

United States Association for the Study of Pain

Monthly Newsletter

February 14, 2023

Volume 16

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2023 Annual Scientific Meeting
April 11-14
Washington Duke Inn and Golf Club

REGISTER TODAY!

EARLY REGISTRATION ENDS
FRIDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2023



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Message from the Treasurer about the USASP meetings. It's about more than this one meeting

The USASP strives to have a **transparent process** in the conduct of its business and the goal for our annual scientific meetings (ASM) is to provide members access to high quality science, networking opportunities, and professional development, all at an efficient price. Thus, we aim to break even, rather than profit from the meeting, especially while we are young and growing.

Every time USASP conducts an annual meeting, we take a financial risk in signing a contract with the meeting venue (e.g., hotel). The contract includes a financial commitment for rooms to be used by attendees as well as the food and beverage attendees consume. This is how hotels make money so that the meeting space can be included as part of the room/food and beverage contract, usually with no additional fees if the room/food and beverage financial commitments are met.

How does the USASP decide on the cost of the annual scientific meeting (ASM)?

Registration Fees: The USASP prioritizes keeping costs low and charging trainees and speakers only what it costs to have them attend (i.e., meals). Other attendees pay an additional amount that supports the costs of running the meeting, which include providing A/V, renting poster boards, covering travel and honoraria for Plenary speakers, etc. While **hotel meals** are more expensive than you would get on your own, they have clear advantages aligned with the USASP goals for the ASM. Meals at the hotel allow attendees to socialize, network, and meet new people with an interest in pain research. Providing food allows people to mingle and stay on site rather than finding food other places, ultimately increasing the networking opportunities that are particularly important for our early career investigators.

Lodging: When the USASP has its meeting, it has made a commitment to the venue that attendees, if they can, will book their rooms at the meeting venue. We make a commitment for a pre-specified number of rooms (125 rooms per night for 2023), and, if we do not meet the minimum room commitment, the USASP must **pay for the rooms not used**. This is where the USASP takes a risk when planning the meeting and signing the contract with the hotel. Hotel rates are negotiated to be below current market rates for that hotel but are not typically the lowest in the area due to the meeting facilities that the hotel provides for the meeting. Thus, **you are supporting USASP and the ASM when you book your room at the meeting hotel**.

How does the USASP decide where to hold its annual scientific meetings?

- The venue for the meeting ideally is selected 2-3 years ahead of the actual meeting, which allows us to negotiate lower food and lodging costs in the best venues. As a new organization, the USASP is playing catch-up on identifying locations and negotiating with future venues.
- The U of Cincinnati, and our pain colleagues there, provided generous support for our first in-person meeting, which was hampered by the slow transition many were making back to travel as well as the threat of a COVID surge. The setting was ideal to get us back on track with our annual scientific meetings and required very low registration for trainees, with little financial risk. As you may remember, no hotel commitments were made, and attendees booked housing on their own.

- Duke University provided a competitive proposal for the 2023 meeting, offering the Washington Duke Inn and Golf Club, where there is ample space for our expected growing attendance. Costs of registration for the 2023 ASM are higher due to the higher cost of food and service charges in a hotel setting.
- A long tradition in professional meetings for US societies is to move the meeting around the US, so we looked at and recently signed a contract with the Westin Hotel in Seattle, WA for the 2024 meeting (April 14 to 18, 2024). This venue provides space for us to accommodate possible growth in attendance and we anticipate the registration fees will be similar to those of the 2023 meeting, assuming the USASP breaks even with the 2023 ASM.
- We have not yet planned the 2025 meeting, so stay tuned, as we will be making plans for that location and venue in the upcoming months. We hope that pain researchers around the country and USASP members will continue to contribute to identifying new venues around the country. The process is even more complicated than planning a wedding, but we hope it is also one of the most enjoyable and valuable parts of your membership!

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February USASP Trainee Spotlight



Lana Mucalo, MD
Postdoctoral Fellow
Department of Pediatrics
Medical College of Wisconsin

Lana Mucalo, MD is a Postdoctoral Fellow who works with Amanda Brandow, DO, MS in the Clinical Effectiveness Research Lab at Department of Pediatrics, Section of Hematology/Oncology/Blood and Marrow Transplant at Medical College of Wisconsin. She earned her medical doctor degree at School of Medicine University of Split in Croatia. Her main research topic is identification of inflammatory signature for differentiating pain phenotypes in individuals with sickle cell disease and she was invited to give an oral talk on the topic at the 2022 USASP Annual Scientific Meeting. Additionally, she has been investigating COVID-19 outcomes in sickle cell disease, for which she was awarded Best Clinical Poster Award at 2020 USASP Annual Scientific Meeting, Best Abstract for Implementing the NASEM 2020 Report and Best Trainee Abstract Overall at 2022 Sickle Cell Disease Association of America and Sickle Cell in Focus Annual National Convention. Currently, her other ongoing projects include investigation of tools for evaluating chronic pain in sickle cell disease, as well as researching the relationship of diet, inflammation, and pain in sickle cell disease. Her long-term career goal is to work as a physician scientist in the field of pediatrics.

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Education and Professional Development Event!

INCORPORATING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION INTO GRANT PROPOSALS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GRANT MAKERS

Many grantmaking organizations have expressed their commitment to DEI through enhanced funding priorities, as well as considering a grant proposal's attention to DEI when making funding decisions. During this event, attendees will hear from grant makers regarding their organizations' specific priorities related to DEI and how DEI content is being evaluated within the grant review process.

 **Live Zoom Event**

 **Wednesday February 22**

 **3:00-4:00PM ET**

Networking Event 4:00-5:00pmET

 **Register at usasp.org/calendar**



Education and Professional Development Committee & Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism in Pain SIG Sponsored Event



Dr. Cheryse Sankar

Program Director in the Office of Global Health and Health Disparities (NINDS)



Dr. Vivian L. Towe

Senior Program Officer at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute



Crystal Henderson, EdD

Scientific Research Officer, Health Services Research & Development, Department of Veteran Affairs

Join us on February 22 at 3pm (eastern) for Incorporating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion into Grant Proposals from the Perspective of Grant Makers. This event is co-sponsored by the Education and Professional Development Committee and the Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism Special Interest Group. The purpose of this event will be to hear from grant makers regarding their organizations' specific priorities related to DEI and how DEI content is being evaluated within the grant review process.

[Register here to attend this event](#)

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The JOURNAL of PAIN

The official journal of the US Association for the Study of Pain

G.F. Gebhart Journal of Pain Young Investigator Award

In 2017, an annual award was created to honor young investigators, The G.F. Gebhart Journal of Pain Young Investigator Award. This award is given on an annual basis, and involves a \$1000 travel scholarship to attend the spring USASP Scientific Meeting, which will be held this year April 11-14, 2023 in Durham, NC.



Applications Due: March 1

Eligible applicants must be a first author on a manuscript in *The Journal of Pain* that was published in 2022, a member of USASP (as of March 1st), and within 5 years of completing their advanced degree.

More details about the application process can be found at usasp.org or by scanning the QR code.

[Click here to learn more!](#)

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From the Membership Committee: Fall 2022 Membership Survey Summary

Many thanks to all who completed our Membership Survey this past fall! We had 116 members respond, which included 16% trainees, 28% in early career, 25% in mid-career, and 31% in late career stages. Most of the respondents identified as researchers (83%) and many had clinical (40%) and/or educational (35%) roles. We consistently heard across all career stages and career types that the scientific meeting is one of the most important aspects of being a USASP member. The three most important factors for selecting a conference to attend were: 1) Networking opportunities, 2) Opportunities to present, and 3) Affordable registration. We appreciate the feedback provided about

your priorities when selecting which conferences to attend as well as ideas to further support trainees and early to mid-career members.

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HEAL* National K12 Clinical Pain Career Development Award (HEAL K12)

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

*The Helping to End Addiction Long-term® Initiative, or NIH HEAL Initiative®, is an aggressive, trans-NIH effort to speed scientific solutions to stem the national opioid public health crisis. Launched in April 2018, the initiative is focused on improving prevention and treatment strategies for opioid misuse and addiction, and enhancing pain management. For more information, visit: <https://heal.nih.gov>

The Chronic Pain and Fatigue Research Center at the University of Michigan is requesting applications for the HEAL National K12 Clinical Pain Career Development Award (HEAL K12). The HEAL K12 is a mentored career development program designed to provide protected time for clinicians and scientists to focus on training and conducting clinical pain research. Awards provide a minimum of 75% salary support (up to \$100,000/year) plus fringe benefits, and \$50,000/year in research support costs, for up to 3 years.

Successful applicants will have at least (3) mentors: a primary home-institution mentor, a senior pain research mentor of national stature assigned by the K12 program, and a mentor with lived pain experience (also assigned by the K12 program). Training is split between the scholar's home-institution and didactic resources available remotely or in-person at the University of Michigan. Annual travel to the 3-day NIH PURPOSE Conference on Pain Education and to the two-day Ann Arbor Summer Pain Short Course is expected.

Since 1993, The MAYDAY Fund has supported innovative projects to close the gap between knowledge and practice in the treatment of pain, as well projects to build on the current knowledge base. Understanding that creating meaningful change with modest funding is a challenge, MAYDAY tends to provide significant support to a handful of projects annually. Starting in 2023, The MAYDAY Fund has awarded the United States Association for the Study of Pain funding for 3 years to support two meritorious early career investigators who propose innovative clinical/translational research in the field of pain.

Research Topics

Competitive research proposals address clinical/ translational research related to the management of pain. Applicants should describe the proposed research in pain and describe how it is innovative and cutting edge. In addition, the applicant should describe their vision for a career in pain research and provide information or any examples of leadership in pain-related activities.

Key Dates and Deadlines

The application portal will open March 1, 2023

Deadline for completed applications is 11:59 PM (eastern) on March 30, 2023

Grant awards will begin July 1, 2023

Eligibility

To be eligible for the USASP-MAYDAY Clinical/Translational Research Award, the applicant:

Must be a USASP member

Early career Assistant Professors within four years of the appointment are eligible to apply, except

those who have received tenure at the time of the application.
Must conduct their research and be appointed at an institution in the United States or Canada.
Should demonstrate a commitment to the field of pain research.

[Click here for more information](#)

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Featured Special Interest Group News

Acute (to Chronic) Pain

Meeting February 15

2pmET

For our February meeting, Dr Michael Jankowski will be speaking on "Neuroimmune mechanisms of neonatal nociceptive priming". Dr. Jankowski is the Theodore W. Striker, MD Chair in Anesthesia Research, and is a Professor and Director of Research in the Department of Anesthesia at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC). He also serves as the Associate Director for Basic Science Research in the Pediatric Pain Research Center at CCHMC and is the Associate Director of Admissions and Recruitment for the Medical Scientist Training Program. He is an Associate Editor for several journals including Pain and is one of the Rita Allen Foundation Scholars in Pain. Dr Jankowski's research is supported by numerous NIH grants and focuses on basic mechanisms of nociceptive processing across the lifespan with a particular emphasis on neuro-immune communication.

If you are a member and you would like attend a SIG meeting please contact Dr. Brittany Knight (Director of Operations) at admin@usasp.org.

Calendar of USASP events is provided at the end of newsletter.

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Pain Epidemiology

Meeting February 15

2pm ET

Our next Pain Epidemiology SIG meeting is on Wednesday, February 15th. Dr. Titilola Falasinnu will join us to discuss "A Review of Potential National Chronic Pain Surveillance Systems in the United States". We will be discussing this attached paper. Hope you can join us!

Pediatric Pain & Sex

Differences in Pain and

Analgesia

Meeting February 17

2pm ET

The Pediatric Pain and Sex Differences in Pain and Analgesia SIGs will meet this Friday to hear from Dr. Hadas Nahman-Averbuch. Dr. Hadas Nahman-Averbuch will be presenting on "Sex differences in pain during adolescence". We hope you can join us!

Seeking Contributors to a Review Paper

Drs. Tamara Baker, Staja Booker, and Mary Janevic are seeking contributors to a review paper on racial disparities and pain. We are looking for experts or emerging experts on the following topics:

- Long-COVID/COVID
- Mental health/serious mental illness
- LGBTQIA+
- Alz Dz and cognitive function

We anticipate the writing to be minimal as each section will be approximately 700-800 words (2 double-spaced pages). If you would like to contribute or recommend a colleague, please email Dr. Tamara Baker at: Tamara_baker@med.unc.edu. Thank you.

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NIDA Genetics and Epigenetics Meeting

Registration and Call for Abstracts for May 16-17, 2023, NIDA Genetics and Epigenetics Meeting, Natcher Conference Center, NIH, Bethesda MD

You are invited to register and/or submit an abstract for the NIDA Genetics and Epigenetic Meeting to be held at Natcher Conference Center, Bldg. 45, on the NIH Campus in Bethesda, MD. This is an in-person meeting. **To register:** <https://apps1.seiservices.com/NIDA/GeneticsConsortium/Default.aspx>

To submit an abstract: https://apps1.seiservices.com/NIDA/GeneticsConsortium/docs/2023-AbstractForms_508c.pdf

Abstracts are due by Midnight PST on March 3, 2023

There is no registration fee to attend this meeting. However, attendees are responsible for their own travel, meals, and lodging.

The goals of the meeting are to:

- Showcase the exciting research on the genetics and epigenetics of substance use disorders.
- Encourage collaboration among investigators with different expertise in genetics and epigenetics.
- Foster collaboration between investigators working on the genetics and epigenetics of substance abuse disorders and HIV/AIDS investigators.
- Identify new research opportunities in the genetics and epigenetics of substance use disorders.
- Provide attendees with an opportunity to meet with NIDA program directors to discuss their ideas for grant applications and funding opportunities.

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NIH HEAL Initiative Funding Opportunities: PRECISION Human Pain Network

HEAL Initiative: Human Pain-associated Genes & Cells Data Coordination and Integration Center (U24 Clinical Trial Not Allowed) [RFA-NS-22-021](#)

The goal of this funding opportunity announcement is to support a Human Pain-associated Genes & Cells Data Coordination and Integration Center (DCIC) as part of the NIH HEAL Initiative's Program to

Reveal and Evaluate Cells-to-gene Information that Specify Intricacies, Origins, and the Nature of Human Pain (PRECISION Human Pain). The DCIC will curate, harmonize, and integrate comprehensive -omics and cellular function datasets generated by companion U19 Centers for Discovery and Functional Evaluation of Human Pain-associated Genes & Cells, which include the characterization of functional genetic elements, epigenetic signatures, and molecular/cellular pathways that underlie human pain signal transduction, transmission and processing.

The Human Pain-associated Genes & Cells DCIC will lead efforts to establish spatial and semantic standards for managing heterogeneous human pain-associated data types and information, collect and register multimodal human pain-associated data to common neural tissue coordinate systems, and establish a web-accessible information system that can be widely used throughout the research community. See attached pdf for more information.

HEAL Initiative: Discovery and Functional Evaluation of Human Pain-associated Genes & Cells (U19 Clinical Trial Not Allowed) [RFA-NS-22-018](#)

The purpose of this funding opportunity announcement is to support research that uses human tissue or cells to generate comprehensive datasets for the discovery and characterization of functional genetic elements, epigenetic signatures, and molecular/cellular pathways that underlie human pain transduction, transmission, and processing. This FOA will support concerted multidisciplinary team science efforts that apply large-scale high-throughput approaches on tissues involved in human pain processing as part of the NIH HEAL Initiative's Program to Reveal and Evaluate Cells-to-gene Information that Specify Intricacies, Origins, and the Nature of Human Pain (PRECISION Human Pain).

U19 Centers will operate as a cooperative network to promote collaboration and coordination of research activities. U19 Centers will also coordinate with the U24 HEAL Initiative: Human Pain-associated Genes & Cells Data Coordination and Integration Center that will curate, harmonize, and integrate datasets generated by this U19 research program. See attached pdf for more information.

Upcoming Receipt Date for these RFAs: March 9, 2023

For more information, reach out to PRECISION Human Pain program contacts:

D.P. Mohapatra, PhD (dp.mohapatra@nih.gov)
Julia L. Bachman, PhD (julia.bachman@nih.gov)

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Featured Jobs and Training Opportunities

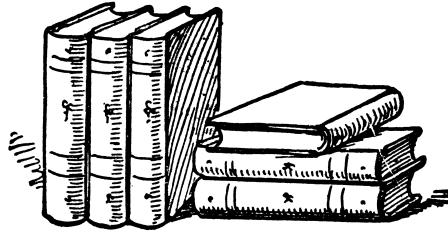
[Pain Psychologist – Stanford University Pain Management Center](#)

[Postdoctoral Scholar at the University of Kentucky](#)

[Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health](#)

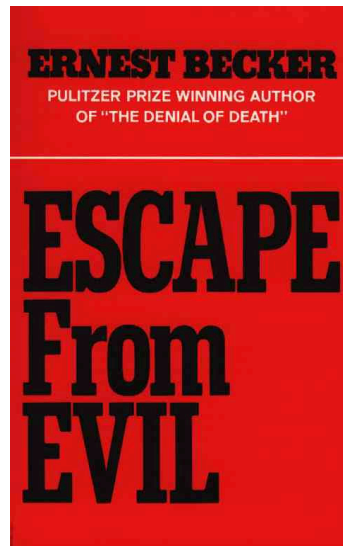
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BOOK CORNER

EDITED BY JOHN LOESER &
DAVID TAUBEN



Free Press, published March 1985
(first published November 1975)
188 pages. Paperback \$13.57
ISBN13: 9780029024508

A Review of *Escape From Evil*, by Ernest Becker

“If a way to the better there be, it lies in taking a full
look at the worst.”

Thomas Hardy, an epigraph for *Escape From Evil*

I've just re-read “*Escape From Evil*” published back in 1975, with intention to better understand the frightening evilness of contemporary human affairs. Decades later I still recommend this book; a thought-provoking and brief but broad chronicle of cultural anthropology by Ernest Becker, past Professor of Anthropology at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia. A Pulitzer Prize winning scholar, he delivers a tightly reasoned argument drawing upon ancient artifacts, historical beliefs, cultures and psychologies, philosophers and political scientists. Our present world's fearful discontents and disillusion offer sound proofs to his theories.

Becker provides a convincing account of why we humans think and behave so often inhumanely: He puts it simply, “to persevere, as does any animal or primitive organism”. Confronted by the challenges of surviving and actually prospering within the physically and biologically hostile world of threats and constraints, pain and suffering, the human brain has evolved both structural and functional capacities to think abstractly and reason symbolically. Becker proposes “evil” to be the human mind’s response to “the crushing awesomeness of things” and our “helplessness in the face of them.” Per Becker, evil has evolved as “a social contract forged in desire and fear”, human nature’s conditional defense against fears of physical injury and incapacity, suffering, guilt and unavoidable death. Sounds grim, and it is; yet

Becker concludes with hope that an “escape” from evil remains possible.

Becker begins with a well written introduction followed by concise chapters; primitive “rituals” and “technics”, economic “expiation and power”, origins and evolution of “inequality”, modern era “immortality power” (i.e., money), dynamics of “human nature” and “social evil”, a digression with social theories, and concludes with “heroic” social means to escape our evil natures.

Without Becker’s mere mention of the word “pain”, what has this to do with our study of pain? He represents his book as quest for “authentic science,” a “general theory of human nature.” Recognizing those cultural beliefs that sustain social evils may well improve our scientific understanding of human experience of pain. Pain is an agreed upon “biopsychosocial” experience; perhaps we might also consider adding “-cultural” to our biopsychosocial definition?

-David J Tauben, MD

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Upcoming SIG Meetings and Events

- **February 15** (2pm ET): Acute (to Chronic) Pain SIG Meeting
- **February 15** (2pm ET): Pain Epidemiology SIG Meeting
- February 17 (11amPT/2pmET): Pediatric Pain SIG and Sex Differences in Pain and Analgesia SIG Meeting
- **February 22** (3pm ET): Incorporating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion into Grant Proposals from the Perspective of Grant Makers, [click here to learn more.](#)
- **February 28** (2pm ET): Substance Use and Addiction SIG Meeting
- **March 1:** Deadline to Application due for the G.F. Gebhart Journal of Pain Young Investigator Award, [click here to learn more.](#)
- **March 1:** Application portal opens for the USASP-MAYDAY Clinical/Translational Research Award, [click here to learn more.](#)
- **March 30:** Applications due for the USASP-MAYDAY Clinical/Translational Research Award
- **April 11-14:** USASP Annual Scientific Meeting

USASP
US Association for
the Study of Pain

If your SIG or committee has updates or events you would like shared with USASP membership please email them using the contact below.

Contact Info:

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admin@usasp.org

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