

Advancing in Neurorehabilitation Research: Dr. Ahlam Salameh's Personal Journey Through ASNR's Education Committee

Joining the American Society of Neurorehabilitation's (ASNR) Education Committee marked the beginning of a transformative journey for me, both professionally and personally. Approached by Dr. Jason Carmel to become a member, this opportunity led to significant advancements in my scientific knowledge, social networks, and emotional resilience.



How It Began

My first encounter with the ASNR Education Committee came unexpectedly when Dr. Jason Carmel, a scientist I greatly admire, approached me during my first ASNR meeting and invited me to join the committee. The invitation presented a unique opportunity to contribute to the neurorehabilitation research field in a more substantial way. Accepting this role, I was unaware of the profound impact it would have on my professional journey and personal growth.

Developing the Virtual Mentoring Program

One of my first tasks within the committee involved collaborating with Drs. Heidi Schambra and Diane Damiano to develop a [Virtual Mentoring Program](#). This initiative aimed to connect experienced professionals with newcomers in the field, fostering knowledge exchange and support. The process taught me valuable lessons about committee dynamics, plan development, and execution strategies. The creation of this program was not just a professional task; it was a venture into understanding the power of mentorship and guidance. Working closely with Heidi and Diane, I learned the nuances of creating a meaningful and thoughtful program, as well as the importance of adaptability and responsiveness to the needs of our members.

The Impact of Social Interaction and Scientific Collaboration

Through my involvement with the committee, I have met an array of remarkable individuals, including Drs. Steve Wolf, Carolee Winstein, Steve Cramer, and Tom Carmichael, among others, who share my passion for neurorehabilitation research. These connections have evolved into significant scientific collaborations, enriching my research and expanding my professional network. For example, I am currently co-authoring a scientific paper with Dr. Schambra. Also, Dr. Michael Ellis, whom I met through my work on the committee, assisted me in developing a proposal for a symposium for the ASNR 2024 meeting. Moreover, the committee's monthly meetings have become a source of emotional support, especially during the isolating times of COVID-19. The anticipation of these gatherings has underscored their value, not just for organizational discussions but also for emotional wellbeing.

Leadership and Moderation Roles

A pivotal moment in my journey with the committee was my appointment as Chair of the Virtual Mentoring Program subcommittee. This role allowed me to steer the program's direction and implement improvements based on feedback and evolving needs. Additionally, by attending group meetings within the Virtual Mentoring Program as a moderator, I gleaned valuable insights from both mentors and mentees, enriching my understanding and benefiting from their shared experiences. Furthermore, serving on the ASNR education committee significantly impacted my professional development, affording me the chance to moderate sessions, lead group discussions, and host webinars. These experiences, invaluable and learned through practice, have enriched my skill set and broadened my perspective.

Reflecting on my journey with the ASNR Education Committee, I now recognize that this opportunity has influenced my career in more ways than I could have imagined. From learning the intricacies of committee work to leading a pivotal program and moderating discussions, each step has contributed to my professional and personal development. This journey underscores the importance of community, collaboration, and mentorship in advancing not only in one's career but also in contributing meaningfully to the field of neurorehabilitation research.

I extend my gratitude to Jason for his initial encouragement, to Heidi and Diane for their mentorship and collaboration, and to all the members of the ASNR Education Committee for their support and inspiration. ASNR is a group that is very welcoming and is shaped by the diversity and perspectives of its members. Being involved in ASNR and the Education Committee has been tremendously beneficial for me, and I encourage all ASNR members and people in neurorehabilitation research field who aren't members yet to get more involved with the organization.