



Harry M. Vars Award and Promising Investigator Award **Criteria and Responsibilities**

General Overview:

- Recognizes and honors an Early Career Investigator (details below) who has submitted a top-scoring original abstract, and demonstrates excellence via a manuscript and oral presentation at the ASPEN Nutrition Science & Practice Conference Premier Paper Session.
- The Vars winner is awarded \$1,000 and the runner up in the competition, the Promising Investigator, is awarded \$750.

Vars and Promising Investigator Candidates Are Chosen According to the Following:

- Candidates have chosen to participate in the Vars competition by opting in on the Abstract Submission Site.
- The candidate has submitted an Original Abstract (abstract represents original work that is presented for the first time at the ASPEN Nutrition Science & Practice Conference). Abstracts presented at other national meetings will not be considered
- The abstract score as determined by the Abstract Review Committee.
- The quality of the candidate's manuscript
- Presentation and responses to questions at the ASPEN Nutrition Science & Practice Conference Premier Paper Session.

The presentation evaluation criteria include:

- Command of material; expertise commensurate with level of experience and training
 - Quality of slides
 - Clearly states background, relevance, and rationale for the study
 - Clearly states hypothesis, study design, and methodology
 - Presents data relevant to research questions/study aims
 - Presents complicated concepts & results at level understandable to general audience
 - Appropriate organization of the presentation in support of the manuscript including the overall timing of talk
 - Summarizes appropriately; findings interpreted with appropriate level of caution
 - In control of speaking situation and poised/composed during Q/A
 - Articulately handles responses, explanations, and discussion during Q/A
 - Input from the audience via popular vote in the conference app
- The Promising Investigator Award is given to the runner-up for the Vars Award. Selection is based on the same evaluation criteria.

Vars and Promising Investigator Candidates must comply with the following Criteria and Responsibilities:

- The presenting author is specified at the time of abstract submission and will attend the ASPEN Nutrition Science & Practice Conference to present their abstract at the Premier Paper Session. The presenter/Vars candidate must be listed as the first author in the author list and if an unexpected event occurs prior to the conference that prevents that Vars candidate from presenting, ASPEN has the authority to make other arrangements on a case by case basis.
- The presenting author is an *Early Career Investigator* (he/she is within 10 years of completing a terminal research degree, medical residency, end of post-graduate clinical training, must be at a career level of assistant professor (or the equivalent) or lower, and is the primary contributor to the research represented in the abstract.
- The presenter must not have obtained funding (other than career development awards/young investigator awards) from a large governing research body such as the NIH or equivalent in the US or another country. [Please check the NIH list to verify US affiliated awards.](#)
- A manuscript based on the candidate's abstract will be produced and submitted to *JPEN* prior to the stated submission deadline. **On behalf of ASPEN and the Research Committee, it is recommended that each**

candidate submits their manuscript for detailed proof reading to ensure academic and written English proficiency prior to submission to *JPEN*. Failure to meet the deadline will result in disqualification of the candidate. Note: Manuscript submission does not guarantee acceptance by *JPEN* editors.

- All candidates will attend the ASPEN Nutrition Science & Practice Conference to present their abstract in the Premier Paper Session.
- All candidates must also attend the Rhoads Lecture and Awards Ceremony in preparation for the Vars Award or Promising Investigator Award recipient announcement. One candidate will receive the Vars Award and the runner up will receive the Promising Investigator Award.