

**President's Message: Inspiring Optimism**  
*By Elliot J. Roth, MD, President*



A highlight of the recent AAPM&R Annual Assembly was presenting this year's FPM&R research grant awards to the recipients who so richly deserved them. Their proposals embodied the breadth of the field, and our winning investigators demonstrated innovation and novelty.

**Anders Asp, MD, Mayo Clinic**, "Transcutaneous Spinal Cord Stimulation to Improve Lower Limb Function and Assess Lower Motor Neuron Health in Children with Spina Bifida"

**Corinna Bondi, MD**, University of Pittsburgh, "Clinically relevant neurorehabilitation to mitigate aging- and hypertension- mediated cognitive decline after traumatic brain injury"

**Sharon Bushi, MD**, Burke Rehab Hospital, "Evaluating inpatient rehabilitation for metastatic cancer patients"

**Nicole Katz, MD**, Spaulding Rehab Hospital, "Mechanistic impact of synovial fluid relaxin-2 on the progression of knee osteoarthritis"

**Syed Qadri, MD**, Moss Rehab, "Evaluating Brain Plasticity in Moderate TBI Patients with Theta Burst Stimulation: A Pilot Study"

**Jason Silver, MD**, University of Washington, "Bioengineered muscle tissues to assess muscle stem cell fate decisions with aging"

**Adam Tenforde, MD**, Spaulding Rehab Hospital, "Achilles Tendinopathy"

Reviewing the grant applications gave me a front-row seat to the innovation, creativity and potential impact of rehabilitation research from extraordinary physiatric investigators across the country. The future of our specialty is in better shape than it may seem, despite the current and projected reductions in government funding for research and growing mistrust and distaste for science among some members of the public. **The enthusiasm, drive, creativity, and desire for improving the way that care is provided remains strong among many academic physiatrists – all qualities that inspire and produce strong research.**

These projects and the investigators who run them remind us that there is good reason for optimism. **Our collective job is to build on that optimism by supporting their efforts.** Conducting research requires financial support, which is difficult to obtain during the early stages of a project. Foundation for PM&R grants enable investigators to collect pilot data that can serve as a basis for proposing larger research projects and securing larger grants to fund them. This is the foundation of all research.

In addition to the 7 projects awarded during this past year, **we are extremely pleased to announce 3 new grants for 2026** that are funded by a generous anonymous gift, and a fourth to be announced soon. These grants are named to recognize past giants in the field, and will focus on specialty areas that are important targets for research. (See the article below for more information.)

As you can see, **this is an exciting time to conduct and to consume psychiatric research.** We ask you to join us in supporting these efforts by making a donation today. Thank you in advance for your support!

**DONATE NOW**

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## Congratulations, 5k Winners!

Thank you to all who came out for the Foundation for PM&R Rehab's 5k Run/Walk & Roll in Salt Lake City!

Thomas Amabile (*pictured at right*), was the overall winner with a time of 18:06, and Kaitlin Vanias was the first female finisher with an impressive time of 19:14.



The University of Michigan team (*pictured below*) once again took top honors in the Rehab 5k Residency Program Challenge! Congrats on winning both Largest Team and Fastest Team. Many thanks to our other participating teams from University of Cleveland and Mount Sinai New York as well.



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## New FPM&R Leadership

At the October 8 Board of Directors' meeting, Dr. Ross Zafonte turned over the office of President to Dr. Elliot Roth, who has served as Vice President for the last two years. He also welcomed Dr. Kathleen Bell (*pictured at right*) as our new Vice President; a former AAPM&R President, department chair and well-known researcher, Dr. Bell will assume the role of Foundation President in 2028. Dr. Zafonte also thanked Dr. Diana Cardenas for her 6 years of service on the Board, and Dr. Heidi Prather for 3 years at a Director-at-Large.



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## 2026 Research Grants

Our spring 2026 cycle will be open on **December 1** with an **application deadline of May 1**. Information about the grants can be found on the Foundation website ([www.foundationforPMR.org/research-grants/](http://www.foundationforPMR.org/research-grants/)); applications must be submitted online at <https://foundationforPMR.submittable.com/submit>.



Opportunities include:

### **ENCOMPASS HEALTH MIDCAREER INVESTIGATOR RESEARCH GRANT**

One grant of \$25,000 for an experienced psychiatric investigator to pursue a new line of inquiry. *(Special thanks to Encompass Health for their ongoing support of this grant!)*

### **MATERSON ERF NEW INVESTIGATOR GRANTS**

Up to three career development grants of \$10,000 each for psychiatric investigators five years or less out of training (residency or fellowship.)

### **GABRIELLA MOLNAR PEDIATRIC PM&R RESEARCH GRANT**

One grant of \$10,000 for a pilot study in pediatric rehabilitation.

### **SCOTT NADLER PASSOR MUSCULOSKELETAL RESEARCH GRANT**

One grant of \$30,000 for a pilot study in musculoskeletal rehabilitation.

### **TACTILE MEDICAL CANCER REHABILITATION RESEARCH GRANT**

One grant of \$10,000 for research in rehabilitative care of cancer patients. *(Special thanks to Tactile Medical for their support of this grant!)*

**We are delighted to introduce three new research grant opportunities:**

### **DOROTHEA GLASS PM&R LIFESTYLE RESEARCH GRANT**

One grant of \$10,000 for psychiatric research focused on sexuality, relationship, and lifestyle issues affecting individuals with disability.

### **MARTIN GRABOIS CHRONIC PAIN REHABILITATION RESEARCH GRANT**

One grant of \$10,000 for psychiatric research focused on the physiology of chronic pain and its clinical management.

### **RICHARD HERMAN NEUROREHABILITATION RESEARCH GRANT**

One grant of \$10,000 focused on psychiatric research in neuroscience, neurophysiology or rehabilitation neuroengineering.

**Thanks to the generous support of Nobis Rehabilitation Partners, a fourth new research grant is in the works for this 2026 grant cycle. Details will be available by December 1.**

Questions about our research grants program can be directed to Phyllis Anderson, [panderson@foundationforPMR.org](mailto:panderson@foundationforPMR.org) or 847-737-6062.

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**Double Your Donation!**

**Make a gift by November 15** and it will be doubled by matching gifts from Drs. Diana Cardenas and Lynn Gerber (pictured at right).



**All gifts made by December 31 are eligible for the maximum tax savings** allowed by law; the Foundation for PM&R is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

**Contribute now!** Click on the button below, or scan the QR code.



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