

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **AADOCR Announces Recipients of the 2026 AADOCR Travel Award for New Clinical Investigators**

**Alexandria, VA** – The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) has announced the inaugural recipients of the AADOCR Travel Award for New Clinical Investigators. The recipients 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 recipients are:

- **Akhilesh Wodeyar**  
University of Alabama at Birmingham
- **Birtan Tolga Yilmaz**  
Harvard University
- **Zoe Xiaofang Zhu**  
Tufts University

The new AADOCR Travel Award for New Clinical Investigators was created to encourage new investigators to travel to and submit their research at the AADOCR Annual Meeting. Individuals conducting clinical research in any of the dental, oral, and craniofacial (DOC) research areas are eligible to apply. The award is supported by a generous donation from Marcelo W.B. Araujo, Dean, University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine in New York. Dr. Araujo was an international student in 1997 at the University at Buffalo where he received a MS in Oral Sciences, followed by a Clinical Research and Teaching Fellowship in Periodontology, and a Ph.D. in Epidemiology. The goal of the award is to encourage new investigators to undertake DOC research and facilitate their presentation of this work to the U.S and international DOC research community.

### **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).