



News Release

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The American Diabetes Association Announces 2024 Pathway to Stop Diabetes Grant Recipients

Spurring Innovation and Momentum in Diabetes Research

ARLINGTON, Va. (February 5, 2024) – Today, the American Diabetes Association® (ADA) announced the awardees of the Pathway to Stop Diabetes® (Pathway) grants. This year's grants dedicate more than \$4.8 million dollars to support breakthroughs in translation and clinical science, technology, care, and potential cures in the field of diabetes.

Through the Pathway program, talented early-career scientists who demonstrate exceptional innovation, creativity, and productivity receive five to seven years of funding to explore new ideas without traditional project constraints. They are also paired with world-renowned diabetes scientists who offer mentorship as well as scientific and professional guidance throughout the duration of their grant.

This year, Pathway grants have been awarded to Chelsea Hepler, PhD, a postdoctoral fellow at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine's Bass Lab; Debora Sobreira, PhD, assistant professor in the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, Los Angeles; and Lu Wang, PhD, a research assistant professor at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University.

"I am incredibly honored to receive this award and join the community of ADA scientists that are dedicated to combating diabetes. The support from this program will allow me to investigate the interplay between circadian rhythms and inflammation in the pathogenesis of diabetes and obesity, which may uncover new avenues for therapeutic interventions," said Hepler. Hepler received the Pathway grant for her research, Integration of Circadian and Inflammatory Pathways in Metabolic Homeostasis, which will delve deeper into emerging evidence indicating that circadian disruption is a major contributor to metabolic disease.

Debora Sobreira received a grant for her work, Linking Variants to Function: Understanding the Genetics of Type 2 Diabetes Through Multi-Omic Data. The goal of her research is to bridge the gap between genetic signals and type 2 diabetes development, paving the way for new strategies to predict and prevent type 2 diabetes.

"The funding from the ADA will have a transformative impact, enabling me to delve into unraveling the complexities of diabetes by studying DNA variations that contribute to the risk of developing diabetes. In essence, this award and the support from the ADA have not only validated my past endeavors, but

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have also empowered me to push the boundaries of knowledge, fostering a deeper understanding of diabetes and contributing to the ongoing pursuit of innovative solutions,” said Sobreira.

Wang’s research, *Leveraging the Online Grocery Shopping Environment to Improve Diet and Advance Health Equity*, seeks to discover how digital technologies can help reduce barriers to support healthier diets for low-income Americans with diabetes.

“My overarching goal is to identify, design, and evaluate impactful policies and interventions to improve diet, reduce diet-related chronic diseases, and improve health equity. Supported by this award, I will have the opportunity to develop, implement, and evaluate intervention strategies integrated into the real-world online grocery retail setting to promote healthier food purchases, improve diet, and improve health outcomes among diabetes patients receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits,” said Wang.

“Diabetes research is vital to improving the lives of people living with diabetes, and ultimately finding a cure,” said Charles “Chuck” Henderson, CEO of the ADA. “The ADA is proud to foster new leadership and medical breakthroughs for diabetes research. Congratulations to Drs. Hepler, Sobreira, and Wang as they pioneer advancements in diabetes care.”

To learn about past and current Pathway award recipients, visit [Pathway to Stop Diabetes](#).

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About the American Diabetes Association

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is the nation’s leading voluntary health organization fighting to bend the curve on the diabetes epidemic and help people living with diabetes thrive. For 83 years, the ADA has driven discovery and research to treat, manage, and prevent diabetes while working relentlessly for a cure. Through advocacy, program development, and education we aim to improve the quality of life for the over 136 million Americans living with diabetes or prediabetes. Diabetes has brought us together. What we do next will make us Connected for Life®. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at [diabetes.org](#) or call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383). Join the fight with us on Facebook ([American Diabetes Association](#)), Spanish Facebook ([Asociación Americana de la Diabetes](#)), LinkedIn ([American Diabetes Association](#)), Twitter ([@AmDiabetesAssn](#)), and Instagram ([@AmDiabetesAssn](#)).