

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **AADOCR Announces Winners of the 2026 AADOCR Hatton Competition**

**Alexandria, VA** – The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) has named the winners of the 2026 AADOCR Hatton Competition. The winners were recognized during the Opening Ceremonies of the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the AADOCR, which was held in conjunction with the 104<sup>th</sup> General Session of the International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (IADR) and the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Dental Research on March 25-28, 2026 in San Diego, CA.

The winners are:

### **JUNIOR CATEGORY**

1<sup>st</sup> – **Jasmine Canlas**, Dental College of Georgia at Augusta University. *Engineered Small Extracellular Vesicles as a Novel Antimicrobial Therapy for Periodontal Disease.*

2<sup>nd</sup> – **Allison McGrath**, Columbia University. *StemJEL-XR: A Next-Generation Wnt-Blocking Hydrogel for Osteoarthritis Treatment*

### **SENIOR CATEGORY**

1<sup>st</sup> – **Heliya Ziaei**, Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC. *Epigenetic Regulation of Mesenchymal BMP Signaling Directs Tooth Sensory Innervation.*

2<sup>nd</sup> – **Karin Shamardani**, University of California, San Francisco. *Efnb1 And Shrm4 Loss Interacts to Cause Cleft Palate.*

### **POST-DOCTORAL CATEGORY**

1<sup>st</sup> – **Nicha Tokavanich**, University of California, San Francisco. *Salt-Inducible Kinases Inactivation Reverses Primary Failure of Eruption in Mice.*

2<sup>nd</sup> – **Xiaolei Li**, University of Pennsylvania. *Nanoengineered Endogenous Commensal Bioreactors for Targeted Biofilm Disruption and Caries Prevention.*

The AADOCR Hatton Competition is designed for junior investigators (junior, senior and post-doctoral) who exhibit potential for a productive career in dental research. It was first presented as the "Novice Award" in 1953 and is the oldest IADR/AADOCR Award. The name was changed to the Edward H. Hatton Award in 1957 to honor IADR past president Edward H. Hatton. This year's

winners of the AADOCR Hatton Competition went on to compete in the IADR Hatton Competition with other IADR Division and Section competitors later in the General Session.

### **About AADOCR**

The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research is a nonprofit organization with a mission to drive dental, oral, and craniofacial research to advance health and well-being. AADOCR represents the individual scientists, clinician-scientists, dental professionals, and students based in academic, government, non-profit and private-sector institutions who share our mission. AADOCR is the largest division of the International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research. Learn more at [www.aadocr.org](http://www.aadocr.org).