

# Inhalation and Respiratory Specialty Section (IRSS) Newsletter

Fall  
2026

Dear IRSS Members,

Summer seems to pass too quickly. June through August offers many of us a much-needed break from deadlines, meetings, and teaching. For me, it is also the time of year when I can be more present for the undergraduate and graduate student trainees in the lab.

Right now, supporting trainees as a scientist is challenging. Much of our attention goes to sustaining our research programs on less funding than before instead of letting our minds wander to the next hypothesis. The cost is not only the science we are not doing; it is the trainees who never enter the pipeline and the ones already here who get fewer chances to learn.

Our trainees need to be at the SOT Annual Meeting presenting their work, learning to communicate it, and building the networks that shape careers in academia, government, or industry. Your IRSS Executive Committee has been working on opportunities to do exactly that.

**Mentoring.** The 2026 IRSS Mentoring Event, sponsored by Underwriters Laboratories, matched 37 mentees with 26 mentors from academia, government, and industry. This networking program, which traditionally takes place before the IRSS Business Meeting and Reception, gives our trainees a unique opportunity to meet mentors who were once in their shoes and get valuable feedback in a relaxed setting. Planning for the 2027 IRSS Mentoring Event is in progress.

**Awards.** The 2026 IRSS Mary Amdur Award Rapid-Fire Webinar, where four IRSS trainees gave short presentations on their research projects, took place on Wednesday, September 23, 2026. We hope our outstanding Amdur awardees have inspired you or your trainees to apply for one of our student and postdoctoral awards or nominate a deserving colleague for the Paper of the Year, Young Investigator, or Career Achievement Award.

Recognizing our trainees and honoring our distinguished colleagues is one of the most rewarding parts of serving on the IRSS Executive Committee, and it brings me to my ask: please support the in-person IRSS Business Meeting and Reception and our non-endowed awards by contributing to the IRSS fund, volunteering as a mentor for the 2027 IRSS Mentoring Event or nominating yourself or a colleague to the IRSS Executive Committee. These efforts rely on your membership dues and donations, and your participation is critical for our trainees to become the next generation of inhalation and respiratory toxicologists.

We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming online events and in San Antonio, March 14-17, 2027.

With appreciation,

Lisa Miller



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# Important Announcements and Upcoming Deadlines:

- Nominations for upcoming IRSS election: **October 26, 2026**.
  - Contact Chris Reilly: [Chris.Reilly@pharm.utah.edu](mailto:Chris.Reilly@pharm.utah.edu)
- SOT annual conference abstract submission: **November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026**.
- Applications due for IRSS Awards: **December 1, 2026 and December 8, 2026 (Career Achievement ONLY)**.
  - Questions? Reach out to Katherine Zychowski: [kzychowski@salud.unm.edu](mailto:kzychowski@salud.unm.edu)



**SOT** SAN ANTONIO, TX  
66TH ANNUAL MEETING  
& ToxExpo • March 14–17, 2027

## SOT UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARD

UP TO  
**\$800**  
IN TRAVEL FUNDING

Plus lodging + complimentary registration



Recognition



Undergraduate Education Program



Mentorship

Application and abstract due  
October 16, 2026

**TOXICOLOGY.ORG\AWARDS**



# Treasurer Report and IRSS Donations:

Dear Inhalation and Respiratory Specialty Section Members,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Inhalation and Respiratory Specialty Section Executive Committee to invite you to support our upcoming awards and mentoring event. Our 332 members include a diverse group of students and professionals from academia, government, NGOs, and industry all dedicated to advancing toxicological research. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we were able to increase the number of awards presented at our 2026 annual meeting, and we sincerely appreciate your support.

The IRSS offers a wide range of activities, from educational webinars and career development programs to numerous awards, that engage members at every career stage, from undergraduates to established principal investigators. Ensuring the continuation of our awards, especially those recognizing students and early-career investigators, and hosting a vibrant event remain critical priorities. Your contribution helps us honor outstanding achievements and advance the field of inhalation and respiratory toxicology.

Our meetings thrive because of the generous support from donors like you. This year, we aim to raise \$6,000 through donations and partnerships with SOT-allowable sponsors. We deeply appreciate your ongoing support and kindly ask you to consider contributing to our general fund. Three easy donation options are available

1. Use the online donation link: <https://igfn.us/f/5ue2/n>
2. Mail your donation to the following address: Society of Toxicology // attn. Jane Carskaddan // 11190 Sunrise Valley // Suite 300// Reston, VA 20191. Please add a note in the envelope or write on the memo that it is a donation and the name of the Inhalation and Respiratory Specialty Section.
3. Scan the QR code to the right: → → → → → → → → → → → → →



Sincerely,

Pooja Singh  
IRSS Treasurer

## IRSS Webinars

**Fall webinar:** Wednesday, September 23rd, 2026. 1-2:30 pm EDT  
*2026 IRSS Mary Amdur Award Winners–Rapid-Fire Session*

### Speakers:

Sarah Miller, UNC Chapel Hill  
Heui Hye Park, UC Davis  
Antonio Saporito, NYU School of Medicine  
Winny Soerianto, UNC Chapel Hill

**Winter Webinar:**  
TBD

# IRSS Executive Committee

## Positions Available in Upcoming Election

|                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <b>Vice President-Elect</b><br><b>(1 position, 4-year term)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VP-Elect serves as Chair of the Awards Committee.</li> <li>• Leads review and selection of awardees with the IRSS Executive Committee.</li> <li>• Notifies award winners.</li> <li>• Prepares a written summary of the winners of each award to be included in the newsletter and presented at the IRSS Reception.</li> <li>• Notifies Secretary/Treasurer of any checks needed for award winners.</li> <li>• To the extent possible, solicits donations for awards; responsible for communication with potential sponsoring entities.</li> <li>• Informs Endowment Fund Board and Fund points of contact of Award winners prior to the Annual Meeting.</li> <li>• Presents awards at the annual IRSS reception.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Secretary</b><br><b>(1 position, 2-year term)</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records all transactions of meetings of the Section and the Executive Committee</li> <li>• Responsible for the correspondence of the Section, and shall maintain a list of members and their status</li> <li>• Develops plans for reception and for Executive Committee meeting at SOT annual meeting (submits food, poster board, and AV requirements, prepares agendas, orders awards/plaques, etc.).</li> <li>• The Postdoctoral Representative and Graduate Student Representative will assist with this effort.</li> <li>• Records minutes of all meetings (specialty section and executive committee)</li> <li>• Composes any required reports (other than the annual reports, done by the Immediate Past President)</li> <li>• Responsible for correspondence</li> <li>• Writes and sends out welcome messages to list of new members</li> </ul> |
| <b>Treasurer</b><br><b>(1 position, 2-year term)</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pays authorized bills incurred by the Specialty Section as directed by the Executive Committee</li> <li>• Fiduciary responsibilities for all monies</li> <li>• Authorizes disbursements</li> <li>• Orders checks for awards (best paper, graduate student, and postdoctoral awards)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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| <b>Junior Councilor</b><br><b>(2 positions, 2-year term)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves on the Program Committee (under the direction of the Vice President) and Awards Committee (under the direction of the Vice President-Elect) as described above.</li> <li>• Assists with webinars and prepare for the following year.</li> <li>• Builds the poster for the annual meeting reception</li> <li>• They may also be asked to serve in other capacities, as the need arises within the IRSS.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Student Representative</b><br><b>(1 position, 2-year term)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represents graduate student interests to IRSS and provides IRSS information to graduate students</li> <li>• Actively recruits new graduate student members into IRSS, and encourages former Student members of IRSS to continue their membership at the post-doctoral or Associate level</li> <li>• Participates in GSLC</li> <li>• Attends IRSS Executive Committee meetings and participate in teleconferences</li> <li>• Coordinates IRSS representation/participation at annual student/post-doctoral reception at SOT; acts as IRSS liaison at reception</li> <li>• Assists Secretary/Treasurer with planning for the annual meeting</li> <li>• Periodically review IRSS web page to keep it current, including addition of new officers, updated award information, award winners, photos from annual meetings, and any announcements.</li> <li>• Reviews SOT guidelines for webpages to assure compliance. Establishes appropriate links to other organizations as needed. Serves as IRSS website and ToXchange liaison with SOT HQ.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Please note - you must be a current SOT and IRSS member to run for an elected IRSS position.</b></p> <p><b>If interested in running, email IRSS Past-President, Chris Reilly ( <a href="mailto:Chris.Reilly@pharm.utah.edu">Chris.Reilly@pharm.utah.edu</a> ) and IRSS Secretary, Elizabeth Corteselli ( <a href="mailto:Elizabeth.Corteselli@med.unc.edu">Elizabeth.Corteselli@med.unc.edu</a> ). Provide your headshot and short bio by <u>October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026</u>. Further information will be communicated via ToXchange.</b></p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

# Upcoming IRSS Awards- Please Apply!

IRSS members are encouraged to apply and to encourage others to apply. Additional information regarding eligibility requirements for each award, instructions on the application process, and due dates are available through the [SOT awards system](#) or on the [IRSS website](#).

- **With the exception of the Career Achievement Award, nominations are due by December 1, 2026, at 11:59 PM EST.**
  - **The Career Achievement Award nomination is due by December 8, 2026, at 11:59 PM EST**
  - **Note you MUST be an IRSS member to be eligible for awards**

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| <a href="#"><u>Paper of the Year Award</u></a>                                                                                                                                       | An engraved plaque will be awarded to the author that applied for the award. The paper must be published in a peer-reviewed journal during the calendar year (Jan 1–Dec 1) prior to the annual meeting of the Inhalation and Respiratory Specialty Section at which the award will be presented.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <a href="#"><u>Career Achievement Award</u></a>                                                                                                                                      | An engraved plaque will be awarded to a senior investigator whose body of work represents an outstanding achievement in respiratory/inhalation toxicology.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <a href="#"><u>Young Investigator Award</u></a>                                                                                                                                      | An engraved plaque and a cash stipend (\$500) will be awarded to a scientist who has made significant contributions to the field of inhalation or respiratory toxicology. The recipient must be within 15 years of obtaining their highest earned degree at the time when the award is presented (this date should be indicated in the applicant's documents submitted for the award).                                                                                                                        |
| <a href="#"><u>Mary Amdur Student Award</u></a><br><i>This award is made possible by the Mary Amdur Student Award Fund of the SOT Endowment.</i>                                     | An engraved plaque and cash stipend (\$500) will be awarded to the student whose abstract best addresses the environmental health issues that were the focus of Dr. Mary Amdur's career. Dr. Amdur was a pioneer in air pollution toxicology, who overcame gender, political, and scientific barriers to proclaim the potential for interactions between specific air pollutants. More information on Dr. Amdur's career can be found <a href="#">here</a> .                                                  |
| <a href="#"><u>Donald Gardner Inhalation Toxicology Education Award</u></a><br><i>This award is made possible by the Donald Gardner Award Fund of the SOT Endowment</i>              | This award will be used to provide stipends to early career scientists (students, postdocs, or scientists within 10 years of advanced degree) to either:<br>1) gain specialized training in novel/emerging inhalation toxicology methodologies by training in another laboratory, attendance at a workshop/class, or training at a core facility<br>OR<br>2) to develop educational webinars on innovative methods in the fields of Inhalation and Respiratory Toxicology that will be presented to the IRSS. |
| <a href="#"><u>Outstanding Graduate Student Award</u></a><br><i>Note that receipt of an IRSS Student Award in the previous year disqualifies the applicant for the current year.</i> | The purpose of this award is to recognize outstanding contributions of graduate students in the area of inhalation or respiratory toxicology. The applicant must be a current graduate student. Submission of an abstract to the SOT Annual Meeting is also required. Applications will be reviewed for scientific merit and service will be considered for this award. Awardees will receive an engraved plaque and cash award of \$500 during the IRSS business meeting at the annual SOT meeting.          |

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| <p><b><u>Outstanding Postdoctoral Trainee Award</u></b></p> <p><i>Note that receipt of an IRSS Student Award in the previous year disqualifies the applicant for the current year.</i></p> | <p>The purpose of this award is to recognize outstanding contributions of postdoctoral trainees to the SOT Annual Meeting in the area of inhalation or respiratory toxicology. The applicant must be a current postdoctoral trainee. Submission of an abstract to the SOT Annual Meeting is also required. Applications will be reviewed for scientific merit and service will be considered as criteria for this award. Awardees will receive an engraved plaque and a cash award of \$500 during the IRSS business meeting at the annual SOT meeting.</p> |
| <p><b>Sponsored Awards</b></p>                                                                                                                                                             | <p>Will be posted on SOT website and announced—stay tuned as a number of sponsored awards are in the works!</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

# 2026 IRSS Trainee Mentoring Event

**Thank you to our Attendees, Volunteer Mentors, and Event Sponsor (UL Laboratories)!**



**The IRSS Mentoring event is free to all SOT Trainees. Please sign up and join us for this unique and informative event!**

# 2026 IRSS Award Recipients

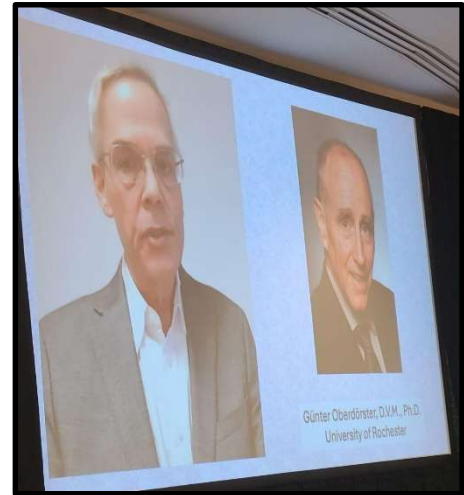
## IRSS Career Achievement Award

**Stephen Gavett, PhD**

Research Biologist

US EPA

Nominated by: Colette Miller, PhD



## IRSS Paper of the Year 2026

**Alex Carll, PhD**

University of Louisville



## **IRSS Young Investigator Award**

**Colette Miller, PhD**

Biologist

US EPA

Nominated by: Kym Gowdy, PhD



## **IRSS Outstanding Postdoctoral Trainee Award**

**Idoia Meaza Isusi, PhD**

University of Louisville

Mentor: John Wise, PhD



## **IRSS Outstanding Graduate Student Award**

### **Dustin Rousselle**

Indiana University Bloomington

Mentor: Patricia Silveyra, PhD

Project: *The Interactions between Chromosomal and Gonadal Sex Affect Lung Function After Sub-Chronic Ozone Exposure*



## **Honorable Mentions**

### **Chloe Chou**

UNC Chapel Hill

Mentor: Julia Rager, PhD

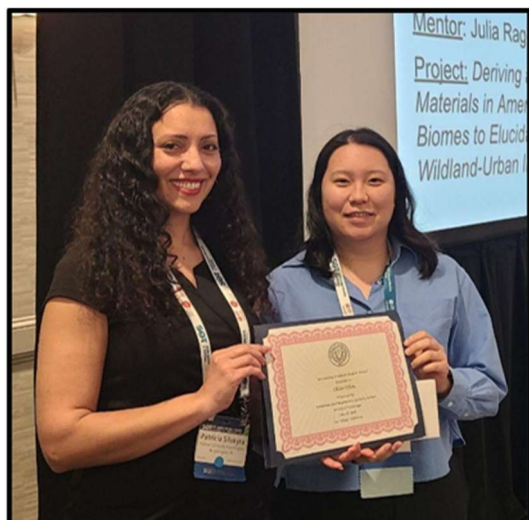
Project: *Deriving a Mixture of Combustible Materials in American Homes and Fire-prone Biomes to Elucidate the Toxicity of Wildland-Urban Interface Fires.*

### **Jenna Swihart**

Purdue University

Mentor: Jonathan Shannahan, PhD

Project: *Lipid Compositional and Spatial Alterations Associated with Pulmonary and Systemic Toxicity Following Silica Exposure.*



# Sponsored IRSS Award Recipients

## **IRSS EMKA-Scireq Award**

**Jordis Blackburn**

Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine

Mentor: Sean Murphy, PhD

Project: *A Modular Smoke Exposure Platform for In Vitro Modeling of Burn Pit Emissions.*



## **IRSS RIFM Award**

**Nicole McNabb-Kelada**

RTI International

Mentor: Shaun McCullough, PhD

Project: *Integrating Inter-Individual Variability and Cellular Interactions: Transcriptomic Responses to Acrolein in a Donor-Matched Lung Co-Culture Model.*



# IRSS Endowed Award Recipients

## **Donald E. Gardner Inhalation Toxicology Award**

**Aishwarya Bhusal**

University of California, Davis

Mentor: Pamela Lein, PhD

Project: *Obtain specialized training in transmission electron microscopy (TEM) to apply to research in TRAP and UFPM in neurodegenerative risk.*



## **Mary Amdur Student Award**

**Heui Hye Park**

UC Davis

Mentor: Laura Van Winkle, PhD

Project: *Sex-Dependent Effects of Chronic Traffic-Related Air Pollution Exposure on Pulmonary Macrophage Polarization and Neuronal Atrophy.*



## **Mary Amdur Student Award**

**Winny Soerianto**

UNC Chapel Hill

Mentor: Megan Rebuli, PhD

Project: *Woodsmoke Particulate Attenuates Antiviral Cytokine Production Against Live Attenuated Influenza Virus in Differentiated Human Nasal Epithelial Cells.*



## **Mary Amdur Student Award**

**Sarah Miller**

UNC Chapel Hill

Mentor: Julia Rager, PhD

Project: *In Vitro Mixtures Toxicity Testing to Address Wildfire Smoke Exposures and Individual Chemical Components Contributing to Human Health Risk.*



## **Mary Amdur Student Award**

**Antonio Saporito**

NYU Grossman School of Medicine

Mentor: Terry Gordon, PhD

Project: *Occupational Health Hazards: Aerosol Toxicity and Cardiopulmonary Effects on a Restaurant Cohort.*

