

Memorable Moments and Attendee Perspectives From ASNR's 2025 Annual Meeting

Our 2025 ASNR Annual Meeting was among our largest on record with 288 registered attendees! Held at the Grand Hyatt Buckhead in Atlanta, Georgia, attendees enjoyed outstanding presentations, invigorating discussions, excellent networking opportunities, delicious food, and an exceptionally warm and welcoming environment.

Pre-Conference Events

A sense of collaboration and collegiality permeated our Pre-Conference Workshop that was held on April 22nd in partnership with the implantable Brain-Computer Interface Collaborative Community (iBCI-CC). The theme of the event was “Building Clinical Practice Guidelines for Implantable Brain-Computer Interfaces”. Attendees engaged in productive discussions surrounding the ideal processes for iBCI referral, considerations for the pre-implantation stage, implantation logistics, and recommendations for both short-term and long-term management after implantation. Speakers included Drs. Benjamin Rapoport and Daniel Rubin, Co-Leads of the iBCI-CC's Clinical Practice Guidelines Workgroup, as well as iBCI-CC Organizers Jessica Kelemen and Dr. Leigh Hochberg. Dr. Catherine Lang (now ASNR Past President) and Adam Fry (Clinical Science Manager at Synchron) served as panelists to kick off the conversation.



Conference Program and Attendees

The Professional Development Roundtables provided an interactive forum for attendees to connect with each other and the facilitators at each table. Led by our Education Committee Chair Dr. Ela Plow and Education Committee Member Dr. Jinsook Roh, the roundtables covered promoting good science in uncertain times, use of artificial intelligence (AI) in scientific writing, navigating early career transitions, navigating mid-late career transitions, networking and making connections, and the art and science of writing.



“I really enjoy coming to the ASNR Annual Meeting,” explained Joanna Hoh, an occupational therapist and PhD student at the University of Delaware. “I think it's a great environment for trainees to network with other trainees and a bunch of other amazing professionals in the neurorehabilitation field.” We were excited to have

attendees of all career stages participate in this session, and it was so well-attended that we had to bring in more chairs partway through!



Our 2025 program featured seven symposia with a total of twenty-nine speakers. The presentations featured a wide variety of approaches and methods, including behavioral economics, artificial intelligence and computational modeling, non-invasive brain stimulation, education, transcutaneous spinal cord stimulation, and implantable brain-

computer interfaces. This diverse array of content helps ensure all attendees can expand their knowledge and hear new perspectives. “I actually learned a lot of new things here about AI and biomechanics. So, this is really cool,” Raihan Mia, a PhD student at Marquette University.

Dr. Jason Carmel (ASNR Secretary/Treasurer and Weinberg Family Associate Professor of Neurology at Columbia University) commented that one of the things he likes most about ASNR Annual meetings are “the unexpected topics”. “For me, it was behavioral economics. I’m a big fan of the behavioral economics work, but I hadn’t really thought deeply about how it would apply to our goal of neuro-recovery,” he explained. “I loved that symposium because it went from a basic understanding of people’s choices in an artificial laboratory environment all the way to application in people’s homes. They talk about behavioral economics as the ‘nudge unit’, and I think we could use more of that theory-embedded nudge of behavior to improve health,” he continued.



There were great questions and comments from trainees, clinicians, researchers, clinician-scientists, and other professionals in the audience during the discussions at the end of each symposium. “I love ASNR so much because this is the perfect place to meet clinician-scientists. A lot of other conferences I go to, it’s mostly people who focus just on research. I’m a PT by background, and I love to

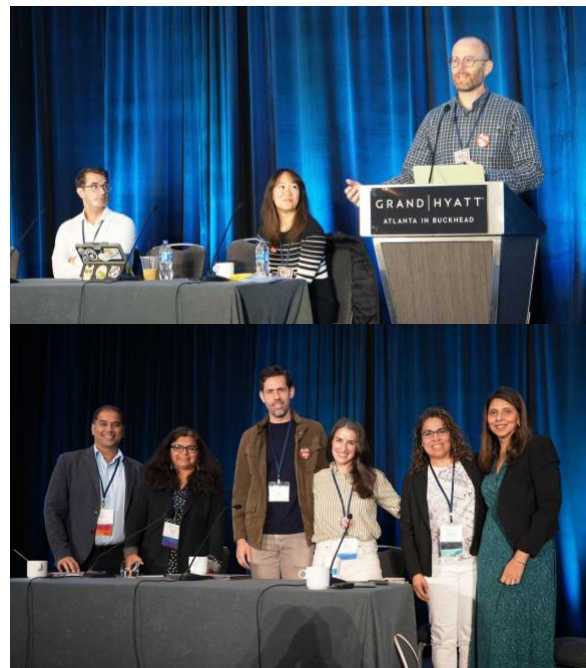
meet people who have experience in both worlds... I’m still a student, so there’s a lot to learn, but I feel like ASNR is such a cozy audience with such good feedback. The best thing about ASNR is that the audience knows how to give both negative and positive feedback in the best way,” remarked Pramisha Thapa, a PhD student at the University of Minnesota.

The research presented in the symposia spanned the translational pipeline from work in animal models to clinical trials in populations with stroke, Parkinson’s disease, spinal cord injury,

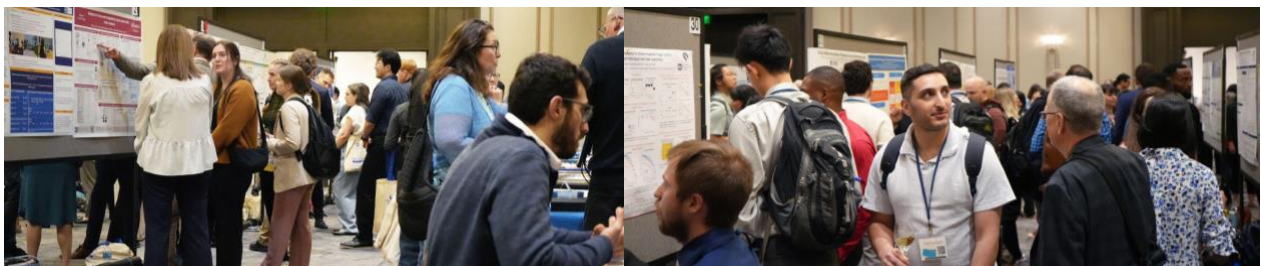


traumatic brain injury, and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Dr. Sean Dukelow indicated that he was really looking forward to the presentation of the results of the Transport 2 Trial, which examined whether brain stimulation could enhance the effects of motor therapy after stroke. "I think a lot of the research on brain stimulation is intriguing because it's potentially augmenting neuroplasticity, and this is an interesting route to potentially seeing better recovery in neurologic diseases like stroke," he elaborated.

This year's first Professional Development Session gave attendees hands-on experience using AI to help generate code and a sample machine learning model to visualize and analyze neurorehabilitation data from an open-source dataset. Programming like this session can help individuals at all career stages learn new techniques that are applicable to a wide range of research areas. Our second Professional Development Session brought attendees behind the scenes of an NIH mock scientific review section. Each panelist played the role of a character reviewing a submitted grant proposal, providing insight into the responsibilities of a Study Section Chair, the criteria on which grants are scored, issues that can arise in evaluating grants, and the conversation between reviewers that leads to the final score for a grant.



Our poster sessions are always a highlight of our Annual Meetings, and this year, we had nearly 150 posters on display over the course of two days. These sessions allow attendees to learn more about a broad range of research, both within and outside of their specific area of expertise, as well as meet presenters who may become collaborators and friends. "I have really appreciated getting to see both the perspectives of my fellow clinicians mixed with the perspectives of those who have taken more of a traditional academic research route. I work



specifically on gait, so learning more about upper extremity rehabilitation has been incredible. Getting to network and connect with people doing that work has been really cool. I've enjoyed the opportunity to really immerse myself in the science and everything that people in the field are doing," reflected Emily Shalit, an occupational therapist and PhD student at the University of Minnesota who was attending an ASNR Annual Meeting for the first time.

During the poster sessions, attendees also visited with our sponsors and exhibitors at their tables. This year, we were excited to welcome California Rehabilitation Institute/Select Medical, Cambridge Electronic Design Limited (CED), TIRR Memorial Hermann, The Medical Rehabilitation Research Resource (MR3), The National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research (NCMRR), Sage Publications, our journal *Neurorehabilitation and Neural Repair*, and Unfold Productions as our meeting sponsors and exhibitors. The tables were bustling with visitors throughout each session.



ASNR Award Recipients

We recognized our 2025 Diversity Fellowship Awards, Presidential Abstract Award, Fletcher McDowell Abstract Award, Outstanding Neurorehabilitation Clinician-Scientist Award, and Fellow of the American Society of Neurorehabilitation recipients. Congratulations to each of these individuals, and you can find more information about the awards and award recipients in [our recent blog article](#).



Social Events and Networking

In addition to the exciting new findings in neuroscience and neurorehabilitation that are shared during the meeting, the conference program is crafted to maximize opportunities for attendees

to catch up with colleagues, meet new people, and participate meaningfully in conversations that will shape the future of neurorehabilitation. The scheduled breaks, dedicated networking time, onsite meals, poster receptions, Q&A discussions, and offsite guided tour of the Atlanta History Museum were ideal for fostering and strengthening connections within the neurorehabilitation community. “I come to ASNR across the Atlantic because it’s the best meeting of its type. It’s been, as usual, just an incredible mix of meeting old friends, meeting new people, and seeing the best and most exciting science across a range of areas,” Charlotte Stagg, a member of our Program Committee and Professor of Human Neurophysiology at the University of Oxford.



As a smaller, single-track conference, attendees can attend every session together and really get to know each other. This has been an important factor in developing such a positive and supportive environment where everyone’s contributions are valued and even the biggest names in the field are approachable. Manuel Portilla-Jiménez, a PhD student at the University of Houston, summed it up well when he said, “The most amazing part of this meeting is the environment that you have here — the community that we are creating — between engineers, clinicians, and scientists to help other people improve their daily life activities, especially those with certain pathologies like stroke or spinal cord injury.”



This camaraderie extends beyond scheduled events to the inclusivity of groups going out to dinner and socializing in the evenings. “ASNR provides a beautiful opportunity to get to know



neuroscience from all of the key stakeholders in the field. I’m looking forward to the traditional karaoke evening. That’s always a big thing in ASNR,” noted UCLA postdoctoral fellow Anne Schwarz. Spearheaded by Dr. Sook-Lei Liew, several years ago, a few attendees got together for a karaoke night offsite after the conference activities ended for the day. This karaoke event has grown substantially over the years, now drawing large crowds of attendees for a memorable evening filled with great music and laughter.

We caught up with Joseph Epperson, a PhD student at UT Dallas, as he reflected on his experience on the final day of the meeting. “I’ve enjoyed everything,” he said. “The networking is fantastic. All my favorite people are here — all the researchers that I want to collaborate with or I am collaborating with. It’s the one moment in the year where all of my passions merge in one location.”

Mark Your Calendars for ASNR 2026 in Los Angeles

We would like to express our deep appreciation for our Program Committee (Chair: Dr. Kelsey Baker) for the fantastic content throughout the meeting, our Education Committee (Chair: Dr. Ela Plow) for the outstanding roundtable and career development sessions, and our Member Engagement Committee (Chair: Dr. Steve Zeiler) and local hosts for their efforts spreading the word about the meeting. As Dr. Kelsey Baker concludes her term as Program Chair and prepares to begin her new role as ASNR’s Secretary/Treasurer, she shared her thoughts and gratitude. “We are so grateful for our sponsors, exhibitors, presenters, attendees, and everyone who contributed to make our 2025 meeting in Atlanta a resounding success! I have been a part of ASNR for approximately ten years, and the Annual Meeting is a highlight every year. This year’s Annual Meeting was no exception. I always look forward to the exciting science that will be submitted to the meeting, and I encourage everyone to watch for our calls for submissions this fall.”

We ask all attendees to please share their feedback in our 2025 Annual Meeting Evaluation, and we are excited to invite you to join us March 24-27, 2026, for our next Annual Meeting in Los Angeles, California! Save the dates now, and follow ASNR on social media to make sure you don’t miss any conference updates, important deadlines, news, and more in the coming months!



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Want to see even more highlights from our 2025 Annual Meeting? [Check out our photo gallery!](#)