

AVA SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Purpose:

The Academy on Violence and Abuse (AVA) Scholars Program is a mentorship program designed to improve the ability of junior researchers to conduct high-quality research and to enter productive careers focused on understanding and minimizing the effects of violence and abuse on people's health.

Rationale:

- Violence and abuse are prevalent and adversely affect health across the life course.
- One approach to mitigate the impact of violence and abuse on health is to advance research on the prevention, recognition, and treatment of the health effects of violence and abuse.
- The number of researchers conducting this work is relatively small, and funding is scarce.
- One way to improve researchers' success is to provide role models and mentors to junior violence researchers.

AVA Scholars Program:

- USA-based AVA Scholars who meet eligibility criteria will be provided registration, domestic travel, and lodging to attend the **2026** AVA Global Health Summit.
- International AVA scholars who meet eligibility criteria may be accepted (virtual option). AVA will waive the registration fee if attending in person.
- If self-funded, international candidates are encouraged and welcome to attend the **2026** AVA Global Health Summit in person.
- Each AVA Scholar is matched with a mentor who will provide support for **2024-2026**.
- Mentors are educators or researchers working in violence or abuse who have strong mentorship abilities, experience with research, and are committed to the program.
- Mentors will provide support about a specific research project identified by the scholar, career advice and guidance, and other challenges typical of violence-related research (working with IRBs, applying for grant funding, etc.).
- AVA scholars and their mentors will meet in person during AVA conference meetings and will have continued contact, at least monthly, via email, ZOOM phone/video.
- AVA scholars will be recognized at the **2024** AVA Global Health Summit. The registration fee will be waived.

Eligibility Criteria:

Applicants must:

- Be an active AVA member.
- Plan to pursue violence-related research and have a specific project for which they would like senior mentor input. For example, research projects on violence and abuse across the lifespan can include, but are not limited to, Child Forensics, Elder Abuse, Maternal ACEs, Stalking, Violence in Schools, Technology Facilitated Abuse, etc.
- Be at an early stage in their career (includes post-doctoral fellows and junior faculty within five years of completion of terminal degree)
- Because they already have demonstrated research expertise, former or current principal investigators on an NIH R01 research project or the equivalent are not eligible to apply.

Outcome expectation/deliverable:

- AVA Scholars will present the project they received mentorship through the AVA Scholars program at the **2026** AVA Global Health Summit
- All AVA scholars are encouraged to submit their project results to peer-reviewed journals.

- All AVA Scholars are highly encouraged to continue being active AVA members, focusing on understanding and minimizing the effects of violence and abuse on people's health.

Evaluation and Monitoring:

- Individuals selected as AVA Scholars must attend AVA conference meetings. Provide an annual progress report to their mentor. A copy of the report must be emailed to the committee chair. The scholars will be required to complete AVA's requirements for program evaluation and annual and final reports.

Application Deadline:

March 15, 2024

AVA Application Process

To apply, applicants must complete an application that includes:

- A current CV with your application
- Two letters of recommendation
- A letter from the applicant's supervisor expressing commitment to the proposed course of work (if applicable) or
- A letter from the applicant's advisor/committee chair expressing commitment to the proposed course of work (if applicable)

Please forward the completed application to Nora Montalvo-Liendo nora.montalvo@gmail.com

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Current position. _____

Please describe in **600 words or less** your current position, research area, and future career plans.

Please describe in **600 words or less** a research project about which you would benefit from having the input of an expert mentor. Include research objectives, methods, and a proposed timeline.

Please describe in **350 words or less** how being an AVA Scholar would benefit your current research and future career.

Selection Criteria

The following factors are considered in the selection process:

- Evidence of the potential for a strong commitment to a career addressing the health effects of violence and abuse.
- Evidence of the potential to become a national leader in addressing the health effects of violence and abuse.
- General merit of the candidate's research proposal.
 - Potential of the proposed research to advance understanding of the health effects of violence and abuse and
 - Potential of the proposed research to serve as a launching point in the candidate's career.
- The selection committee values and will prioritize diversity across multiple dimensions, such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, and disadvantaged socioeconomic status. We strongly encourage

applications from candidates who will help us expand the perspectives and experiences we bring to our work. The more we include diverse perspectives and experiences related to the health effects of violence and abuse, the better we can help all people live healthier lives.

- As an organization, AVA is interprofessional, and our goal is to have Scholars reflect on this diversity of health professions.

The AVA Scholars Program Committee will review applications.

- The AVA Board will approve the final selection.

About the Academy on Violence and Abuse

AVA is an academic, health-professional membership-based organization dedicated to making violence and abuse a core component of medical and related professional education.

Violence and abuse have been viewed predominately as criminal justice or social welfare issues focusing on stopping crime, prosecuting criminals, and treating the victims' immediate physical wounds. However, criminal justice systems are not designed to address the full spectrum of healthcare needs of victims of violence and abuse. However, subtle forms of violence and abuse, such as verbal abuse and neglect, are rarely recognized or deemed severe enough to be classified as criminal behavior. Still, these less obvious cases of abuse require prevention and contribute to serious health problems, which warrant professional treatment.

Without formal training, healthcare professionals often lack knowledge and understanding of the issues surrounding violence and abuse and are inexperienced in recognizing related physical and emotional health symptoms. Instead, health problems resulting from abuse are often attributed to unrelated factors — or worse yet, to nothing.

For these reasons, AVA is creating dialogue, raising awareness, and promoting changes in how issues of violence and abuse are addressed in health professional education and its academic communities.

AVA intends to enhance the infrastructure of health care education and highlight the pivotal role health care professionals play in addressing these critical issues, ultimately reframing the limited view of violence and abuse into one that establishes them as crucial health care issues.

Program Contacts:

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For more information, visit <https://www.avahealth.org/about-ava/>