



2020 Eugene L. Gottlieb JCO Student of the Year PRESENTED BY AMERICAN ORTHODONTICS

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Contact: Phil Vogels
(303) 443-1720
philvogels@jco-online.com

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Stony Brook University Student Dr. Saro Atam Wins 2020 Eugene L. Gottlieb JCO Student of the Year Award, Presented by American Orthodontics

The Journal of Clinical Orthodontics is proud to name Dr. Saro Atam from Stony Brook University in Stony Brook, N.Y., as the winner of the 2020 Eugene L. Gottlieb JCO Student of the Year Award, presented by American Orthodontics. Dr. Atam was selected over 24 other students from schools around the United States in a two-stage, months-long competition judged by members of the JCO editorial board. His prize includes more than \$8,000 worth of products and services from American Orthodontics, JCO, and Dolphin.

“Coming from a war-torn country and being recognized in the United States and specifically by one of the most prestigious orthodontic peer-reviewed journals, it is a great achievement,” said Dr. Atam. “I feel so happy and blessed. I feel lucky.”

Dr. Atam grew up in Syria and graduated from dental school there, enduring the civil war and drone strikes, including a bomb dropped inside his dental school campus. He emigrated to the United States as a refugee and attended dental school at the University of Pennsylvania, where he graduated at the top of his class. He won the Dentsply Sirona Restorative Global Clinical Case contest in 2017 and was a recipient of the prestigious Earle Banks Teaching award in 2018. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, he was accepted into the orthodontic program at Stony Brook University. A complete profile of Dr. Atam will be published in the April issue of JCO and posted on JCO’s Facebook page.

Dr. Atam is the fifth Student of the Year award winner, joining Dr. Katya Skillestad of Texas A&M University (2019), Dr. Samaneh Mojarrad of the University of Pennsylvania (2018), Dr. Moataz Elmahdy of the University of Rochester (2017), and Dr. Krystian Jarosz of Rutgers University (2016). Stony Brook University is the fifth different school to produce a winner over the five years of the competition.

The award program grew out of JCO’s central mission to specialize in the clinical side of orthodontics. “We believed there was a gap in student recognition,” said JCO Editor Dr. Robert Keim. “Almost all of the awards were for research, which is of course important, but no one was rewarding clinical excellence. We thought we were the perfect vehicle to address that gap.” JCO was founded in 1967 by Dr. Eugene L. Gottlieb, after whom the Student of the Year Award is named. Dr. Gottlieb died in 2018 at age 99.



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“We could not be prouder of this award and the competition around it,” said Dr. Keim. “Each year the judges are highly impressed by all of the applicants, and this year was no different. The future of the profession is in wonderful hands and we look forward to following not only Dr. Atam, but all of the entrants into the competition as they progress through their careers.”

The award’s title sponsor, American Orthodontics (AO), is the world’s largest privately held manufacturer of orthodontic products. Based in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, AO is dedicated to providing quality products, dependable delivery, and personalized service. “AO is dedicated to supporting orthodontic education and the future of the profession, and we are very proud to sponsor the JCO Student of the Year Award recognizing the best and brightest in orthodontics,” said Director of North American Sales, Todd Beaudoin.

The award is also sponsored by Dolphin, which provides 2D/3D imaging, diagnostic, treatment planning, case presentation, practice management, and patient education software for orthodontists. Mobile and Cloud applications are available.

The competition was held in two stages. Every school in the United States was allowed to nominate one current student. Each nominee submitted two letters of recommendation and a personal essay. Nominees were then given the materials from an unpublished case and asked to write a complete treatment plan, including all possible alternatives, within a two-week time frame. Three JCO board members whittled the 25 nominees down to 12 finalists in December.

Each of the finalists then submitted a complete report for a case he or she had worked on. A wider panel of JCO board members voted for the winner.

Published monthly, JCO is the only peer-reviewed publication that emphasizes the everyday clinical and management aspects of private orthodontic practice.

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