FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The American Association of Immunologists
Press Release

The American Association of Immunologists Announces 2023 Recipients of the Careers in Immunology Fellowships

Thirteen principal investigators awarded one year of salary support for trainees

ROCKVILLE, MD (September 26, 2023) — The American Association of Immunologists (AAI) is pleased to announce the 2023 recipients of the AAI Careers in Immunology Fellowships.

Established in 2014, this program supports the career development of young scientists by providing eligible principal investigators with one year of salary support for a trainee in their labs. The program strives to support labs with limited funding or those in need of bridge funding between grants—and this critical support often enables groundbreaking research to continue.

This year, AAI awarded fellowships to 13 recipients. Congratulations go to:

Suzanne Cassel, M.D. (AAI ’21), Associate Professor
Trainee: Suman Gupta, Ph.D. (AAI ’21), Postdoctoral Fellow
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
Project: Regulation of melanoma progression by NLRC4

Chih-Hao Chang, Ph.D. (AAI ’13), Assistant Professor
Trainee: Colleen L. Mayberry, Ph.D. (AAI ’23), Postdoctoral Fellow
The Jackson Laboratory
Project: Metabolic modulation of effector T cell function in cancer

Sherrie J. Divito, M.D., Ph.D. (AAI ’17), Assistant Professor
Trainee: Xiaopeng Fu, Ph.D. (AAI ’22), Postdoctoral Fellow
Brigham and Women's Hospital
Project: Interrogating the skin immune system in dirty mice

Ana M. Espino, Ph.D. (AAI ’15), Professor
Trainee: Albersy Armina-Rodriguez (AAI ’21), Graduate Student
University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine
Project: Fasciola hepatica fatty acid binding protein (Fh15): its therapeutic capacity, role in the activation of macrophages, and impact in the relative abundance of proteins associated to inflammatory pathways
Sivapriya Kailasan Vanaja, D.V.M., Ph.D. (AAI ’16), Assistant Professor
Trainee: Rafael Ricci de Azevedo, Ph.D. (AAI ’23), Postdoctoral Fellow
UConn Health School of Medicine
Project: Mechanisms of Shiga toxin-mediated cell death

Susan E. Kovats, Ph.D. (AAI ’98), Member
Trainee: Abigail Williams (AAI ’21), Graduate Student
Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation
Project: Sex-divergent ILC2 functions as a result of androgen receptor activity modulating the epigenome

Jean S. Marshall, Ph.D. (AAI ’95), Professor
Trainee: Roopa Nanjundappa, Ph.D. (AAI ’22), Postdoctoral Fellow
Dalhousie University Faculty of Medicine, Canada
Project: The role of mast cells in regulating immune responses against RSV infection

Gowrishankar Muthukrishnan, Ph.D. (AAI ’20), Assistant Professor
Trainee: Himanshu Meghwani, M.B.B.S., Ph.D. (AAI ’23), Postdoctoral Fellow
University of Rochester Medical Center
Project: Examining IL-17/IL-17R axis in IL-27-mediated neutrophilic responses during Staphylococcus aureus osteomyelitis

Dana J. Philpott, Ph.D. (AAI ’11), Professor
Trainee: Jitender Yadav, Ph.D. (AAI ’23), Postdoctoral Fellow
University of Toronto, Canada
Project: Elucidating the link between metabolic dysfunction and Crohn's disease

Ramandeep Rattan, Ph.D. (AAI ’18), Senior Scientist
Trainee: Mary Priyanka Udumula, Ph.D. (AAI ’21), Postdoctoral Fellow
Henry Ford Health System and Wayne State University
Project: Role of novel small molecule mitochondrial inhibitors in targeting immunosuppressive myeloid cells in ovarian cancer

Joyce Solheim, Ph.D. (AAI ’95), Professor
Trainee: Alaina C. Larson (AAI ’22), Graduate Student
University of Nebraska Medical Center
Project: Modulation of antigen presentation by cancer therapy

Ajithkumar Vasanthakumar, Ph.D. (AAI ’23), Laboratory Head
Trainee: Tabinda Hussain, Ph.D. (AAI ’23), Postdoctoral Fellow
Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute, Australia
Project: Investigating the homeostatic requirements of Treg cells in primary and metastatic tumor niches

Tiffany Weinkopff, Ph.D. (AAI ’23), Assistant Professor
Trainee: Lucy Fry (AAI ’22), Graduate Student
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
Project: Determining the role of lymphatic remodeling in the maintenance of non-healing leishmaniasis

About The American Association of Immunologists
Founded in 1913, The American Association of Immunologists (www.aai.org) is an association of professionally trained scientists from all over the world dedicated to advancing the knowledge of immunology and its related disciplines. AAI members have been responsible for some of the most significant immunological discoveries of the past century, including the development of cancer immunotherapies, monoclonal antibodies, transplant technologies, and dozens of life-saving vaccines. The organization counts 27 Nobel Laureates among its members. AAI owns and publishes *The Journal of Immunology*, the oldest and most established journal in the field, as well as *ImmunoHorizons*, an open-access, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to the science of immunology.

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