

American Head and Neck Society Dr. Eddie Méndez Fellowship Award

Diversity Fellowship in Head and Neck Oncologic Surgery for Under-Represented Minority Medical Students

Thanks to the very generous contributions of the American Head and Neck Society (AHNS) members and supporters, AHNS Research and Education Foundation, is pleased to announce the second offering of the Dr. Eddie Méndez Fellowship Award.

The AHNS is honoring our colleague and friend, the late Dr. Eduardo “Eddie” Méndez. Dr. Méndez was a prominent physician-scientist who earned his MD with honors from the University of Maryland in 1999. He completed Otolaryngology- Head and Neck Surgery residency followed by an Advanced Head and Neck Surgical Oncology and Microvascular Reconstructive fellowship both at the University of Washington. In 2006 Dr. Méndez became faculty at the University of Washington and the subsequent director of the Translational Research Program at the affiliated Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. He led an NIH-funded laboratory examining the genetic expression of oral cavity squamous cell carcinoma in effort to identify novel treatment pathways.



Dr. Mendez was passionate about research and training the next generation of head and neck surgeon-scientists. This award is intended to expose and further the interest of an under-represented minority medical student to the field of Head and Neck Oncologic Surgery as a physician-scientist. Currently, less than 5% of practicing Otolaryngologists identify as minority providers and even a lower percentage are physician-scientists. This award aligns with the AHNS mission “to advance education, research, quality of care, and equity for the head and neck oncology patient and care team”. The AHNS recognizes the importance of increasing diverse perspectives in head and neck oncology to develop innovative and insightful research impacting our heterogeneous population.

The Dr. Eddie Mendez Fellowship awardee will receive \$10,000. The recipient Is expected to work with their research mentor to create a budget related to their proposed research. It is required that a portion of the budget be used for travel expenses to the AHNS annual meeting. The remaining funds may be used at the discretion of the recipient and mentor.

Eligibility Criteria

- Completion of at least M2 year prior to fellowship year (June 2026)
- Identify as an underrepresented according to the 2023 biennial report, [*Diversity and STEM: Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities*](#), from the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, including:
 - Individuals from racial/ethnic groups: African American/Black, Hispanic/Latin Origin, Asian Pacific Islander, American Indian
 - Persons with Disabilities
 - Individuals who are first generation college graduates

Application Materials:

- 1) Copy of your CV

2) 2 Letters of Recommendation:

- a. Letter of Recommendation from your chosen research mentor
- b. Letter of Recommendation from Medical School Dean's stating in good standing, and approval for 1 year gap during medical school to undertake this research fellowship.
 - Students must be in good standing at an accredited US medical school, or US school (see eligibility criteria)

3) Personal statement: goals of research experience, how this fellowship experience will impact the applicant's career trajectory, why this particular research subject and/or lab is of interest for the applicant and what he/she/they plan to gain from the opportunity (skills/knowledge) (2 pages maximum 1,000 words single spaced) Please include in the personal statement your underrepresented minority status and a life experience that is a contributing factor to seeking this award.

4) Research Proposal:

The applicant is expected to work with their mentor to help shape the research proposal. Applicants may select a mentor of their choosing. **In addition, mentors who have expressed an interest in providing an excellent research experience in head and neck cancer can be found [here](#).** All areas of research are welcome, including but not limited to basic science, computational, and clinical based research. The proposed project should be briefly described, however the applicant is not expected to prepare a scientific proposal. (Not to exceed 3 pages)

- *This will necessitate the applicant identifying a potential mentor(s). The student will need to speak to the mentor to determine the feasibility of the "match." The student will need to determine if the research project and opportunity with the mentor is sufficient to sustain a 1-year fellowship.*

Research Expectations:

- Awardees are expected to submit an abstract for oral presentation at the AHNS annual meeting at COSM. Recipients who are unable to prepare an abstract for COSM must notify the AHNS office.
- In addition, the AHNS Dr. Eddie Méndez Fellowship in Head and Neck Oncologic Surgery awardee will have the opportunity to present their research during the *AHNS Awards Ceremony which takes place during COSM 2027 April 7-11, 2027 | Seattle Convention Center's Arch Building and the Sheraton Grand Hotel Seattle, Washington.*
- Any published manuscript supported by the AHNS Dr. Eddie Méndez Fellowship in Head and Neck Oncologic Surgery award should cite the AHNS Research & Education Foundation as a funding source.

[APPLY HERE TODAY!](#)

Deadline is October 20, 2025.

Questions please contact: ochun@ahns.info