

## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Page Baluch, AIMS 2025-2026 President



Welcome to sunny Scottsdale Arizona. This will be the location of our annual **AIMS conference on April 17, 2026**. We have been busy organizing this upcoming meeting and are excited to tell you the details!

This year the 2026 conference is scheduled for **April 17, 2026** at the **SkySong Pavilion in Scottsdale, Arizona**. We are excited to announce that our speakers include core facility directors

from some of the most well-established microscopy labs in the country. Our speakers are leaders in microscopy education, development and research and are coming to Arizona to share their success and insight into recent advancements in microscopy techniques and instrumentation.

At the 2026 AIMS conference, we will have many opportunities for student participation. There will be an **Image Analysis Workshop** on Thursday March 21<sup>st</sup>. On the day of the meeting, there will be a **Student Poster Session** and an **Image Competition**. Undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral students are encouraged to register and present their work. There will be a **1<sup>st</sup> (\$150)** and **2<sup>nd</sup> (\$100)** prize awarded for the best light and EM based posters. For the Image Competition there will be a **1<sup>st</sup> (\$100)** and **2<sup>nd</sup> (\$50)** prize for the best microscopy image in both the Scientific and Artistic categories as well as a **People's Choice Award (\$25)** in each category. **Sponsors are welcome to present a poster** during the vendor exhibits/poster session if they are interested. [Vendor posters will not be judged as part of the poster competition but will have the additional opportunity to engage with attendees.] Details and registration information can be found at <https://azmicroscopy.org/events/>.

We are looking forward to a great meeting and hope you will join us at the 2026 AIMS conference in Scottsdale Arizona!



## ATTENTION STUDENTS!

This year we have multiple opportunities for student participation. Information about all these events can be found at <https://azmicroscopy.org/events/>.

- **Workshop:** On Thursday April 16th there will be a fully catered AIMS workshop focused on Histotechnology and Microscopy. Seating is limited so you must register to attend.
- **Image Competition:** This year we are happy to announce our annual Image Competition. There will be cash prizes for each category chosen by our judges and by popular vote. Please visit the website for more details.
- **Poster Session:** Students who use microscopy to visualize their research are invited to present a poster at the conference. There will be **8 poster awards for the best light and EM based posters at the undergraduate and graduate/PD level.** You can register and submit your abstracts online at <http://azmicroscopy.org>. You must be a student member of AIMS to register your poster. Once you have signed up, there is a separate registration for the conference and to submit your poster abstract.



poster guidelines/evaluation criteria and <https://azmicroscopy.org/events/>.

## Registration

Registration for the conference is a two-step process. We encourage all those working with microscopy within Arizona to support AIMS by registering as a member online at [www.azmicroscopy.org](http://www.azmicroscopy.org) at the student or individual level. Conference registration is separate and must be submitted through the website. Corporate members have the option to register at various sponsorship levels. Gold level and above include a table at the conference. Sponsors at the Platinum level or above will have first choice of their table location at the event and will be guaranteed a slot in the lightning rounds.



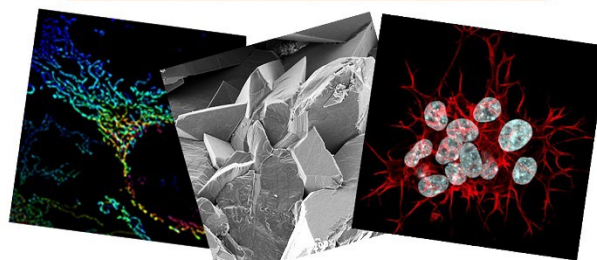
## 2026 MICROSCOPY IMAGE CONTEST

Join us in celebrating the captivating world of microscopy!

**SUBMIT YOUR IMAGE TODAY!**

There will be cash prizes for 1st and 2nd place as well as a People's Choice award

**Deadline: Friday April 10, 2026**



For more information visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/AIMS2026ImageContest>

You must **register in advance** to enter the poster competition. Your **poster abstract must be submitted by March 8<sup>th</sup>** to be included in the conference program. **Images must be uploaded by March 8<sup>th</sup>** to be included in the conference image display for judging. Details regarding the image requirements can be found at



## Traveling to the 2026 Conference?

For those who have registered and are coming in from out of town, we have secured a block of hotel rooms that will be available at a reduced cost. The hotel is called Element Scottsdale at SkySong [1345 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85257]. Our reduced rate is \$179.00/night and includes the concessions listed below. You must mention the group name: “**ASU AIMS 2026**” when reserving the room. This block will be no longer available after March 16, 2026. We have a limited number of rooms in this block, so I encourage you to book soon.

Included Hotel Concessions:

- Complimentary wireless internet access in all guest rooms
- Complimentary daily grab and go breakfast
- Free parking
- **Element Scottsdale at SkySong for 179.00 USD per night - Last Day to Book : Monday, March 16, 2026**

[Book your group rate for ASU AIMS 2026](#)

## 2026 AIMS Conference Program | Arizona State University

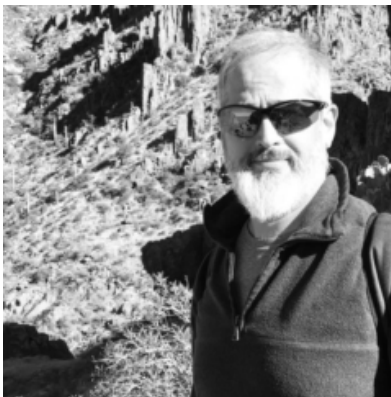
SkySong Synergy I & II, Scottsdale, Arizona

April 17, 2024

- | 8:00 - 8:45a.m. | **Check-In**
- | 8:45 – 9:00a.m. | **Opening remarks**  
**Page Baluch** - AIMS President
- | 9:00 -9:40a.m. | **Cryogenic Low Dose Imaging for Structure Determination**  
**Dewight Williams**, PhD, Eyring Materials Center CryoEM Manager,  
Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
- | 9:40 -10:20a.m. | **Low Dose In Situ and Multiscale Cryo Microscopy on Solid-Liquid Interfaces**  
**Katie Jungjohan**, National Laboratory of the Rockies
- | 10:20 -11:20a.m. | **Morning Break/Student Posters/Visit Vendors**
- | 11:20 -12:00p.m. | **Volume Electron Microscopy: A Nanoscale Window into 3D Cell Biology**  
**Kedar Narayan**, PhD, CCR Volume EM Group Leader and Senior Scientist,  
National Institutes of Health
- | 12:00 -12:15p.m. | **Microscopy Core Facilities in Arizona**



- | 12:15 - 1:15p.m. | **Buffet Lunch – Synergy I & II, SkySong Pavilion**
  
- | 1:15 - 2:00p.m. | **Cryo-FIB/(S)TEM of Low-Z, Hydrated, and Beam Sensitive Materials**  
**John Watts**, PhD, Scientist and Electron Microscopist, Center for Integrated Nanotechnologies (CINT), Los Alamos National Laboratory
  
- | 2:00 – 2:45p.m. | **Vendor Lightening Talks**
  
- | 2:55 – 3:15p.m. | **Break/Student Posters/Vendors**
  
- | 3:15 – 3:55p.m. | **Integrating Microscopy, Large Language Models, and High Performance Computing**  
**Peter Ercius**, PhD, Staff Scientist, National Center for electron Microscopy, Molecular Foundry, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
  
- | 3:55 - 4:20p.m. | **Developing a Microscopy Toolkit for the Cellular Biology of Non-Model and Intracellular Organisms**  
**Jess Warren**, Postdoctoral Researcher, Arizona State University
  
- | 4:20 – 4:45p.m. | **Student Awards and Closing Remarks**
  
- | 5:00 – 5:30p.m. | **Business Meeting - Annual Society general meeting – open to the public**



## **SPEAKERS**

### **Dewight Williams**

**CryoEM Core Director, Arizona State University**

My efforts are focused on helping institutions in establishing cryogenic EM facilities and training users in sample preparation, data collection strategies, and image processing algorithms. My current position is at Arizona State University, where I am part of an energetic group of researchers working within the Erying Material Center and the Biodesign Institute where I assist in establishing a Southwestern Regional Consortium of structural biologists. Cryogenic EM methods are but a part of this overall effort.



### **Katie Jungjohan**

**Group Research Manager III-Materials Science, National Laboratory of the Rockies**

Katherine Jungjohan’s research efforts are focused on advanced electron microscopy techniques being applied to clean energy materials, including cryogenic, multiscale, in-situ, and dose-sensitive electron microscopy. Topics include electrochemical interfaces, phase transformations, thermochemical reactions, and degradation reaction mechanisms.



## **Kedar Narayan**

**Group Leader and Senior Scientist at the National Institutes of Health** Beth

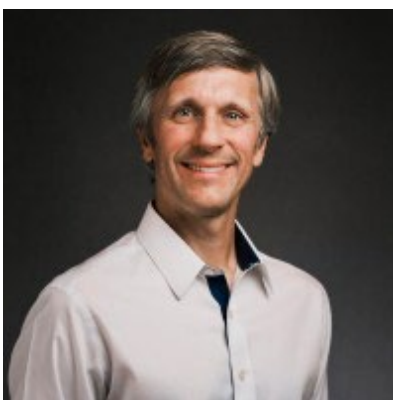
Kedar Narayan is a senior scientist and group leader at the Center for Cancer Research Volume Electron Microscopy (CVEM) at Frederick National Laboratory and National Cancer Institute, NIH, USA. Kedar has a Ph.D. in immunology, with an emphasis on biophysics and imaging, and a background in chemistry, pathology and software engineering. His group has developed and applied FIB-SEM and other volume EM technologies to questions in cancer and cell biology. Specific areas of Kedar's research focus are correlative imaging, vEM tool development and deep learning/AI; his lab released "empanada", a popular napari plugin for automated segmentation of organelles from EM images. He has co-authored more than fifty papers and given invited talks around the world. His community work includes co-organizing conferences on volume EM and "large data", leadership on data working groups, and creating common metadata standards for the field. As a leading member of the volumeEM community, Kedar is committed to the growth and democratization of the field.



## **John Watt**

**Scientist and Electron Microscopist, Center for Integrated Nanotechnologies (CINT), Los Alamos National Laboratory**

Dr. John Watt is a Scientist and electron microscopist at the Center for Integrated Nanotechnologies (CINT) at Los Alamos National Laboratory. He received his PhD in Chemistry from Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand and held postdoctoral positions at both VUW and Sandia National Laboratories. His research interests include synthesis and characterization of soft matter and inorganic materials and investigating their unique interfaces and behaviors using both cryo- and in-situ EM.



## **Peter Ercius**

**Staff Scientist, National Center for Electron Microscopy, Molecular Foundry, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory** Peter Ercius

graduated from Cornell University with a B.S. in applied and engineering physics in 2003. He remained at Cornell and completed a Ph.D. in applied and engineering physics with Professor David A. Muller in 2009. His dissertation project focused on three-dimensional (3D) electron tomography of semiconductor devices using scanning transmission electron microscopy (STEM). He then joined the NCEM facility as a collaborative postdoctoral researcher for 2 years before being hired as a permanent Staff Scientist of the Molecular Foundry. Peter is currently in charge of the electron tomography program at NCEM and the dual aberration-corrected TEAM 0.5. Dr. Ercius is a leading expert in electron tomography and collaborates with users of the Molecular Foundry on a wide range of projects including S/TEM atomic resolution imaging, electron tomography, 4D-STEM scanning diffraction, in situ liquid TEM, and electron energy loss spectroscopy (EELS).



### Jessica Warren

Hanna Gray Fellow/HHMI, Postdoctoral Researcher, Arizona State University Plants are essential for life on Earth. One of the most important features of plant cells is the chloroplast, which originated from the capture of a cyanobacterium approximately a billion years ago and facilitates the process of photosynthesis. Jessica Warren is investigating how the chloroplast’s bacterial structures and genetic features have been integrated into modern plant cells, and how this incorporation controls plant development and physiology.

## MICROSCOPY & MICROANALYSIS 2026 CONFERENCE



We invite you to join us on Aug 2 – Aug 6, 2026 at the Milwaukee Convention Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin for the Microscopy & Microanalysis 2026 Conference. Microscopy and Microanalysis 2026 provides scientific diversity, spanning disciplines from life to the physical sciences, all unified by the tools of our trade. The program committee has developed a strong program Highlighting the latest microscopic and micro analytical advances in the three primary fields of biological sciences, Materials science, and Analytical sciences. The exhibits will demonstrate

state-of-the-art equipment, and the vendor tutorials will continue to be a significant part of the meeting. The meeting will also feature tutorials and workshops to be held during the meeting in addition to the traditional short courses. For more information, go to:

<https://mmconference.microscopy.org/>



### Microscopy Today Micrograph Awards

Each year *Microscopy Today* has a micrograph competition with 3 prizes given in each of the following categories: Published, Open, and Video. The goal of

this international competition is to identify and showcase scientific micrographs and movie clips. While there must be scientific content in the images, winning entries will also exhibit exceptional composition and other aesthetic qualities. **The next deadline is March 15, 2026. Micrograph submissions begin on January 1, 2026.** For more information go to: [Learn More](#)

## CURRENT ARIZONA MICROSCOPY NEWS

### DNA provides a solution to our enormous data storage problem

Now, researchers with Arizona State University’s Biodesign Institute and their colleagues offer a surprising answer. In a pair of new studies, they show how DNA, the molecule of life, can be harnessed to faithfully store enormous volumes of data and provide powerful encryption. [Full Story](#)



## Hassan Group Wins Prestigious Microscopy Today Innovation Award

Mohammed Hassan research group has been honored with the 2025 Microscopy Today Innovation Award for their groundbreaking work on establishing the Attomicroscopy which enables attosecond temporal resolution in the Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM). This achievement represents a major leap forward in ultrafast electron microscopy, opening new possibilities for observing dynamic processes at unprecedented time scales.

Presented by the Microscopy Society of America (MSA), this honor recognizes innovations that significantly impact the microscopy community and underscores the global importance of the Hassan group's contribution to advancing scientific imaging. [Full Story](#)

## 2026 AIMS SPONSORS

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