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Mid-Atlantic Biomaterials Day

February 24, 2017
New York City, New York

Hosted by



Final Report

The inaugural Midatlantic Biomaterials day was held on February 24th, 2017 in New York City, and was titled “Biomaterial Frontiers: Emerging Challenges Creating New Opportunities.” The event was created to encourage students within this large and diverse region to learn about and share their knowledge of biomaterials, and to provide a forum where they might learn about pursuing a biomaterials-related career, whether that be in industry or academia. Five universities from across the region came together to collaborate on putting on this event: Columbia University, the University of Rochester, the City College of New York, Johns Hopkins University, and Rutgers University. Each of these universities has small but active chapters of Society for Biomaterials and were eager to spread awareness and collaboration of Biomaterials science within the region.

Over 100 people attended the event from 20 institutions across the region, and included undergraduate students, graduates, post-docs, professors, and professionals. These institutions included Baruch college, City College of New York, Columbia University, the Food and Drug Administration, Hunter College, Johns Hopkins University, Matritek, Inc, MedImmune, the National Eye Institute (NIH), New Jersey Institute of Technology, New York University, NYU College of Dentistry, Pennsylvania State University, Profusa, Rutgers University, Touro College, University of Connecticut, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and University of Rochester.

The event began with a keynote address from sitting SFB president Dr. Liisa Kuhn of the University of Connecticut. Dr. Kuhn introduced attendees to her exciting research on calcium phosphate-based drug delivery systems, and gave unique perspectives on a fulfilling 20-year career in academic research. Following the keynote address there were four plenary sessions which featured 30 minute talks from invited guest speakers, followed by rapid-fire student presentations relevant to the session. These plenary sessions were Cell-instructive Biomaterials, lead by Dr. Prabhas Moghe (Rutgers University), Biomaterials for Drug and Gene Delivery, lead by Dr. Danielle Benoit (University of Rochester), Fabrication techniques for Biomaterials, lead by Dr. Murat Guvendiren (NJIT), and Materials Characterization and Mechanics, lead by Dr. Timmie Topoleski (UMBC).

The main goal of the event aimed to provide a platform for student researchers to share their research, and to gain exposure to regional experts in biomaterials science. Forty abstracts were selected for presentations at the event. All accepted presenters were asked to present their research during a poster session, and outstanding abstracts were invited to give 5-minute rapid-fire podium presentations during

plenary sessions. A committee of judges from each of the host schools judged the presentations, and awarded best rapid-fire talk and best poster prizes to Shoumyo Majumdar (Johns Hopkins University) and Jumana Alhmadi (University of Connecticut), respectively.

Some of the most popular events of the day were the career talks. The first session featured speakers from government research institutions, Dr. Kimberly Ferlin (FDA) and Dr. Charlie Drinnan (NIH), and the second session featured speakers from industry, Dr. Ben Hwang (CEO of Profusa, Inc) and Dr. Anthony Tuesca (Medimmune). In these sessions, the speakers gave unique insights into what type of work and research their jobs entail, how they got to where they are, and on occasion advertised recruitment search for potential positions! After their brief talks, each of these speakers was invited to sit on a panel, along with Dr. Liisa Kuhn, to answer undergraduate and graduate questions about a wide variety of career paths. This event provided a unique opportunity for students to interact with and network with professionals in three major career pathways associated with biomaterials research. In particular, having the opportunity to ask questions directly to the CEO of a biomedical technology company within a relatively small forum was greatly appreciated by many attendees.

Generous contributions from our sponsors Profusa Inc., Matritek, the Johns Hopkins Alumni Association, the Graduate Student Council of CCNY, the CCNY BME Graduate Student Association, and the Chemical Engineering Graduate Council of CCNY, as well as the Biomaterials Day Grant award from SFB helped produce an extremely successful inaugural event.

Information about the event, including information about our speakers, sponsor links, list of abstracts, and photos of the event, can all be found at our website <https://www.midatlantic-biomaterialsday2017.org/>

Success Story

The preparation for this event was initiated by four schools, Columbia University, the University of Rochester, the City College of New York, and Johns Hopkins University. During this process, students from Rutgers University expressed a strong interest in helping plan the event. Rutgers university has a strong biomaterials program however had not established an official chapter of SFB. In the summer of 2016, during the initial planning phase of the event, Rutgers brought together a group of interested students and established a brand-new chapter of SFB. The hosting school of City College of New York had also started their chapter of SFB only one year prior. Many of the other schools leading this event had previously had limited participation, and the planning and execution of this event reinvigorated membership and participation in these chapters. In addition, at the end of this event, students from the University of Connecticut reached out to the host committee schools for guidance on how to start their own SFB chapter, and are currently in that process now. Many attendees of the event came from research groups that do biomaterials research but are not in formal biomaterials focused programs, and were pleased to learn of SFB as a forum for presenting their research in the future.