

Recap of ASNR's 2024 Annual Meeting in San Antonio

The 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Society for Neurorehabilitation (ASNR) brought together more than 200 attendees spanning a broad range of geographic locations, backgrounds, and disciplines! The meeting provided great opportunities for networking, discussion, and learning about the latest advances in neurorehabilitation research, technology, and care.

Pre-Conference Events

ASNR was pleased to partner with the Brain Computer Interface (BCI) Society to co-host the Inaugural Clinical Brain-Computer Interface Workshop on April 10th. ASNR Board Members Dr. Leigh Hochberg and Dr. Karunesh Ganguly organized the event, and it brought together more than 50 clinicians, researchers, and industry professionals. The event was held at the conference hotel, the Hilton Palacio del Rio, and attendees participated in vibrant discussions and presentations surrounding the clinical translation



of implantable BCI and the emerging multidisciplinary field of BCI therapeutics. “The ASNR community is dedicated to advancing neurorehabilitation, and its members will play a key role in bringing implantable BCIs to the benefit of people with stroke, spinal cord injury, ALS, and other neurologic disorders”, said Dr. Hochberg. Dr. Ganguly added, “It was a great, lively discussion, where experts quickly engaged in identifying how a variety of clinical and scientific disciplines and patient advocates will help to craft the future of this important field”.

The Conference Program and Attendees

Day one of ASNR 2024 began with an informal address from Dr. Ela Plow, incoming Chair of our Education Committee, to kick off the Professional Development Roundtable Session. There were a total of twelve roundtables covering six topics: NIH grants, reviewing grants, manuscript reviewing, reproducible rehabilitation research, leveraging social media for your career, and networking and making connections.



In reflecting on the upcoming events of the conference, Dr. Dylan Edwards remarked, "It's great to be here in San Antonio at ASNR 2024. I'd love to catch up with old colleagues and new people entering the field, see the wonderful posters that are here, and hear more about the excellent range of topics that will be presented." Dr. Edwards is the Nancy Wachtel Shrier Director of the Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute and a Professor at Thomas Jefferson University.

A first-time attendee Syamala Buragadda, a PhD Candidate at Memorial University of Newfoundland, echoed similar sentiments, adding "This is my first time coming here, and it's been really interesting. Amazing talks, and I'm looking forward to the upcoming sessions."



In addition to the roundtable discussions, the program included two interactive Professional Development Sessions. The first of these sessions explored applications of emerging computer vision technologies in neurorehabilitation, and the second walked attendees through the process of integrating qualitative methods into their neurorehabilitation research.



The conference program also included scientific symposia on windows of opportunity for recovery, plasticity, and deconditioning in multiple sclerosis; tactile assessments and treatments for upper extremity motor recovery in stroke; using markerless motion capture to increase diversity and inclusivity of 3D motion assessment; the impacts of reticulospinal contributions to movement rehabilitation after stroke and spinal cord injury; and new frontiers in regenerative neurorehabilitation.



"I think my favorite part is connecting with colleagues and the discussions after each of the sessions. I tend to get just as much from the questions as I do from the presentations themselves. I've really enjoyed the talks so far," remarked Dr. Chad Swank, a Research Scientist at the Baylor Scott & White Research Institute, as he headed over to the poster session after the final scientific symposium on day one.

One hundred sixteen research posters were presented across two poster receptions, where attendees enjoyed beverages, hors d'oeuvres, and engaging conversations with poster



presenters and exhibitors. This year's sponsors and exhibitors included Partners in Medicine, Synchron, The Motion Monitor, The Medical Rehabilitation Research Resource (MR3), Rogue Research, Paradromics, The National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research (NCMRR), and MindMaze. The receptions provided a great environment for discussion and exchange amongst attendees and exhibitors.

"It's been phenomenal. So wonderful to see collaborators I've never met in person, colleagues from previous institutions, and friends from across the country. It's really nice to have us all here together to talk about science and what we've been up to. Also just really exciting to hear about cutting-edge work in the field and the innovative projects people are working on at other institutions. It also opens the door to collaborations for those doing similar work or applying techniques that could be used in my research," stated Dr. Grace Bellinger, a Postdoctoral Fellow at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

As part of ASNR's continued commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we were pleased to welcome Dr. Gladys Maestre to share her expertise in an inspiring and compelling session on the topic of using representativeness as an alternative to DEI in clinical research. Dr. Maestre is the Director of the Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center for Minority Aging Research and Professor of Neurosciences and Human Genetics at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.



In the final session of the conference, the Program Committee was excited to engage attendees in a lively debate with panelists regarding the terminology and evidence surrounding neural reorganization on Day three. This session involved back-and-forth discussion between presenters and members of the audience to highlight different perspectives as well as important gaps that remain in the field.



"I really like everything about the meeting," noted Ehsan Sinaei, a PhD Student at the MGH Institute of Health Professions. "It's very well organized. Everything is on time. It's very, very friendly. And I really feel comfortable here. There are a lot of great scientists, but it doesn't feel

intense or intimidating. It's like a cozy lab meeting, but at a conference. I've met scientists from many different backgrounds, so the meeting is totally interdisciplinary, but at the same time it is very focused on neurorehabilitation. I think every scientific conference should be like this," he explained.

FIRST-TIME ATTENDEE PERSPECTIVES



"I love how interdisciplinary it has been here. I am with respiratory care and am now collaborating with physical therapy. Seeing all the research involving so many different fields and specialties, and hearing the different perspectives that come from being in different disciplines, has been truly amazing. Everyone has been so kind, friendly, and supportive, and it is such a great place to talk, discuss, and generate new ideas."

**Angel Melendez, PhD Research Associate,
The University of Texas at El Paso**



"I think the breadth of information that's been communicated has been really interesting, as well as seeing the advancements in technology from the lab trickle down to clinicians. I'm a physical therapist by background, but I currently work for a pharmaceutical company and do spasticity management education. So, clinical relevance is really important to me, and that combination of having people with clinical backgrounds and researchers coming together is what attracted me to this meeting."

**Dr. Sawyer Powers-Ferguson, Medical
Science Liaison, Ipsen Biopharmaceuticals**



"It has been really helpful to hear from everyone who is doing such amazing research and working at the forefront of the field of neurorehabilitation. I really like how there's a good blend of clinicians and researchers here, and I think these kinds of interdisciplinary meetings are really helping to inform clinical practice, coming from the student perspective."

**Jessica Manning, Occupational Therapy Doctorate
Student, Virginia Commonwealth University.**



"This has been a really great experience. Being here in person, seeing the work of people who are doing a lot of different things, and learning about the most updated research from the different talks has been really eye-opening for me. It also opens doors to collaboration and discussions with people in the same field to see if we can work on projects together or share our work. That's really helpful. I'm a trainee, and it's really good for me to learn about what more senior people in the field are doing and how they are doing it, so I can use it to advance my career and research."

**Dr. Liqi Shu, Neurology Fellow, The Warren
Alpert Medical School of Brown University**

ASNR Award Recipients

During our Award Recognition Ceremony, we were excited to acknowledge the 2024 recipients of our Diversity Fellowship Awards, Presidential Abstract Award, Fletcher Abstract Award, Outstanding Neurorehabilitation Clinician-Scientist Award, Kenneth Viste Jr., MD, Memorial Lectureship Award, and two new Fellows of the American Society of Neurorehabilitation. Congratulations to all of the award recipients pictured below!

ASNR 2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS

2024 Diversity Fellows



Alex Bendetto



Manuel Portillo-Jimenez



Alexandra Reed

Kenneth Viste, Jr., MD Memorial Lectureship Award



Beth Fisher
PT, PhD

Presidential Abstract Award

Victoria
Nemchek, BA



Fletcher Abstract Award



Anne Schwarz,
PT, PhD

ASNR Fellows



Jyutika Mehta, PhD, CCC-SLP



Steve Cramer, MD, MMSc

Outstanding Neurorehabilitation Clinician Scientist Award

Karunesh Ganguly,
MD, PhD



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF NEUROREHABILITATION

Social Events and Networking

As a smaller, single-track conference, ASNR attendees are together as a group throughout the conference program, and this provides valuable opportunities for connecting and sharing ideas. In addition to the interactive sessions, the scheduled breaks, lunches, poster receptions, and offsite activity provided attendees with a chance to catch up with old friends and meet new people from diverse areas in the field of neurorehabilitation.

Beyond informal networking opportunities, the meeting ended with a DEI offsite excursion where attendees enjoyed a 45-minute self-guided audio tour of The Alamo. The Alamo was the site of a renowned resistance effort in 1836 during the Texas Revolution, and it is among the historic Catholic missions in San Antonio that have been collectively named a U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site. The “Victory or Death Audio Tour” is narrated by country music singer, songwriter, actor, and nine-time Grammy Award winner Ray Benson from the Western swing band Asleep At The Wheel. During this excursion, attendees spent a memorable afternoon immersed in history.



Mark Your Calendars for ASNR 2025 in Atlanta

Looking back on the 2024 meeting, we appreciate the efforts of our outstanding Program Committee, led by Chair Dr. Kelsey Baker, as well as the presenters, attendees, exhibitors, and sponsors who all contributed to make this event a resounding success. We are already looking forward to our next Annual Meeting which will take place April 23 - 25, 2025, at the Grand Hyatt

Buckhead in Atlanta, GA. Make sure to save the date, and stay connected with ASNR for news, conference updates, and more.



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