

Nevada's med school scores at research forum

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Second-year students at the University of Nevada School of Medicine were winners at the 24th Annual Western Student Medical Research Forum in Carmel, which was hosted by Nevada's medical school. According to Gale Hansen-Starich, Ph.D., medical student research director, Nevada ranked second among the 18 medical school participants, with 24 student abstracts submitted. Schools that sent student researchers are the universities of Arizona; California, San Francisco; California, Davis; California, Irvine; California, Los Angeles; British Columbia; Colorado; Loma Linda; and Washington.

Six students won awards, but the shining star was Second-Year Class President Miguel Rivera who won the Plenary Award for having one of the four top student papers at the conference. He presented his paper at the joint plenary session of the Western Society for Clinical Investigation and the Western Section of the American Federation for Clinical Research. When Rivera finished, the moderator of the joint session, Dr. David Rodman, remarked that if he had been a Fellow, his paper would have received the Fellows Award for the best score among all the abstracts submitted. According to Dr. Hansen-Starich, Miguel worked hard on his

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project, and had to build his own instrumentation for the electro-physiology project, not once, but twice. Rivera's mentors are Drs. Jamie Campbell, Carlos Palant, Nelson Publicover and Hansen-Starich.

The other five winners were:

Dan Lewis, who earned the SubSpecialty Award in Health Care Research; his mentor was Steve Zell, M.D. His work, "Decision Analysis: Vaccination Strategies for Hepatitis B Infection in HIV Patients" was presented to the Health Care Subspecialty section of the meeting.

Jim Nachiondo received the SubSpecialty Award in Adolescent Medicine; his mentor was Dr. Thomas Robinson, Stanford University. Jim presented his work, "Ethnicity, Acculturation and Seat Belt Use Among Adolescents," in the Adolescent Medicine/General Pediatrics Subspecialty Section.

Kathleen Benson, whose mentor was Paul Anziano, Ph.D.; and Darius Moezzi, whose mentor was Dr. D.F. Larsen from the University of Arizona, both earned AFCR Membership Awards for the top papers from Nevada that has not already received an award.

Archie Perry received Honorable Mention in the WSMRF Bertakis Award competition for oral presentations. His presentation, "Non-Cemented Total Arthroplasty Success in Osteoarthritis and Avascular Necrosis Patients," was among the top seven of the 60 papers presented. Both Eric Boyden, M.D. (SOM Class of 1988) and Dr. Hansen-Starich, served as his mentors.

A lot of the credit goes to the faculty members who serve as mentors to these young scientists. They open their labs and involve students in a wide variety of important projects, as well as allowing students to come up with projects of their own.

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