

Report on the Gordon Research Seminar and Conference: Functional Genomics of Human Brain Development and Disease

From April 5 to 11, 2025, I had the privilege of attending the Gordon Research Seminar (GRS) and Gordon Research Conference (GRC) on *Functional Genomics of Human Brain Development and Disease*, held in the beautiful and sunny town of Ventura, California. The conference brought together a diverse and interdisciplinary group of leading experts and early-career researchers dedicated to understanding the human brain using cutting-edge genetic and cellular techniques.

The event began with a two-day Gordon Research Seminar, designed specifically for early-career scientists. Talks and posters were presented from PhD students and Postdocs in a welcoming and collegial atmosphere, fostering open discussions and feedback. I was honored to contribute to the program by presenting my own research on MYT1L syndrome using neurons derived from patient induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs). The seminar provided a perfect platform for engaging with peers working on similar research questions and for receiving valuable feedback for my own work. The seminar concluded with a panel discussion about future career opportunities. The panel consisted of principal investigators from both academia and industry, as well as Laura Zahn, representing the editorial board. All of them shared valuable insights and advice based on their specific background and answered questions from the trainees.

On the same evening, the Gordon Research Conference officially began with a welcome dinner, followed by a keynote session given by Kristen Brennand and Marius Wernig. I found Marius Wernig's presentation particularly compelling. As a pioneer in induced pluripotent stem cell reprogramming, his talk on how the pro-neuronal transcription factor NGN2 generates three distinct subtypes of excitatory neurons, and how chromatin landscapes and cofactors influence this process, was especially relevant to my own project based on NGN2-induced neurons.

A highlight of the GRC was the opportunity to present my poster, titled "Loss of neuronal cell fate and function in MYT1L syndrome patient-derived neurons". Prior to the poster session, flash talks were held to briefly introduce the research question, methods and key findings to spark interest and initiate discussions. It was exciting to share my latest results and exchange ideas with both peers and leading experts of the field. The feedback I received will inspire new directions for my project.

Overall, I am really grateful for the opportunity to attend this GRS and GRC, made possible by the support of the GSCN! I left Ventura not only with a deeper understanding of current research in neurodevelopmental disorders, but also with new connections, potential collaborators and renewed motivation for my own research. This experience has significantly contributed to my scientific development and will have an impact on my next career steps as a researcher. I am very glad I had this opportunity!

Sincerely,

Jule Truberg