

University of Memphis FedEx Institute hosts Biomaterials Conference

Day-long event focuses on biomaterials, and the world of academia, industry, and entrepreneurship after graduation.

Friday, March 18, 2016, the University of Memphis and University of Tennessee Health Science Center, together with Vanderbilt University and University of Kentucky presented Biomaterials day 2016 at the FedEx Institute on the University of Memphis campus. The event was organized and supported by the Society for Biomaterials, Student Section at the University of Memphis, and Topher Gehrmann, the President-elect of the society. Topher is a biomedical engineering graduate student in the Tissue Template Engineering and Regeneration Laboratory of Dr. Gary Bowlin at the University of Memphis and the committee chair for Biomaterials Day 2016.



Morning registration was followed by a welcome and keynote by Dr. John Rose, the principal scientist in biomaterials in advanced surgical devices from Smith and Nephew. Dr. Rose is an experienced biomaterials research scientist in Memphis who studies biomaterials interfacing with the human body. Dr. Rose has published papers on a wide variety of materials and their degrading and wearing characteristics ranging from non-degradables, biodegradables, bone cement, and other

polymer biomaterials. Chris Przybyszewski, Executive Vice President & Board Secretary for US Biologic; Dr. Kerem Kalpakci, Principle R&D Engineer at Medtronic Spine & Biologics; and Dr. Karen Hasty, George Thomas Wilhelm Endowed Professorship in Orthopaedic Surgery within the UT within the UT-Campbell Clinic Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and Biomedical Engineering and Director of Basic Research UTHSC discuss alternative careers with moderator Allan Daisley, President of Zeroto510 Medical Accelerator and Director of Entrepreneurship & Sustainability at Memphis Bioworks Foundation. (Photo Chad Riggs)



(Left to Right) Ms. Mary Anthony, Senior Program Director, Global PLM, Advanced Surgical Devices Division at Smith & Nephew; Ms. Lauralan Terrill-Grisoni, Vice President Reconstruction-Global Knees at Smith & Nephew; Dr. Jessica Amber Jennings, Assistant Professor University of Memphis; Dr. Amy De Jongh-Curry, Professor and Graduate/Undergraduate Coordinator, University of Memphis Department of Biomedical Engineering; Dr. Ashley Parker, Research and Development Engineer at Microport Orthopedics. The panel was moderated by Dr. Esra Roan, Professor, University of Memphis, Department of Biomedical Engineering. (Photo James Tatum)

Following the keynote, the day went on to include research presentations about tissue engineering, fabrication methods, and simulation and modeling host response. There were also several panels that discussed alternative career paths, empowering women in engineering, and working in industry and academia. There were two dedicated areas for student poster presentation as

well, and a STEM education workshop sponsored by Wright Medical that was open to the public and offered teaching methods and practices for STEM education at all levels from primary school all the way to collegiate and post-collegiate students/employees. Over 100 people attended the event, and feedback was very positive.

“I really enjoyed Biomaterials day. It was a great opportunity to feel your research is paying off and be proud of it, and also learn what everyone else is working on. The panels were really intuitive and meeting people from other schools was a lot of fun, especially to see how the same research goal can be approached from different perspectives.”

-Chris Alexander, Biomedical Engineering Graduate Student, University of Memphis

“Our success is greatly aided by the attending faculty, industry professionals, entrepreneurs, government scientists, and diverse supporting professionals from across the fields of biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, and healthcare who have come to foster the growth of our students. Without the cumulative support of our strong and diverse community in the Mid-South, we would not be able to create amazing success stories such as our very own [SweetBio Inc.](#) in Memphis who has successfully raised over a million dollars in funding for their biomaterial innovation, proving further that University of Memphis students, and our peers in the mid-south, can accomplish great things when we work together.”

-Topher Gehrman, Biomedical Engineering Graduate Student, Society For Biomaterials.

Other sponsors included [Smith & Nephew](#), [Wright Medical](#), [Memphis Bioworks](#), and [Life Science Tennessee](#).



Rear: Dr. Richard Smith, Associate Professor and Graduate Program Director, Department of Orthopedic Surgery & Biomedical Engineering.

Front (L-R): Dr. Chris Waters, Professor and Vice Chair Department of Physiology, UTHSC College of Medicine; Dr. William Mihalko, J. R. Hyde Chair of Excellence in Biomechanical Engineering at the UTHSC, Orthopaedic Surgeon Campbell Clinic; Dr. John T. Wilson, Assistant Professor of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering and Biomedical Engineering, Vanderbilt University; Dr. Warren Haggard, Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, University of Memphis. (Photo James Tatum)