AMLI



SCIENCE & DISCOVERY

IMMUNE REGULATION & EMERGING THERAPIES

PEOPLE, PROGRESS & NEW TECHNOLOGIES

AT THE CROSSROADS OF CLINICAL IMMUNOLOGY

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Salt Lake City • 39th Annual Meeting

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MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



Salt Lake City, often called the "Crossroads of the West," served as an ideal setting for the 39th Annual Meeting of the Association of Medical Laboratory Immunologists (AMLI). Over four days, several hundred scientists, clinicians, laboratory professionals, exhibitors, and trainees gathered to explore advances in transplantation, autoimmunity, infectious disease, neuroimmunology, rheumatology, and emerging laboratory technologies. The meeting showcased cutting-edge science, recognized outstanding achievements, and provided valuable opportunities for networking and collaboration.

AT THE CROSSROADS

OF CLINICAL IMMUNOLOGY

TOLERANCE, TYRANNY AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

The afternoon session, Tolerance, Tyranny and Everything In Between, focused on regulatory T cells (Tregs) and their role in maintaining immune tolerance.

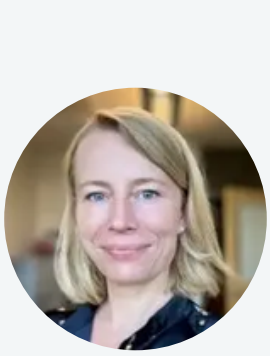
Highlights included:

Maria Bettini (University of Utah) reviewed Treg biology in autoimmune disease.

Mingnan Chan (University of Utah) presented innovative CAR-Treg approaches targeting PD-1-positive T cells to deliver immunosuppression at sites of active inflammation.

Rosa Bacchetta (Stanford University) described Treg therapy for IPEX syndrome.

Stanislaw Stepkowski (University of Toledo) explored how temporary Treg inhibition may improve vaccine responses in immunocompromised individuals.















Double-Edged Swords: Transplantation and Immune Regulation

The meeting opened with a focus on transplantation immunology. Michael Allen Pulsipher (University of Utah) highlighted advances in haploidentical stem cell transplantation, which have significantly expanded donor availability, particularly for underrepresented populations. His presentation emphasized strategies to preserve graft survival while minimizing graft-versus-host disease.

Additional talks explored the complex balance between immune activation and immune suppression:

Jen Lohr (University of Utah) discussed how CAR-T cell therapies for multiple myeloma alter the T-cell microenvironment and contribute to immune dysfunction.

Arabella Young (University of Utah) reviewed immune-related adverse events that may limit the effectiveness of immune checkpoint inhibitors.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE: INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND IMMUNE RESPONSE

Day two began with emerging infectious diseases and immune defense.

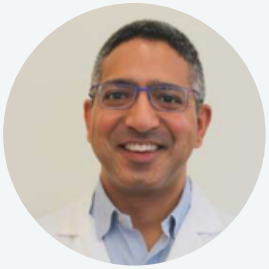


Benjamin Bradley (University of Utah) emphasized the importance of collaboration between public health and clinical laboratories in responding to evolving infectious threats.

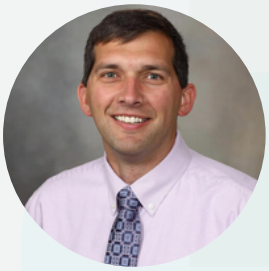


Kimberly Hanson (University of Utah) highlighted advances in fungal diagnostics, including antigen detection and molecular testing platforms.

Additional presentations examined host-pathogen interactions and vaccine responses:



Manish Butte (UCLA) discussed immune dysregulation caused by infections and potential therapeutic interventions.



Richard Kennedy (Mayo Clinic) reviewed factors influencing vaccine responsiveness, including genetic variation.



Jessica Durkee-Shock (NIH) provided updates on efforts to develop an Epstein-Barr virus vaccine.

Gut Instinct: The Microbiome and Mucosal Immunity

The afternoon microbiome session explored the growing understanding of how gut microorganisms shape immune function.

June Round (University of Utah) described how disruptions in host-microbiome interactions may contribute to autoimmune disease development.

Attention then shifted to eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE), where:

Amiko Uchida and Ashley Pyne (University of Utah) discussed the diverse clinical manifestations of EoE.

Food antigens were highlighted as key drivers of disease.

Emerging evidence suggests food-specific antibody testing may help better characterize affected patients.





Brainstorms: Advances in Neuroimmunology

Neuroimmunology was the focus of the final session on day two.

Maria Alice V. Willrich (Mayo Clinic) reviewed the recently updated McDonald criteria for multiple sclerosis and discussed the role of cerebrospinal fluid free kappa light chain index as an alternative to oligoclonal banding. She emphasized the continued value of oligoclonal band testing, particularly in equivocal cases.

Additional presentations addressed autoimmune and paraneoplastic neurologic disorders:

Stacey Clardy (University of Utah) demonstrated through clinical cases that diagnosis requires more than antibody positivity alone.

Tammy Smith (University of Utah), in her presentation Neural Antibodies: Fabulous, Flummoxing and Faulty, reviewed commercial neural antibody testing and highlighted the utility of the APE2 score for predicting meaningful antibody findings.

SHOWCASING SJÖGREN'S DISEASE

Patient experience meets clinical science and laboratory discovery.

A highlight of the meeting was an engaging session dedicated to Sjögren's disease.

A patient shared her personal journey alongside her rheumatologist, Pankhuri Gupta (Intermountain Health), providing powerful insight into the disease burden beyond the classic sicca symptoms. Fatigue, chronic pain, and flu-like symptoms were described as major challenges.



Key presentations included:
Pankhuri Gupta(Intermountain Health) and Sara Stern (University of Utah) reviewing diagnosis and management strategies.

Discussion of salivary gland biopsy, common comorbidities, and emerging therapies such as CD19-targeted approaches.



Michael Mahler (Exagen) presenting current and emerging biomarkers, ranging from anti-Ro antibodies to novel autoantibody targets.

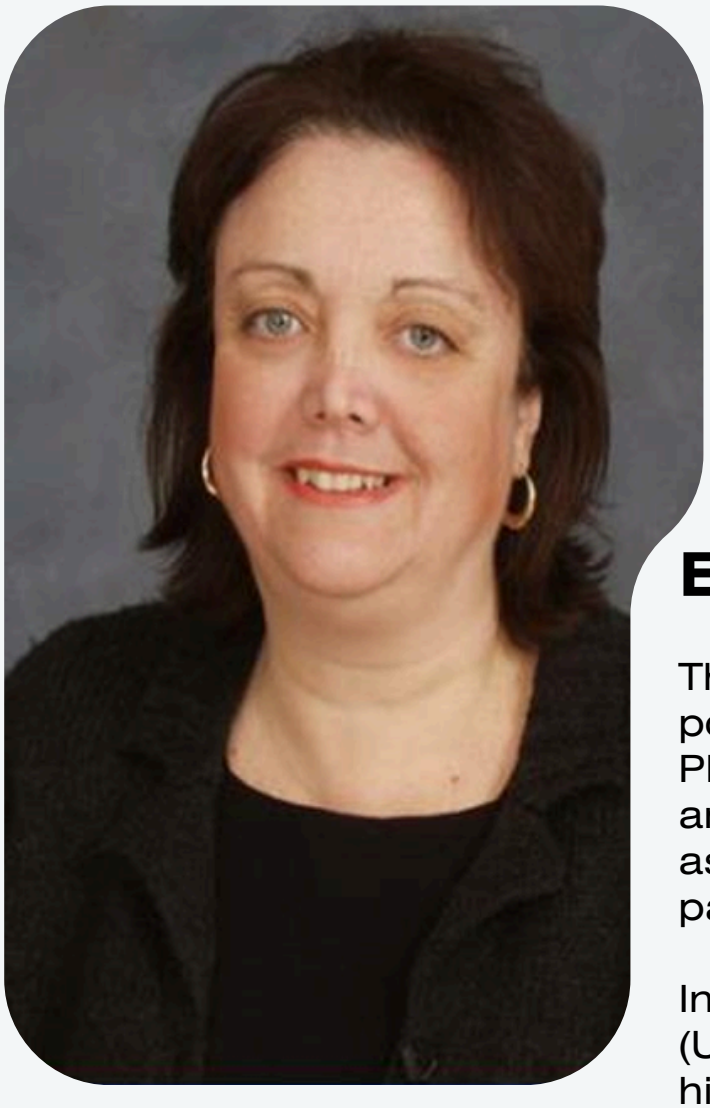
Lane Destro (Sjögren's Foundation) highlighting advocacy, education, and patient support initiatives.



CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: AMLI AWARDS

The annual awards ceremony recognized outstanding contributions to medical laboratory immunology.





Erwin Neter Award

The Erwin Neter Award was presented posthumously to Silvia S. Pierangeli, Ph.D., honoring her pioneering work in antiphospholipid antibody testing, assay standardization, and disease pathogenesis research.

In a moving tribute, Ware Branch (University of Utah) took the stage to highlight the incredible achievements of the late Silvia Pierangeli while her family formally accepted the posthumous award on her behalf.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Anne Tebo (Mayo Clinic) received the Distinguished Service Award in recognition of her longstanding commitment to AMLI and its mission.

Additional Award Recipients

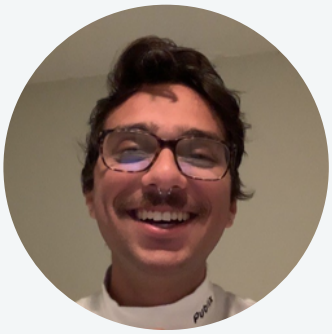


The Young Investigator Award: Favour Chibueze
University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT
Abstract: *TCF1-mediated Regulation of Treg Function, Self Renewal, and Stability in Autoimmune Diabetes*



Doctorate Award: Danting Liu
Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN
Abstract: *Association of HLA-DQ Genotype with Celiac Disease Serologic Positivity in a Large Clinical Cohort*

Awardees also presented brief overviews of their research accomplishments.



Peter Maxim Memorial Clinical Laboratory Scientist Award: Ben Asghar

University of North Carolina Health, Chapel Hill, NC

Abstract: *Spit Happens: Saliva Improves DNA Quality, Cost, and Turnaround Time for HLA Genotyping*



Travel Award: Camille Novis

ExSera BioLabs, Aurora, CO

Abstract: *Single-Centre Longitudinal Study of 14-3-3η as a Biomarker of Disease Severity and Prognosis in Rheumatoid Arthritis*



BACK TO THE FUTURE

EMERGING LEADERS & TECHNOLOGIES

The final day highlighted innovations and next-generation leaders in clinical immunology.

Presentations included:



Kimberly Burgos Villar (University of Virginia Health) discussing the Exent mass spectrometry platform for monoclonal protein identification.



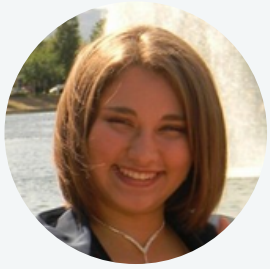
Jack Wu (Mayo Clinic) reviewing novel applications of mass spectrometry, including glycosylation analysis and potential analytical challenges.



Alexis Dadelahi (Tricore) sharing lessons learned while developing a direct-to-consumer immunology testing program.



Abdulrahman Saadalla (University of Utah and ARUP Laboratories) presenting new approaches for establishing serum tryptase reference intervals.



Brooke Holloway (Werfen) examining rheumatoid arthritis biomarkers across multiple clinical studies.

Beyond the Scientific Sessions



The AMLI meeting offered far more than lectures.

Attendees enjoyed:

- More than two dozen industry exhibits
- Over sixty scientific posters
- Sponsored breakfast and lunch workshops
- A tour of ARUP laboratories
- Networking events throughout the meeting

A memorable opening dinner at Red Butte Garden and Arboretum, sponsored by Kronus Inc., featured beautiful mountain views and an AMLI trivia competition won by a team appropriately named "**The Tregs.**"

The AMLI Business Meeting also provided updates on the organization, the Journal of Immunological Methods, and plans for next year's conference.

Taken together, the scientific presentations, educational opportunities, and professional networking made the 39th AMLI Annual Meeting a resounding success.



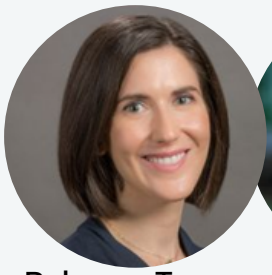
LEFT TO RIGHT: MRS. STEPKOWSKI, STANISLAW STEPKOWSKI, KAREN COST, THOMAS ALEXANDER, PATRICK VANDERBOOM AND MARIA WILLRICH

Thank you!

SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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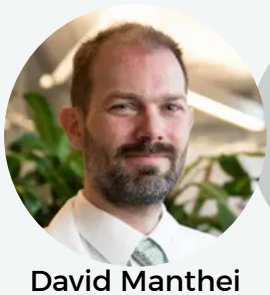
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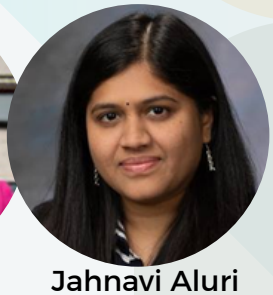

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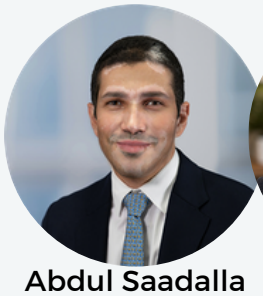

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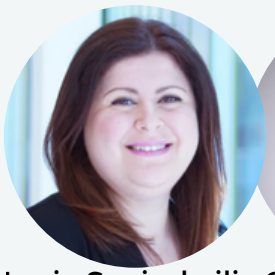
Thank you!

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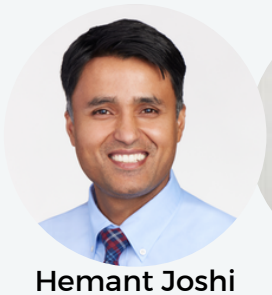
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SALT LAKE CITY, UT


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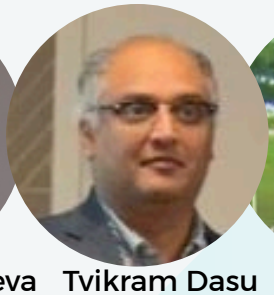

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LOOKING AHEAD

We thank all attendees, speakers, exhibitors, sponsors, and volunteers whose participation contributed to another outstanding AMLI Annual Meeting.

We look forward to continuing our shared mission of advancing laboratory immunology and improving patient care through scientific excellence and collaboration.