

In May, I attended the American Association for Immunologists (AAI) Conference in Portland, Oregon. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the need for quality immunology research and collaboration, and the AAI annual meeting allowed for just that. I have been a member of the AAI for three years and have previously taken part in their Advanced Immunology Course, which helped me tremendously to prepare for my qualifying exam. I was very excited to be able to continue interacting with AAI members by attending an in-person meeting. I was able to go to many talks by leaders in the field. I mostly attended cancer immunology sessions, but I also had the opportunity to learn about research outside of my specific field. I interacted with many PIs and peers from both the U of R and around the world. I also attended networking events, including a panel and meet-and-greet with PhDs in industry.

I received a Trainee Abstract Award that allowed me to present my work during an oral-block symposium. I presented my project entitled “Glycoprotein-NMB (GPNMB) is Pro-Tumorigenic in Lymphangioliomyomatosis (LAM)” during the Tumor Microenvironment session. This was my first oral presentation at a large conference outside of the U of R, and it was a great experience that will certainly help prepare me for future meetings. I also took part in a poster session (pictured below). I received a lot of good feedback on my poster, including potential experiments to expand my work. Presenting this work was helpful as I prepare my research results for publication. Also, LAM is a rare disease that not many people know about. Thus, it was great to be able to spread awareness while sharing my work. The meeting was incredibly well-organized and enriching. Thank you to GWIS for helping to support my travels to this wonderful meeting!

