



Committee Call Notes

Scientist Mentoring & Diversity Program for Medical Technology (SMDP MedTech)

Outreach & Planning Committee

Conference Call

Wednesday, April 29, 2026

9:00 AM Pacific / 11am Central / 12:00PM Eastern

The following Committee members were in attendance:

ICPD Staff: Dayveon Cooper, Scott May

Sarah Maki (AdvaMed), Kimberly Thompson (Edwards Lifesciences),

Fernando Cruz-Guilloty (Johnson & Johnson), Pavlos Vlachos (Lilly)

Scott May welcomed members to the Outreach & Planning Committee and thanked everyone for making time to participate. He reminded participants that the meeting was being recorded to assist with the preparation of the official committee minutes and demonstrated where committee agendas and supporting materials can be accessed on the ICPD website. Scott noted that maintaining these records allows committee members to remain informed throughout the planning cycle and provides an institutional record of the decisions and recommendations made by the committee.

Scott acknowledged apologies from Elisabeth Valerio and Eb Badejo (Johnson & Johnson, both of whom were unable to attend because of conflicting commitments. He then invited participants to introduce themselves. During introductions, Fernando reflected on his long history with SMDP, explaining that he first participated as a scholar in 2004 and again in 2008 before later becoming a mentor and champion for the program within Johnson & Johnson. Scott welcomed Pavlos Vlachos to the committee, noting his dual roles within Lilly and as a professor at Purdue University. He expressed appreciation for Lilly's continued support and said Pavlos' academic and industry experience would bring valuable perspective to committee discussions.

Planning for the 2026 SMDP MedTech Training Program

The committee's primary discussion focused on preparations for the 2026 SMDP MedTech Training Session, scheduled to take place in Boston from October 16-21, 2026. Scott explained that planning activities had now shifted from program design to implementation, with scholar selection, mentor recruitment, venue confirmation and agenda development all moving forward simultaneously.

Scholar Recruitment & Selection

Scott reported that recruitment had produced another strong applicant pool, with more than one hundred completed applications received. Formal review of applications would begin in mid-August, and partner organizations were invited to nominate additional volunteers to assist on the Selection Committee. He emphasized that reviewers play an important role in ensuring that scholars are selected through a fair, balanced and comprehensive evaluation process.



Using an applicant profile prepared by Dayveon Cooper, Scott reviewed the composition of the applicant pool. Approximately half of all applicants are pursuing degrees in biomedical engineering, while the remainder represent mechanical engineering, chemical engineering, electrical engineering, health informatics, data science and other quantitative disciplines that contribute to the medical technology sector. Applicants also represent a diverse range of educational institutions, including major research universities, state universities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

Members also reviewed the academic distribution of applicants across bachelor's, master's, doctoral and postdoctoral levels. Scott observed that the breadth of disciplines and institutions reflects the increasingly multidisciplinary nature of the medical technology workforce. He expressed confidence that the final scholar cohort would closely mirror the diversity already evident within the application pool and would provide partner companies with access to an exceptionally talented group of future professionals.

Mentor Recruitment & Best Practices

Attention then turned to mentor recruitment. Scott reminded partner organizations that mentor nominations are requested by August 14 so that ICPD has sufficient time to complete matching before the October training session. He explained that, alongside recruitment, ICPD is documenting mentor recruitment and engagement practices from partner companies to identify approaches that can be shared across the network.

Fernando Cruz-Guilloty described Johnson & Johnson's evolving mentor strategy. He explained that the company's growing SMDP alumni community now plays a central role in promoting the program internally, identifying prospective mentors and encouraging long-term engagement. Alumni frequently advocate for SMDP with senior leadership, help orient new mentors and, in some cases, serve as co-mentors themselves. This continuity has strengthened the company's mentoring culture while creating multiple pathways for alumni to remain engaged long after completing the program.

Kimberly Thompson shared Edwards Lifesciences' experience of recruiting mentors through employee resource groups and internal volunteer networks. She emphasized that recruitment is only one component of a successful mentoring program; maintaining regular contact with mentors throughout the year is equally important. Periodic check-ins help identify potential challenges early, provide mentors with additional support where needed and reduce the risk of volunteer fatigue, while simultaneously developing a pipeline of future mentors.

A broader discussion followed regarding the appropriate level of communication between ICPD and mentors during the twelve-month mentoring relationship. Scott explained that ICPD intentionally focuses routine follow-up on scholars, confirming that mentoring meetings are taking place and that individualized mentoring plans remain on track, while avoiding unnecessary administrative demands on mentors. Committee members agreed that striking the right balance between support and



flexibility is important and welcomed Scott's offer for ICPD staff to participate in company mentor orientation sessions or mentor meetings whenever requested.

The discussion concluded with agreement that mentor engagement will remain a recurring topic throughout the planning cycle as additional best practices are gathered and shared among partner organizations. Members expressed appreciation for the opportunity to learn from one another's experiences and recognized that strengthening mentor support ultimately enhances outcomes for scholars and partner companies alike.

Venue Planning

The committee next reviewed logistical planning for the 2026 SMDP MedTech Training Session in Boston. Scott May explained that securing an appropriate host company location remained one of the final major planning priorities. ICPD was seeking a partner organization willing to host the program on Saturday, October 17, and the morning of Sunday, October 18.

Scott noted that while the hotel could accommodate the educational sessions if necessary, the committee has consistently found that hosting the program within a corporate facility creates a far richer learning experience. Scholars gain first-hand exposure to the workplace, observe company culture, and interact more naturally with employees, while partner companies are able to showcase their operations and introduce participants to career pathways that extend beyond the classroom. Members discussed several possibilities within the Boston area and agreed to continue exploring opportunities over the coming months. Scott encouraged committee members to identify organizations that may be interested in serving as the host venue.

Agenda & Speaker Planning

Planning for the educational program was progressing alongside venue selection. Scott advised members that speaker recommendations would be requested by August 14 to allow adequate time to finalize the agenda and confirm participation. Committee members were encouraged to think broadly when identifying speakers, including senior executives, engineers, researchers, regulatory specialists, recruiters and former SMDP participants whose experiences could inspire scholars entering the profession.

The committee reaffirmed that one of SMDP's greatest strengths is the diversity of perspectives presented during the training session. Bringing together leaders from large multinational companies, emerging medical technology firms and experienced alumni helps scholars better understand the breadth of opportunities available across the industry.

Annual Celebration Reception

Scott shared preliminary plans for the Annual Celebration Reception, which was expected to be held aboard a Boston Harbor cruise on the evening of Saturday, October 17. The reception provides an informal setting for scholars, mentors, executive sponsors and committee members to strengthen



relationships established during the training session while celebrating the beginning of the year-long mentoring experience.

Committee members were invited to participate in the reception, with RSVP responses requested by September 11 to assist with planning.

Update on The MedTech Conference

Sarah Maki of AdvaMed provided an update on preparations for The MedTech Conference and the continued development of the NextGen Headquarters program. Registration for the conference was expected to open in mid-May, with organizers continuing to expand opportunities specifically designed for university students and early-career professionals interested in the medical technology sector.

Sarah explained that NextGen QH had become an established feature of the conference and serves as a central gathering place where students can participate in career-focused programming, network with industry professionals and explore employment opportunities. She encouraged committee members to introduce AdvaMed to universities, engineering departments, alumni organizations and professional societies that could help broaden student participation.

She noted that colleges and universities are able to bring organized student groups to the conference with complimentary registrations, while discounted registration rates remain available for students and early-career professionals attending independently. Sarah emphasized that reducing financial barriers is an important part of expanding access to careers within the medical technology industry.

Scott thanked Sarah for AdvaMed's continued partnership and observed that attendance at The MedTech Conference is one of the defining elements of the SMDP MedTech experience. Exposure to technical sessions, industry leaders, the exhibition floor and professional networking provides scholars with insights that are difficult to replicate in an academic setting and often influences both career choices and professional confidence.

Partner Support & Sponsorship

Scott thanked organizations that had already committed support for the 2026 program and reminded remaining partners that sponsorship confirmations were requested by June 30. ICPD's planning goal was to support approximately 35 scholar-mentor pairs during the Boston program.

The committee also discussed the Emerging Company Sponsorship initiative, which enables selected startup and growth-stage medical technology companies to participate at no sponsorship cost. Scott explained that these organizations expose scholars to innovation, entrepreneurship and the unique career opportunities available within smaller companies. Members were encouraged to recommend promising Boston-area companies that would benefit from participation.



Virtual Programming & Year-Round Engagement

Scott concluded the planning discussion with an overview of ICPD's year-round virtual programming. He encouraged partner organizations to make greater use of the SMDP Jobs Board by posting employment opportunities directly through the portal, allowing scholars and alumni to connect with career openings throughout the year.

Upcoming virtual programs included AstraZeneca's 'Belonging in Industry' session, the SMDP MedTech Career Networking event, the Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine R&D Senior Leaders Roundtable and the SMDP Biotech Career Networking event. Scott noted that one additional MedTech partner was still being sought to host a future virtual session and encouraged committee members to consider organizations that could participate.

Members were reminded that partner news, events and employment opportunities can also be promoted through the weekly SMDP newsletter. Additional online resources, including Mentor Moments, Career Spotlights, project pages and interactive conference tools, continue to strengthen engagement between scholars, mentors, alumni and partner organizations throughout the year.

2025 SMDP MedTech Program Update

Before concluding the planning discussions, Scott May briefly reflected on the progress of the current SMDP MedTech mentoring cycle. He reported that thirty scholars had been sponsored for the current program and reminded committee members that the annual training session represents only the beginning of the SMDP experience. The program's long-term success depends upon maintaining meaningful mentor-scholar engagement throughout the twelve-month mentoring relationship.

Scott explained that ICPD staff continue to maintain regular communication with scholars after the training session to ensure mentoring meetings are taking place, personalized mentoring plans are being implemented and participants remain engaged. This ongoing follow-up enables ICPD to identify concerns early, provide additional support when necessary and help scholars maximize the value of the mentoring experience.

SMDP Alumni Program

Dayveon Cooper presented a comprehensive update on the continued development of the SMDP Alumni Program, highlighting the significant progress made toward establishing a stronger year-round alumni community. He explained that the Alumni Steering Committee (ASC) has now been formally established and meets monthly to guide the long-term direction of alumni engagement across both the Biotech and MedTech programs.

Rather than functioning solely as an ICPD initiative, the Alumni Program has intentionally been designed to become increasingly alumni-led. Former scholars are being encouraged to assume leadership roles in planning activities, mentoring newer participants, organizing networking opportunities and shaping the future priorities of the program. This approach recognizes that alumni



possess valuable perspectives on the evolving needs of scholars and are well positioned to strengthen the sense of community that extends far beyond the formal mentoring year.

Dayveon reported that the Steering Committee's immediate priorities include establishing regional alumni chapters, expanding professional development programming, strengthening peer-to-peer mentoring and creating additional opportunities for alumni to build meaningful professional networks. Committee members also continue gathering feedback from alumni throughout the network to ensure future initiatives respond to their interests and career aspirations.

Committee members welcomed the progress being made and agreed that the Alumni Program has become an important extension of the SMDP mission. By maintaining relationships with scholars long after completion of the mentoring program, ICPD is building a growing community of professionals who remain connected to one another while supporting future generations of scholars.

Dayveon also reminded members that the second annual SMDP Alumni Networking Event would take place on Saturday, June 20, immediately preceding the SMDP Biotech Training Session in San Diego. The event would be offered in both in-person and virtual formats, allowing alumni from across the country to participate. The networking event would transition directly into the Opening Event welcoming the incoming Biotech scholars and mentors. Committee members and partner organizations were invited to attend, with RSVP responses requested by May 22.

Other ICPD Program Updates

SMDP Biotech

Scott briefly updated members on preparations for the 2026 SMDP Biotech Training Session in San Diego. Planning activities were progressing well, with scholar recruitment, mentor recruitment and program development all advancing according to schedule. He encouraged partner organizations that support both programs to continue sharing ideas and best practices across the Biotech and MedTech committees.

Enterprise, Leaders & Innovators Society for Africa (ELISA)

Scott also shared a brief update on ELISA, highlighting the successful completion of the recent ELISA Business Summit and Business Scholars Program in Zimbabwe. He noted that the initiative continues to grow as an international leadership and entrepreneurship platform and welcomed opportunities for committee members to learn more about the program or become involved in future activities.

Sage Clubs

The committee received a short update on Sage Clubs, ICPD's emerging youth leadership initiative designed to introduce secondary school students to leadership development, environmental stewardship, community service and career exploration. Scott explained that the program complements ICPD's broader commitment to developing talent across multiple stages of the educational pipeline.



Action Items

- Partner organizations to nominate additional volunteers for the 2026 Scholar Selection Committee.
- Submit mentor nominations and contact information by August 14.
- Recommend potential speakers and panelists for the Boston training session.
- Continue identifying a suitable corporate venue for the October training program.
- Confirm 2026 sponsorship commitments by June 30.
- Recommend emerging MedTech companies for participation through the Emerging Company Sponsorship initiative.
- Promote upcoming SMDP virtual programming and utilize the SMDP Jobs Board.
- RSVP for the SMDP Alumni Networking Event by May 22.
- RSVP for the Annual Celebration Reception by September 11.

Next Meeting

Scott thanked committee members for their continued commitment to SMDP MedTech and for the expertise, time and leadership they contribute throughout the year. He noted that the collaborative spirit of the committee continues to strengthen the program and enhance opportunities for scholars pursuing careers within the medical technology industry.

The next meeting of the SMDP MedTech Outreach & Planning Committee was scheduled for Wednesday, July 29, 2026.

Upcoming SMDP MedTech O&P Committee Meetings:

Wednesday, July 29, 9-9:30 am PT

Wednesday, September 23, 9-9:30 am PT

Wednesday, November 4, 9-9:30 am PT