

Bridging the Gap Between Scientific Community and the General Public

By Sunderarajan Padmanabhan

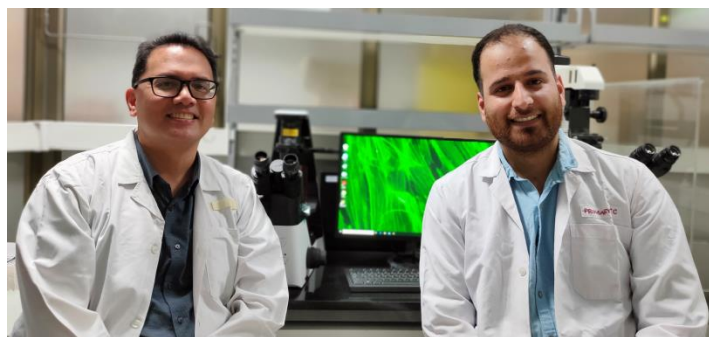
New Delhi, March 27: Edries Hajam, a PhD student at inStem, was recently selected as one of four winners of the International 2020 Young Scientist Seminars (YSS) (<https://www.ibiology.org/meet-the-2020-young-scientist-seminars-winners/>).

This competition was sponsored by iBiology and their partners the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation and the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science. The YSS winners were selected from an international pool of PhD students and postdoctoral fellows. Applicants were chosen based on the importance and novelty of their research, in addition to their ability to project their work in a manner that is accessible to a wide audience including non-scientists.

Edries is a student in Professor Colin Jamora's laboratory at inStem and is studying how the amount of fat stored in cells called adipocytes, expand or shrink. Interestingly, the fat cells in the skin continually undergo cycles of expansion and shrinkage. The team is using mouse models and cell biology approaches to elucidate how this fluctuation in fat content is controlled.

Edries has discovered that a specific type of immune cell, namely T-cells, is an important player and signals to fat cells in the skin. Understanding the control of fat content in a tissue may provide important new insights into the treatment of conditions where there is excess tissue fat such as obesity and diabetes, both of which are major health problems.

As a winner, Edries will attend a multi-day science communication workshop at iBiology headquarters at the University of California, San Francisco. At the end of this training, research talks will be posted on the ibiology website as part of the [Young Scientist Seminars](#). inStem is proud to be training the next generation of scientists who accept the crucial responsibility of communicating the importance of scientific research to the general public who both support and benefit from their research.



Edries Hajam (R) and his mentor Colin Jamora (L) at inStem (March 2020)