

**66th Annual Meeting**

**June 14–17, 2026**

Hilton Washington DC National Mall The Wharf

Building a Better Tomorrow: Advances in the Fields  
of Pregnancy, Reproduction, and Development



April 22, 2026

## Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention Announces 2026 Awardees, Award Finalists, and Special Lecturers

The following awards and special lectures will be presented at the Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention's [66th Annual Meeting](#) taking place June 14–17, 2026, in Washington, DC. Congratulations to our awardees, award finalists, and special lecturers!

*Josef Warkany Keynote Lecture*

**Ralph L. Cooper, PhD**, Quality Scientific Solutions, LLC  
*Scheduled Presentation: The Ever-Changing Female in Toxicology*

*Robert L. Brent Lecture: Teratogen Update*

**John M. DeSesso, PhD**, Exponent  
*Scheduled Presentation: The Rise of Regulatogens: A Crisis of Insouciance and Dilettantism in the Regulatory DART World—And How We Must Fix It*

*F. Clarke Fraser New Investigator Award*

**Nicole R. Sparks, PhD, MS**, University of California, Irvine  
*Scheduled Presentation: Rewiring Bone Developmental Trajectories by Modern Environmental Exposures*

*Patricia Rodier Mid-Career Award for Research and Mentoring*

**Wendy Nembhard, PhD, MPH**, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences  
*Scheduled Presentation: Epidemiology of Congenital Heart Defects: Differences in Burden Across Communities and Population Groups*

*Agnish Fellowship*

**Christine Perdan Curran, PhD**, Northern Kentucky University  
*Scheduled Presentation: Teachers are Learners Too: Lessons Learned During Four Decades of STEM Education*

*James G. Wilson Publication Award* for the best paper published in the journal *Birth Defects Research* in 2025.

**CAPT Andrea Sharma, PhD, MPH**, US Public Health Service, Retired  
COVID-19 Vaccination During Pregnancy and Birth Defects: Results from the CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Pregnancy Registry, United States 2021–2022. *Birth Defects Research*, 117: e2474.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/bdr2.2474>

*Edward W. Carney Distinguished Service Award*

**Godfrey P. Oakley, Jr., MD** (posthumous)

#### *Edward W. Carney Trainee Awards*

- **Lauren T. L. Brown, BSc**, Queen's University at Kingston
- **Julia do Amaral Gomes, PhD**, University of California, San Francisco

#### *Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention Innovator Award Finalists*

- **Xiyu Ge, PhD**, Baylor College of Medicine  
*Abstract Title: Extracellular Vesicle Dynamics and Molecular Signatures Illuminate Racial Disparities in Preterm Birth*
- **Lin Li, PhD**, University of California, San Francisco  
*Abstract Title: Mapping Teratogen-Induced Disruption of Embryonic Lineage Trajectories at Single Cell Resolution*
- **Julia Enterria-Rosales**, Baylor College of Medicine  
*Abstract Title: Intravenous Maternal EV Delivery Enables Gestational Targeting for Spina Bifida Treatment*

#### *Wilson Presentation Award Finalists*

- **Julia Enterria-Rosales**, Baylor College of Medicine  
*Abstract Title: Intravenous Maternal EV Delivery Enables Gestational Targeting for Spina Bifida Treatment*
- **Xiyu Ge, PhD**, Baylor College of Medicine  
*Abstract Title: Extracellular Vesicle Dynamics and Molecular Signatures Illuminate Racial Disparities in Preterm Birth*
- **S. Gomathi**, ICMR-NIN  
*Abstract Title: Riboflavin Deficiency in Dams Induces Metabolic Dysregulation and Photoreceptor Dysfunction in Rat Progeny*
- **Nneamaka Iwobi**, University of California, Irvine  
*Abstract Title: Single-Cell Transcriptomic Dissection of Bisphenol-Induced Disruption in Human Osteogenic Differentiation: Implications for Environment-Associated Skeletal Birth Defects*
- **Lin Li, PhD**, University of California, San Francisco  
*Abstract Title: Mapping Teratogen-Induced Disruption of Embryonic Lineage Trajectories at Single Cell Resolution*
- **Kanchaka Senarath Pathirajage**, Clemson University  
*Abstract Title: Aryl Hydrocarbon Receptor (AHR) Pathway Drives TBBPA-Induced Cartilage Development Defects*
- **Madeline Vera-Colon**, University of California, Irvine  
*Abstract Title: Fine Particulate Matter Disrupts Human Stem Cell Osteogenesis and Reprograms Metabolism to Promote a Developmental Skeletal Risk*
- **Ji Yun Tark, PhD**, Baylor College of Medicine  
*Abstract Title: Characterizing the Association Between In Vitro Fertilization and Congenital Heart Defects: A Population-Based Study of 1.5 Million Live Births*

#### *BDRP Student and Postdoctoral Fellow Travel Awards*

- **Oyemwenosa Nosa Avenbuan, MS**, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- **Piunik Babakhanins, BS**, University of California, Riverside
- **Lauren T. L. Brown, BSCh**, Queen's University at Kingston
- **Megan E. Cull, BSc, MSc, PhD Candidate**, Queen's University
- **Julia do Amaral Gomes, BSc, PhD**, University of California, San Francisco
- **Julia Enterria-Rosales, BA**, Baylor College of Medicine
- **Syed Rubaiyat Ferdous, MS**, Clemson University
- **Xiyu Ge, PhD**, Baylor College of Medicine
- **S. Gomathi, MSc**, Pondicherry University
- **Perri M. Grant, BSCh**, Queen's University
- **Nneamaka Iwobi, BS**, University of California, Irvine

- **Ritishka Kapoor, MS**, Florida International University
- **Soojin Kim, BSN**, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine
- **Priscilla Kini, MPhil**, University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- **Caitlyn I. Kirkpatrick, MBI**, Queen's University
- **Bao Trang Le, BPharm, MS**, University of Florida
- **Lauren M. LeFevre, BS**, Creighton University
- **Lin Li, PhD, MD**, University of California, San Francisco
- **Katherine Ludorf, PhD**, University of Texas Health Science Center School of Public Health
- **Holly G. Mackay, BSCh**, Queen's University
- **Omobola Oluwafemi, PhD**, UTHealth School of Public Health
- **Jaewoo Park, BSc, MBBS Candidate**, University College London
- **Kanchaka Senarath Pathirajage, BSCh**, Clemson University
- **Maya Puar, BS**, Quinnipiac University
- **Alfredo Anthony Rojas, BS**, Clemson University
- **Iuliia Saifetiarova, PhD**, UTRGV School of Medicine
- **Ji Yun Tark, PhD, MPH**, Baylor College of Medicine
- **Vanitha Thurairasu, MD, MPH**, The National University of Malaysia
- **Madeline Vera-Colon, MS**, University of California, Irvine
- **Yanning Wang, MS**, University of Florida
- **Mikayla A.L. Watt, BS**, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- **Wen Wen, MS**, University of Florida
- **Kristin Wu, MPH**, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University

**More Information:** <https://www.birthdefectsresearch.org/meetings/2026/am-awards.asp>

**66th Annual Meeting Website:** <https://www.birthdefectsresearch.org/meetings/2026/>

**Contact:** Heather Carskaddan, [Heather@bdrp.org](mailto:Heather@bdrp.org), 703-438-3104 ext.1606