

# Nashville Biomaterials Day 2015 – Event Report

## Contact Information

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## Event Summary:

The 2015 Nashville Biomaterials Day took place on March 23, 2015 and was co-hosted by Vanderbilt University, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Memphis on the Vanderbilt campus in Nashville, TN. This was the first event co-hosted by Vanderbilt, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Memphis (UK has previously been involved in a triad with Case Western and Purdue University). This new institutional collaboration more appropriately covered the mid-south region and helped to promote new interactions between these institutions, which all have vibrant biomaterials research programs. The theme for this Biomaterials Day meeting, “Synthetic Biology: The Next Horizon in Biomaterials Research?”, was enthusiastically received by the biomaterials communities from all three hosting universities. The event was highlighted by excellent keynote presentations from Dr. Junghae Suh (Rice University) and Dr. Joshua Leonard (Northwestern University) who discussed their research in the cutting-edge juncture of synthetic biology and biomaterials.

Attendees to the 2015 Nashville Biomaterials Day included over 75 participants from both academia and the private sector, which is nearly **double the number of attendees** from the Biomaterials Day event held at Vanderbilt in 2013. Academic registrants included undergraduates, graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and professors from six universities, including Vanderbilt, UK, UofM, University of Tennessee Knoxville (UTK), Duke University, Fisk University, and the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC). Industry partners included participants from Wright Medical Technologies, Smith & Nephew, Cook Biotech, and Microport Orthopedics. The event was sponsored by the Society for Biomaterials and the Vanderbilt University School of Engineering.

The Biomaterials Day was highlighted by a number of successful program events, including presentations from the two invited keynote speakers along with oral presentations from a number of student and faculty researchers. The poster session allowed for a number of graduate and undergraduate students to present their work in a lively, well-attended question and answer setting and featured a multitude of excellent presentations. A networking luncheon allowed students to interact with both academic researchers and industry professionals, while an industry presentation session gave students a direct look at biomaterials work being done in the private sector. Also, a question and answer session with panelists from both academia and industry gave students the opportunity to directly probe the expert panel about the differences and similarities between academia and industry. Finally, the day was punctuated by the awards session for oral and poster presentations which saw awards going to:

### Oral Presentation Awards:

1<sup>st</sup>: Sichang Lu, Vanderbilt University

2<sup>nd</sup>: Prachi Gupta, University of Kentucky

3<sup>rd</sup>: Sue Lee, Vanderbilt University

### Poster Presentation Awards:

1<sup>st</sup>: Tianwei Shen, Vanderbilt University

2<sup>nd</sup>: Theodora Asafo-Adjei, University of Kentucky

3<sup>rd</sup>: Andrew Gordon, Vanderbilt University

Though the event was highlighted by many excellent presentations and new collaborations between attendees, the biggest highlight might have been the holding of the event at all. The Biomaterials Day event was originally scheduled for Friday, February 20<sup>th</sup> but had to be cancelled due to a massive winter storm that created extremely hazardous road conditions in Nashville and the surrounding areas on the day of the event. The conference was rescheduled for Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, which incredibly coincided with yet another winter storm that was so severe it shut down many of the interstates around Nashville the week of the event. This led to a final reschedule to Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> at which time the event went forward as planned. Unfortunately, the unavoidable rescheduling forced

many of the registered attendees and speakers to cancel their attendance to the event; for perspective, the original registration featured over 115 participants from 12 different universities while the final event had over 75 participants from 7 universities. Though it was disappointing to lose so many of our attendees due to rescheduling, it is particularly encouraging that there is so much enthusiasm for biomaterials in this region and should make for even more successful events in the future.

### Speaker List and Schedule

Starting Time	Biomaterials Day Schedule	
	Ballroom B	Ballroom C
8:00 AM	Registration/ Poster Setup	
9:00 AM	<i>Keynote Address</i> <b>Junghae Suh</b>	
9:15 AM		
9:30 AM		
9:45 AM		
10:00 AM	Break	
10:15 AM	Thomas Werfel - VU	Dan Balikov - VU
10:30 AM	Madhu Dhar- UT Knoxville	Andrew Harmata - VU
10:45 AM	Sue Lee - VU	Hongsik Cho - UTHSC
11:00 AM	<b>Thomas Dziubla</b> - University of Kentucky	<b>David Wright</b> - Vanderbilt University
11:15 AM		
11:30 AM	<b>Poster Session</b>	
11:45 AM		
12:00 PM		
12:15 PM		
12:30 PM	<b>Networking Luncheon</b>	
12:45 PM		
1:00 PM		
1:15 PM		
1:30 PM		<i>Keynote Address</i> <b>Joshua Leonard</b>
1:45 PM		
2:00 PM		
2:15 PM		
2:30 PM	<b>Eric Rodenberg</b> - Cook Biotech	Mukesh Gupta - VU
2:45 PM	<b>Russell Pagano</b> - Wright Medical	Murali Yallapu - UTHSC
3:00 PM	<b>Patrick Aldinger</b> - Smith & Nephew	Sichang Lu - VU
3:15 PM	Break	
3:30 PM	Subhash Chauhan - UTHSC	Kameron Kilchrist - VU
3:45 PM	Lucas Hofmeister - VU	Richard Boyer - VU
4:00 PM	Kristin Poole - VU	Prachi Gupta - UK
4:15 PM	<b>Faculty/Industry Panel</b>  Discussion: <i>Career Paths</i>	
4:30 PM		
4:45 PM		
5:00 PM		
5:15 PM		
Closing/Awards		
<b>Closing Reception in Featheringhill Atrium</b>		