

Perspectives on the Young Investigators Research Forum

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Last year, the AADSM partnered with the AASM Foundation for the first time to sponsor two dental researchers for the Young Investigators Research Foundation (YIRF). This research training program assists early career sleep researchers with guidance through discussions on how to develop their research ideas, networking with senior investigators and introductions to funding agencies. Last year, Drs. Aaron Glick and Linda Sangalli were selected to participate in the forum. We spoke with both about their experience.

WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE AASM YOUNG INVESTIGATORS RESEARCH FORUM?

“I had the privilege of participating in the AASM YIRF. This program is designed to foster career development toward clinical and translational sleep medicine research. It is composed of multiple interactive sessions that teach participants how to have a successful career in sleep research, foster interdisciplinary collaborations, develop mentorship relationships, and understand the funding process. The program faculty were immensely knowledgeable and highly published in the field. Some sessions focused on learning from the experiences of these mid-senior sleep researchers. I learned more about potential funding mechanisms and interfaced with program officers from multiple funding agencies. As part of the program, there was a mock grant review process, which gave me a deeper understanding of the process. I enjoyed that the mock review showcased the fascinating research that my fellow colleagues are currently conducting. The fellow participants were multidisciplinary researchers in the sleep and circadian science field. Being amongst researchers from diverse backgrounds (PhD, MD, DNP, PharmD) offered a broader perspective on the sleep field in general. One of the most valuable aspects of YIRF was the opportunity to engage with and learn from other investigators across the broad spectrum of sleep research.

While there is a fair amount of dental sleep medicine research currently under way, this program could provide a unique opportunity for more dentists to learn how to be more effective in their research career. For anyone excited about sleep research, this program offers a valuable approach to gain further knowledge and forge connections to navigate the complex landscape of sleep research. I

strongly urge my dental colleagues to consider applying to YIRF!”

Aaron Glick, DDS, D.ABDASM

“This year marked a significant milestone as the YIRF opened its doors to dental researchers for the first time. Dr. Glick and I had the honor of being the inaugural dentists accepted into this program. Participating in the YIRF was an incredibly enriching and vibrant experience that has profoundly influenced my academic and research trajectory.

The forum provided an exceptional platform for early-career researchers like myself to engage with experts in sleep medicine and collaborate with colleagues from diverse domains within the field. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) mock sessions, the detailed analysis of past grant submissions, and the opportunity of interacting with current NIH program were particularly invaluable. These experiences not only sharpened my grant-writing skills but also deepened my understanding of the NIH funding process.

Small group sessions and one-on-one mentoring allowed me to receive personalized feedback on my research ideas and career plans. The forum fostered a strong sense of community among the participants, creating an inspiring and motivating environment. The collaborative atmosphere facilitated the exchange of ideas and laid the groundwork for future collaborations. I connected with professionals from various disciplines, including clinical psychologists, epidemiologists, headache specialists, and sleep clinicians – connections that I may not have formed otherwise.

In addition to the mentorship and networking opportunities, the program offered practical sessions on grant writing, career development, and navigating the challenges of an academic research career.

Overall, the YIRF was a transformative experience that provided me with the tools, knowledge, and connections necessary to excel in my research career. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of this program and I am hopeful that many more dental researchers will be accepted in the years to come.”

Linda Sangalli, DDS, M.S, PhD

Interested in the YIRF? You can learn more [here](#). Applications for 2025 are due October 21, 2024.

CITATION

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Left to Right: Drs. Aaron Glick and Linda Sangalli