive Regulatory T Cell Dysfunction and Langerhans Cell Activation"*

Mentor: Kelly Messingham, Dermatology

Melvin Marcus Clinical Research Award (U of I Foundation Award)

Soldati, Devin, M2 **Oral**

Title: *"Diagnostic utility of ultrasonography in diagnosing carpal tunnel syndrome vs. electrodiagnostic studies"*

Mentor: Joseph Buckwalter V, Orthopedics and Rehabilitation

Excellence in Global Health Programs Research Award

Dodds, Allison, M2 **Oral**

Title: *"Factors Influencing Time of Presentation Among Children with Myelomeningocele in Zambia. A Prospective Study"*

Mentor: Rebecca Reynolds, Neurosurgery

Excellence in Global Health Programs Research Award

Lietsch, Mei, M2 **Oral**

Title: *"Impact of Sonographic Training on Prenatal Myelomeningocele Diagnosis Across Rural and Urban Settings in Zambia"*

Mentor: Rebecca Reynolds, Neurosurgery

Excellence in Anatomy and Cell Biology Research

Smith, Jessica, M2G **Poster**

Title: *"The Role of Arhgap29 in Orofacial Clefting"*

Mentor: Martine Dunwald, Anatomy and Cell Biology

2025 Medical Student Research Conference Awards:

Margaret V. Lunsford Award for Research in Anesthesia

Kobuzi, Dennis, M2 **Oral**

Title: *“Modeling complex airway procedures using a novel subglottic airway device for selective lobar ventilation: a mannequin-based study”*

Mentor: David Kaczka, Anesthesia

Co-Mentor: Dexter Franklin, Anesthesia

Excellence in Anesthesia Basic Science Research

Bhushan, Arnav, M2 **Oral**

Title: *“ESKAPE Pathogen Transmission in an Anesthesia Work Area During Cesarean Delivery: A Quality Improvement Project”*

Mentor: Unyime Ituk, Anesthesia

Co-Mentor: Dexter Franklin, Anesthesia

Arthur A. Spector Award in Basic Biomedical Research

Yoo, Hye-Lin, M1G **Oral**

Title: *“Separating DNA Synthesis and Pyrophosphatase Activities of DNA Polymerase Eta”*

Mentor: Todd Washington, Biochemistry

Nicholas P. Rossi Award for Cardiothoracic Surgery Research

Shoukih, Kareem, M2 **Oral**

Title: *“Loss of Nicotinic Receptor Innervation Increases Cell Proliferation in Acute Airway Injury”*

Mentor: Kalpaj Parekh, Cardiothoracic Surgery

Excellence in Dermatology Research

Maw, Rivers, M2 **Poster**

Title: *“Paraneoplasia risk and prevalence quantification of paraneoplastic dermatoses by TriNetX data network analysis.”*

Mentor: Vincent Liu, Dermatology

Excellence in Emergency Medicine Research

Glawe, Dylan, M2 **Poster**

Title: *“Structural Brain Lesions and Delirium in Geriatric Emergency Department Patients: A Matched Case-Control Study”*

Mentor: Sangil Lee, Emergency Medicine

Excellence in Family Medicine Research

Snyder, Jackson, M2 **Poster**

Title: *“Perceptions of Diabetes Risk Factors in Ecuador and Iowa”*

Mentor: David Bedell, Family Medicine

John Stokes Award for Research in Internal Medicine

Lam, Dat, M2 **Poster**

Title: *“Successful maturation of stem cell derived islet from RUES2 cell line in the presence of fatty acids”*

Mentor: Yumi Imai, Internal Medicine

2025 Medical Student Research Conference Awards:

Excellence in Internal Medicine Research

Gannon, Ryan, M4 **Poster**

Title: "An ex-vivo approach to predict clinical response to CFTR modulator therapy or to rule out CF in individuals with rare CFTR mutations."

Mentor: Alejandro Pezzulo, Internal Medicine

Excellence in Internal Medicine Research

Manika, Deeraj, M1 **Poster**

Title: "Incidence and Prevalence of Ventricular Tachycardia has Increased in Most Demographics over the past Decade"

Mentor: Jennifer Streeter, Internal Medicine

Excellence in Microbiology and Immunology Research

Gorman, Nick, M2G **Oral**

Title: "Developing a Model for tRNA Fragment-Mediated Suppression of Herpesvirus Replication in Macrophages"

Mentor: Jessica Tucker, Microbiology and Immunology

Excellence in Microbiology and Immunology Research

Weigel, Gabriel, M1G **Oral**

Title: "The Immunomodulatory Effects of Lactate on Neutrophils exposed to N. Gonorrhoeae."

Mentor: Aimee Potter, Microbiology and Immunology

Research Excellence in Molecular Physiology and Biophysics

Arrington, Michael, M2G **Oral**

Title: "Global Nitrogen Flux in Human Colorectal Cancer Cells"

Mentor: Eric Taylor, Molecular Biology and Biophysics

Excellence in Basic Neuroscience Research

Krusemark, Campbell, M2G **Poster**

Title: "Investigating ion channel function in serotonin-mediated central chemosensitivity"

Mentor: George Richerson, Neurology

Excellence in Clinical Neuroscience Research

Toea, Gabriel, M2 **Oral**

Title: "Speech Outcomes After Deep Brain Stimulation of the Subthalamic Nucleus in Parkinson's Disease"

Mentor: Jeremy Greenlee, Neurosurgery

Excellence in Translational Neuroscience Research

Johnson, Connor, M2G **Poster**

Title: "The gene expression signature of electrical stimulation in the human brain"

Mentor: Chris Petkov, Neurosurgery

Excellence in Neuroscience and Pharmacology Research

Nguyen, Lanchi, M2 **Poster**

Title: "Investigating the Role of Dynorphinergic LJA5 Neurons in Post-Surgical Pain Modulation"

Mentor: Yuriy Usachev, Neuroscience and Pharmacology

2025 Medical Student Research Conference Awards:

Excellence in Clinical Research in Obstetrics & Gynecology

Hsu, Erica, M4 **Poster**

Title: "Efficacy of Ask Ana Chatbot for Prenatal Questions"

Mentor: Donna Santillan, Obstetrics and Gynecology

Excellence in Obstetrics & Gynecology Research

Pearl, Sydney, M2 **Oral**

Title: "Maternal Exposure to Environmental Contaminant Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid Disrupts Metabolic Pathways Critical for Placental Function and Fetal Growth"

Mentor: Donna Santillan, Obstetrics and Gynecology

Thomas A. Weingeist Award in Ophthalmology

Chen, Sophia, M2 **Oral**

Title: "Quantification of Intraretinal Fluid Characteristics Correlates with Visual Acuity in Diabetic Macular Edema: A Deep Learning-Based Approach"

Mentor: Elliott Sohn, Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences

William E. Scott Research Award in Ophthalmology

Thompson, Jacob, M2 **Poster**

Title: "Light Exposure Correlates with Disease Severity and Retinal Function in X-Linked Retinoschisis"

Mentor: Arlene Drack, Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences

Hansjoerg E. Kolder Award for Ophthalmology Research

Sarin, Sahana, M2 **Poster**

Title: "Detecting Visual Field Defects Using Size Modulation Perimetry: A Cost-Effective and Optimized Approach to Test the Visual Field"

Mentor: Edward Linton, Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences
Co-Mentor: Michael Wall, Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences

Ignasio V. Ponseti Prize in Orthopaedic Research

Zhang, Travis, M2 **Poster**

Title: "Weight Bearing CT Shows Altered Tibiofemoral Loading Following Combined ACL Reconstruction and Meniscus Treatment"

Mentor: Don Anderson, Orthopedics and Rehabilitation

Research Excellence in Orthopaedics

Haws, Daniel, M2 **Poster**

Title: "A comparative Investigation of Patient Outcomes Across Multiple Joint Arthroplasties"

Mentor: Brendan Patterson, Orthopedics and Rehabilitation

Excellence in Otolaryngology Research

Marla, Kiran, M2 **Oral**

Title: "Centralization of Cancer Surgery in the United States: A Cross-Specialty Analysis of Hospital Procedure Volume"

Mentor: Nitin Pagedar, Otolaryngology

2025 Medical Student Research Conference Awards:

Richard G. Lynch Award for Excellence in Pathology Research

Joglekar, Aditya, M1 **Poster**

Title: "Interferon-gamma (IFN γ) – IFN γ Receptor axis controls the suppressor function of CD8⁺ T-cells and effector resistance of CD4⁺ T-cells"

Mentor: Nitin Karandikar, Pathology

Richard G. Lynch Award for Excellence in Pathology Research

Pham, Quynh, M2 **Oral**

Title: "Exploring the Mechanism of SETDB1 in Obesity-Enhanced Endometrial Cancer: A Pilot Study"

Mentor: Shujie Yang, Pathology

Excellence in Pediatric Basic Science Research

Gubner, Kevin, M2 **Oral**

Title: "Neuroanatomical and Imaging Evidence of Brain Alterations in Hemophilia A"

Mentor: Janice Staber, Pediatrics

Excellence in Pediatric Clinical Research

Bowers, Brynn, M2 **Poster**

Title: "The Impact of Maternal Depression and Its Treatment on Offspring Cardiac Outcomes"

Mentor: Sarah Haskell, Pediatrics

George Winokur Research Award in Psychiatry

Chug, Shria, M2 **Oral**

Title: "Does CAG repeat length in the HTT gene confer a developmental benefit for those not at risk for Huntington's disease?"

Mentor: Peg Nopoulos, Psychiatry

Bob Robinson Research Award in Psychiatry

Gibson, Mikayla, M1 **Poster**

Title: "Recovery Coaching Outcomes in patients with co-occurring liver disease and substance use disorders"

Mentor: Andrea Weber, Psychiatry

Lauretta Bender Research Award in Psychiatry

Baker, Alexis, M2 **Poster**

Title: "Association between differences in pediatric autism diagnoses by clinical team and sex, age, rurality, race, and socioeconomic status"

Mentor: Allan Andersen, Psychiatry

Jason Martin Medical Student Research Award in Radiology

Deng, Lubin, M4 **Oral**

Title: "Machine Learning with Multiple Modalities of Brain Magnetic Resonance Imaging to Predict Prior Suicidal Behavior Among Participants with Bipolar Disorder"

Mentor: Vincent A. Magnotta, Radiology

2025 Medical Student Research Conference Awards:

Larry W. Oberley Award in Radiation Oncology

Yu, Katherine, M2 **Oral**

Title: *“Pathologic extranodal extension: an undervalued prognostic factor in head and neck squamous cell carcinoma.”*

Mentor: Kailin Yang, Radiation Oncology

Kimberly Ephgrave Medical Student Award for Research in Surgery

Rivera Juarez, Ana, M2 **Oral**

Title: *“Identifying Risk Factors for Inpatient Falls in Burn Patients: A Retrospective Cohort Analysis”*

Mentor: Alexander Kurjatko, Surgery

Co-Mentor: Colette Galet, Surgery

Excellence in Urology Research

Godbersen, Carson, M2 **Oral**

Title: *“Evaluation of the Concordance and Discordance in Urine Parameters on the Risk of Cystine Stone Activity”*

Mentor: Ryan Steinberg, Urology