Report of Activities and Accomplishments

Office for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs
September 2023 - August 2024

Contents

Introduction

The School of Medicine and Dentistry's [Office for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA)](#) is the central office that supports the graduate student and postdoctoral community in the School of Medicine and Dentistry (SMD). The Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs, Richard Libby, Professor of Ophthalmology, leads the faculty, staff, operations, and strategic direction of the GEPA office.

GEPA is accountable to SMD leadership and, as one of the University of Rochester's graduate schools, University of Rochester leadership. In leading GEPA, Dean Libby works most closely with SMD Dean, David Linehan; SMD Vice Dean for Education, Sarah Peyre; SMD Vice Dean for Research, Stephen Dewhurst; Provost, Nicole Sampson; University of Rochester school deans and graduate deans; SMD senior associate deans; SMD department chairs/center directors; and SMD graduate program directors. All graduate programs in the SMD are accredited per the University of Rochester's Middle States Commission on Higher Education accreditation as a graduate degree-granting institution, overseen by the [Office of the Provost](#).

GEPA welcomed Amber Rivera, Director of Learner Life and Wellness and Tori D'Agostino, Finance and Operations Senior Manager during the 2023-24 year. GEPA retained multiple key staff and faculty members including Sharon McCullough, Senior Assistant Dean of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs; Elaine Smolock, Director of Writing Services and Training Grant Development; Eric Vaughn, Director of Career Services; Ben Lovell, Academic Administrator; Colleen Bailey, Department Coordinator; Kandice King, Director of Graduate Enrollment; Kate Bognanno, Web Content Manager and Digital Content Strategist; Jeff Koslofsky, Senior Marketing Strategist; and Nathan Smith, Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion. GEPA greatly appreciates the efforts of staff who moved on during the 2023-24 year including Afiya Farrell, Administrative Assistant for Equity and Inclusion; Steve Naum, Associate Director of Finance and Administration; Gillian Coykendall, Senior Programmer/Analyst; and Odyssey Harrington, Administrative Coordinator. See [Appendix A](#) for a detailed organizational structure.

Need to know who to contact? Visit our [GEPA contacts by functional area listing](#).

The graduate student community is comprised of matriculated graduate students in PhD, master's and advanced certificate programs as well as nonmatriculated students, visiting graduate students, students in graduate preparatory programs, student research interns, and students from other University of Rochester schools. At any given time, GEPA is responsible for supporting around 1,200 learners.

Enrollment in all GEPA Programs

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
SMD Postdoc Scholars*	115	116	114
SMD PhD Students^	368	355	353
SMD Master's Students^	130	133	115
SMD Advanced Certificate Students^	27	23	25
SMD Summer Scholars+	27	29	23
SMD PREP Students^	5	6	7
SMD Bridges Students^	2	2	4

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
SMD Non-Matriculated Students^	104	105	95
SMD Visiting Students^	11	7	8
SMD Unpaid Internships^	165	175	176
Non-SMD Graduate Students taking SMD grad courses^	88	120	95
UR Undergraduates taking SMD courses^ *(includes undergrad research and independent study)*	156	219	228
Totals	1,191	1,290	1,243

*July '21/'22/'23 snapshots | ^fall enrollment |⁺July '22/'23/'24 snapshots

GEPA supports the entire student lifecycle and thus, has responsibility for recruitment, admissions, onboarding, payroll and other financial services, career and professional development services, commencement, and alumni engagement. GEPA provides similar services for postdocs including onboarding and completion, payroll and benefit services, career and professional development services, and alumni engagement. In supporting these critical functions, GEPA partners closely with experts in accreditation and assessment, disability services, education, equity and inclusion, faculty professionalism, finance and financial aid, grantsmanship, health and wellness, human resources, information technology, institutional reporting, international services, law, library sciences, marketing and communications, registration and student records, research and research administration, student services, and web services.

GEPA also partners closely with the numerous learner organizations affiliated with SMD including the Alliance for Diversity in Science and Engineering (ADSE), Graduate Students of Color (GSOC), the Graduate Student Society (GSS), the International Students & Scholars Association (ISSA), outGRADS, SMD Entrepreneurs, the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), UR Microbiome, the UR Postdoctoral Association (URPDA), the UR Science Policy Initiative (UR SPI), UR Thinkers, and UR Writing.

Graduate Programs

GEPA provides oversight for PhD, Master's, and Advanced Certificate programs.

Graduate Program Enrollment

PhD Program Enrollment	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Neuroscience	56	54	58
Immunology, Microbiology and Virology	51	46	46
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology	37	36	35
Pathology	38	37	34
Cellular and Molecular Pharmacology and Physiology	28	28	33
Translational Biomedical Science	28	30	28
Biomedical Genetics and Genomics	27	25	24
Statistics	25	25	22
Toxicology	24	18	21
Health Services Research and Policy	19	17	18

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Biophysics, Structural, and Computational Biology	19	20	17
Epidemiology	16	19	17
Master's Program Enrollment	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**
Marriage and Family Therapy	27	27	29
Public Health	38	31	27
Clinical Investigation	12	17	10
Microbiology	17	13	7
Epidemiology	13	13	7
Statistics	1	5	7
Medical Humanities	8	8	6
Medical Pharmacology	8	8	6
Genetic Counseling	-	-	6
Pharmacology	4	4	3
Physiology	3	3	3
Biostatistics	2	2	2
Health Services Research and Policy	-	1	1
Immunology, Microbiology, and Immunology	-	1	1
Advanced Certificate Program Enrollment	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**
Clinical/Medical Technology	15	15	13
Experimental Therapeutics	5	4	4
Public Health	-	2	3
Marriage and Family Therapy	2	2	1
Analytic Epidemiology	2	-	1
Biomedical Data Science	2	-	1
Clinical Research Methods	1	-	1
Regulatory Science	-	-	1

Graduate Enrollment Descriptive Statistics*

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
PhD Enrollment	368	355	353
% international	27%	30%	32%
% HE&URiS R/E[+]	14%	15%	17%
% disadvantaged background	10%	13%	15%
% female	57%	58%	60%
Master's Enrollment	130	133	115
% full-time	59%	55%	52%
% international	11%	17%	16%
% HE&URiS R/E[+]	17%	18%	13%
% disadvantaged background	11%	13%	17%
% female	77%	83%	76%
Advanced Certificate Enrollment	27	23	25
% international	0%	0%	12%
% HE&URiS R/E[+]	7%	0%	28%

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
% disadvantaged background	19%	9%	28%
% female	67%	83%	68%

*Fall enrollment snapshot

+Identifies as a member of a racial and/or ethnic group historically excluded from and underrepresented in science as defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

^As defined by NIH

#Data not available for this year

Recruitment and Admissions

Graduate and preparatory program recruitment and admissions are supported by Kandice King, Director of Graduate Enrollment; Ben Lovell, Academic Administrator; GEPA's Administrative Coordinator; Jeff Koslofsky, Senior Marketing Strategist; and Kate Bognanno, Web Content Manager and Digital Content Strategist. In addition to GEPA's staffing, GEPA supports recruitment and admissions by providing programs with recruitment budgets, supporting partial effort for several graduate program coordinators, and providing a state-of-the-art customer relationship management (CRM) system, Slate.

GEPA supports recruitment for graduate/preparatory programs by conducting outreach including attending STEM-related professional recruiting conferences such as ABRCMS (Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students) and SACNAS (Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science), participating in national McNair undergraduate research conferences, attending recruitment fairs at undergraduate institutions, and hosting on-campus and virtual recruitment events (Appendix B). GEPA also generates leads for prospective students via Graduate Record Exam (GRE) name buys, virtual Biomed Fair registration lists, inbound email inquiries, inquiry form submissions, and website Smart Form pop-up marketing. GEPA collaborates with graduate programs to develop communication plans and drip marketing campaigns via Slate that are intended to convert prospective applicants to completed applications.

GEPA supports admissions for graduate/preparatory programs by managing the entire application cycle via Slate, managing the process by which programs make offers of admission, and monitoring and adjusting tactics as needed to ensure optimal yield by program. GEPA also hosts two, three-day visit weekends for 150 prospective PhD students annually. GEPA provides travel and accommodations for all Discover URSMD weekend attendees and hosts/co-hosts four community events including a welcome dinner, a kick-off breakfast, a philosophy meeting (happy hour), and a poster session. The Office of Equity and Inclusion partners with GEPA to additionally offer Mosaic Community Connections events including a welcome event, a philosophy meeting, and a breakfast.

Key Recruitment Metrics

	2021	2022	2023
Conferences attended (includes McNair)	10	10	13
Undergraduate institution fairs attended	12	4*	3
On-campus recruitment events	8	8	5

*Decrease represents greater focus on strategic opportunities and fewer virtual fair options

PhD Application Descriptive Statistics

	2021	2022	2023
PhD applications	1,063	1,511	2,027
% international	60%	78%	81%
% HE&URiS R/E*	10%	5%	5%
% disadvantaged background^	12%	7%	6%
% female	56%	51%	54%
PhD admits	175	163	171
Selectivity	16%	11%	8%
% international	28%	31%	33%
% HE&URiS R/E*	26%	18%	17%
% disadvantaged background^	20%	21%	20%
% female	65%	71%	70%
PhD enrollment	64	70	76
Yield	37%	43%	44%
% international	30%	37%	29%
% HE&URiS R/E*	25%	13%	13%
% disadvantaged background^	20%	26%	20%
% female	58%	67%	59%

*Identifies as a member of a racial and/or ethnic group historically excluded from and underrepresented in science as defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)
^As defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

*Master's Application Descriptive Statistics**

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Master's applications	370	514	464
% international	43%	50%	53%
% HE&URiS R/E+	15%	9%	8%
% disadvantaged background^	14%	11%	11%
% female	65%	61%	60%
Master's admits	161	164	131
Selectivity	44%	32%	28%
% international	22%	29%	32%
% HE&URiS R/E+	20%	15%	13%
% disadvantaged background^	19%	21%	21%
% female	74%	71%	71%
Master's enrollment	63	85	57
Yield	39%	52%	44%
% international	13%	21%	18%

		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
% HE&URiS R/E[+]		30%	18%	16%
% disadvantaged background^		17%	24%	25%
% female		78%	71%	68%

*Includes fall and spring of academic year

[+]Identifies as a member of a racial and/or ethnic group historically excluded from and underrepresented in science as defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

^As defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

*Advanced Certificate Application Descriptive Statistics**

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Advanced Certificate applications	49	47	47
% international	6%	11%	17%
% HE&URiS R/E[+]	16%	15%	17%
% disadvantaged background^	20%	19%	15%
% female	76%	83%	62%
Advanced Certificate admits	31	28	30
Selectivity	63%	60%	64%
% international	6%	7%	10%
% HE&URiS R/E[+]	23%	7%	23%
% disadvantaged background^	23%	14%	20%
% female	71%	82%	60%
Advanced Certificate enrollment	26	24	21
Yield	84%	86%	70%
% international	8%	8%	10%
% HE&URiS R/E[+]	15%	0%	33%
% disadvantaged background^	19%	8%	29%
% female	69%	83%	62%

*Fall/spring/summer of academic year

[+]Identifies as a member of a racial and/or ethnic group historically excluded from and underrepresented in science as defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

^As defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Academic Student Services and Program Support

Academic student services and program support are supported by Amber Rivera, Director of Learner Life and Wellness; Kandice King, Director of Graduate Enrollment; Colleen Bailey, Department Coordinator; and GEPA's Administrative Coordinator.

A student is defined as matriculated PhD, Master's and certificate program students; postbaccalaureate students; summer research students; visiting graduate students; and matriculated or non-matriculated students enrolled in SMD graduate courses/lab. GEPA supports students and graduate programs in myriad ways, as detailed below.

Onboarding

GEPA initiates and manages the student visa process for around 45 incoming students. GEPA also manages the verification of final degree conferrals and official transcripts for around 160 incoming students.

Orientation

GEPA hosts an orientation program every August for around 160 incoming advanced certificate, Master's, and PhD students. Students meet with the Dean, myHub, a tax expert, and the Office of Equity and Inclusion, and receive an overview of graduate student services from University Counseling Center, University Health Services, Department of Public Safety, and the Graduate Student Society. Orientation culminates with a resource fair with over a dozen university and local community resources specific to graduate students.

Commencement Activities

PhD Graduation Celebration and Awards

GEPA coordinates nominations for and funds four commencement awards annually, the Wallace O. Fenn award, the Vincent du Vigneaud award, the Dissertation Award for Excellence in Equity and Inclusion, and the Leadership Award for Excellence in Equity and Inclusion. PhD program directors nominate recent PhD graduates, and a selection committee comprised of faculty is appointed by the Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs. Awards are presented during GEPA's PhD graduation celebration philosophy meeting.

Master's and Advanced Certificate Ceremony

GEPA coordinates the annual Master's and Advanced Certificate graduation ceremony for around 50 graduates at Eastman Theater's Kilborn Hall.

Finances and Institutional Financial Aid

Graduate finances and institutional financial aid are supported by Tori D'Agostino, Finance and Operations Senior Manager and Colleen Bailey, Department Coordinator.

GEPA is responsible for ensuring that all student financial awards, including stipends, health insurance, and tuition aid, accurately reflect University, SMD, and program specific-guidelines and requirements on all relevant forms provided to the Bursar's Office and the Payroll Office. GEPA reviews and approves more than 1,400 forms for stipend, health insurance, and tuition awards annually.

Postdoctoral Affairs

Postdoctoral Affairs is supported by Tori D'Agostino, Finance and Operations Senior Manager and Colleen Bailey, Department Coordinator. GEPA supports Postdoctoral Affairs by recommending and developing University and SMD policies and procedures that govern postdoctoral appointments and by providing administrative guidance to SMD departments hosting postdoctoral appointees.

Onboarding and Appointments

GEPA is responsible for maintaining a website for posting postdoctoral positions that are actively accepting applications and for ensuring that all postdoctoral appointments meet University and SMD

eligibility and policy requirements. GEPA reviews and approves more than 450 postdoc appointment forms annually including new, change, and termination forms.

Postdoc Descriptive Statistics

	2021-22	**2022-23**	**2023-24**
New postdocs	47	41	59
Total postdocs*	115	116	114
% international	56%	59%	57%
% HE&URiS R/E+	5%	6%	8%
% disadvantaged background@	3%	4%	4%
% female	49%	42%	47%

*July '21/'22/'23 snapshots
+Identifies as a member of a racial and/or ethnic group historically excluded from and underrepresented in science as [defined by the National Institutes of Health](#) *(NIH)*
@As defined by [NIH](#)

Benefits

Postdocs receive benefits from multiple areas including Human Resources, the Provost's Office, and SMD. GEPA is responsible for advocating for postdoc benefits via University channels, helping departments and postdocs understand the various benefits, and implementing postdoc benefits as appropriate.

Orientation

A quarterly orientation connects incoming postdocs with GEPA and myHub resources and builds community among postdoc scholars. Leadership from the Office of Equity and Inclusion and the Postdoctoral Association attend the orientation and provide avenues for postdocs to build community connections there as well.

Preparatory Programs

Postbaccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP)

Established in 2003, PREP is currently supported by Co-Directors Elaine Smolock, Director of Writing Services and Training Grant Development, and Jacques Robert, Professor of Microbiology and Immunology; Kandice King, Director of Graduate Enrollment; Ben Lovell, Academic Administrator. Additionally, PREP is supported by a National Institutes of Health (NIH) R25 grant, the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, and the department of Neuroscience.

PREP is designed to encourage students from groups historically excluded from and underrepresented in science who hold a recent baccalaureate degree in the biomedically-relevant sciences, to pursue a research doctorate, and to prepare these trainees for careers as outstanding research scientists and leaders in the biomedical community.

During the one-year program, PREP provides trainees with research training skills during a two-week boot camp, hands-on lab experience working on a NIH-funded research project, access to advising with

one of over 70 faculty mentors across our biomedical research labs, a full tuition scholarship to take graduate level courses, a competitive stipend, opportunities to improve scientific writing and oral communication skills, mentored focused training and network building, and preparation to be a competitive applicant for PhD biomedical graduate programs.

PREP Admissions, Enrollment, and Outcomes Descriptive Statistics

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
PREP applications	56	64	86
PREP admits	9	11	11
Selectivity	15%	17%	13%
PREP enrollment	5	6	8
Yield	56%	55%	73%
% female	100%	33%	88%
% matriculated into graduate programs	80%	67%	100%
PhD programs	80%	67%	100%
Master's programs	0%	0%	0%
Second year of PREP training	0%	17%	0%
Research position	20%	17%	0%

Summer Scholars

Established in 1998, Summer Scholars is supported by Co-Directors Elaine Smolock, Director of Writing Services and Training Grant Development, and Bob Freeman, Professor of Pharmacology and Physiology; Kandice King, Director of Graduate Enrollment; Ben Lovell, Academic Administrator; and GEPA's Administrative Coordinator. Summer Scholars is an umbrella program that partners with SMD research departments and PhD programs including Neuroscience and Public Health Sciences as well as SMD's Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) and Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT).

Summer Scholars is designed to encourage students from groups historically excluded from and underrepresented in science to explore graduate education in the biomedical and health sciences.

During the ten-week program, Summer Scholars provides trainees with research training under the direct supervision of a participating faculty mentor or postdoctoral scholar, the opportunity to participate in research/educational seminars and presentations on graduate school and careers, the opportunity to construct a poster outlining their research and present the research at a final symposium, and interaction with UR graduate students and other summer trainees via lunches and various other social activities.

Summer Scholars Admissions and Enrollment Descriptive Statistics

	2022	2023	2024
SS applications	224	265	244
SS admits	36	42	28
Selectivity	16%	16%	11%

SS enrollment	27	29	23
Yield	75%	69%	82%
% female	56%	86%	87%
% HE&URiS^	89%	100%	39%

^Identifies as a member of one or more groups historically excluded from and underrepresented in science as [defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Notice of Diversity](#)

Bridges

Established in 2013, Bridges is co-directed by Steven Barnett, Professor of Family Medicine and Public Health Sciences at the UR, and Bonnie Jacob, Assistant Professor, Science and Mathematics at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). The training mechanism is further supported by Elaine Smolock, Director of Writing Services and Training Grant Development; Patricia White, Research Associate Professor of Neuroscience and Otolaryngology; Alaina Maiorano, Education Coordinator for Clinical and Translational Science Institute; Rachel Hillhouse, Program Assistant; and Kimberly Marino, Research Education Program Assistant for Clinical and Translational Science Institute.

Bridges is a National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) R25 funded mechanism that involves a close partnership with RIT. Bridges is designed to encourage Deaf and Hard of Hearing Master's students in science to explore additional graduate education in the biological or biomedical sciences.

Bridges provides trainees with research training under the leadership of Dr. Smolock, who serves as Co-Director of Science Education and PhD Readiness, as well as the direct supervision of a participating faculty mentor at the UR. Trainees have the opportunity to participate in research/educational seminars and presentations on graduate school and career exploration, the opportunity to construct a poster outlining their research and present the research at a final symposium and interact with UR graduate students and other trainees.

Bridges Admissions and Enrollment Descriptive Statistics

	2022	2023^	2024
Bridges applications	2	0	3
Bridges admits	2	0	3
Bridges enrollment	2	2*	4*
% female	100%	100%	100%

^Reflects transition from NIH R25 funding to a new T32 submission. Student recruitment could not occur during this time.
*Reflects students in their 2nd year of the program; carryover from previous years.

Access and Disability Services

[Access and disability services](#) is supported by the Office of Disability Resources (ODR). ODR offers a variety of services for SMD preparatory program trainees (includes Bridges, Summer Scholars, PREP, and unpaid interns/shadows); matriculated, non-matriculated, and visiting graduate students; and postdoctoral appointees. ODR provides services for around 50 learners annually.

Committee and Professional Association Affiliations

GEPA's core* faculty and staff currently participate in more than 30 SMD/URMC committees, around 30 University committees, and 10 regional/national committees and professional associations on an annual basis. See Appendix C for details.

Appendix A, Organizational Chart, blue boxes represent core faculty/staff

Equity and Inclusion

Equity and inclusion is supported by Nathan Smith, Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion; an Associate Director for Equity and Inclusion; and an Administrative Coordinator. This team, formally organized under SMD's Office for Equity and Inclusion (OEI), supports SMD's research and research education missions by serving as a bridge between OEI and research/research education. They provide vision and expertise related to equity and inclusion, assist in recruitment efforts, and fund/organize events for the research community.

GEPA Finance and Administration

Departmental finance and operations are supported by Tori D'Agostino, Finance and Operations Senior Manager; Colleen Bailey, Department Coordinator; and GEPA's Administrative Coordinator.

This team manages all standard department financial operations including account reconciliation, budgeting, and purchasing, as well as all administrative operations including facilities and human resources management.

The entire GEPA team participates in interviewing and selection of new team members. GEPA also hires student employees associated with access/disability services and GEPA support and special projects. GEPA employs around seven students annually.

GEPA assists SMD graduate programs when hiring student tutors, providing financial support and guidance concerning the student employment process.

Institutional Reporting

Institutional reporting is supported by GEPA's Business Intelligence Developer. The Business Intelligence Developer provides support to the entire GEPA team for their data and analytics needs as well as systems use, and optimization needs.

General Statistics and Facts

The following reports are available on the GEPA website.

- PhD Student Reports
  - Incoming class snapshot
  - Thesis information
  - First job out information
- Postdoc Reports
  - Enrollment snapshot

     o   Next opportunity out information

Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering

GEPA completes the annual [Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering](#). The survey, sponsored by the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics within the National Science Foundation and by the National Institutes of Health, collects the total number of master's and doctoral students, postdoctoral appointees, and doctorate-level nonfaculty researchers by demographic and other characteristics such as source of financial support.

Leadership Support

Rick Libby, Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs and Sharon McCullough, Senior Assistant Dean of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs provide leadership support to all students, postdocs, faculty, and staff. GEPA collaborates with multiple stakeholders to provide effective leadership support including program leadership from more than 30 Advanced Certificate, Master's, and PhD programs; department leadership in more than 30 basic science and clinical departments and divisions throughout SMD; the CARE Network; the International Services Office; the Office of Counsel; the Office of Disability Services; the Office of Human Resources; the Office of the Provost; the Registrar's Office; the SMD Faculty Professionalism Council; the SMD Office for Academic Affairs; the SMD Office of Research Integrity; the SMD Office of Equity and Inclusion; the Student Conduct Office; the University Counseling Center; and the UR Office of Equity and Inclusion.

Leadership support is necessary for multiple circumstances including learner academic, performance, professional, interpersonal, mental/physical health, and/or other personal challenges (financial, family, etc.) and learner concerns about faculty relationships, advising/mentoring practices and expectations, professionalism, and/or incivility and mistreatment. GEPA provides leadership support for more than 50 cases annually.

Marketing, Communications, and Web Services

Marketing and communications for research and research education is supported by Jeff Koslofsky, Senior Marketing Strategist; Kate Bognanno, Web Content Manager and Digital Content Strategist; other members of URMC's marketing, public relations teams, and web services; and SMD's research deans.

The Senior Marketing Strategist helps raise the profile of SMD's research mission with both external and internal audiences. The work is ongoing and includes growing SMD social media channels through sharing research, grants, and student/alumni accomplishments; implementing a research-specific social media strategy to raise the profile of SMD science and tell stories that demonstrate how our researchers are expanding knowledge of human health and the treatment of diseases; and continuous monitoring of incoming research to keep a pulse on what our faculty and trainees are publishing.

SMD research news, student and alumni highlights, and other GEPA content is shared on the SMD [Facebook](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#) channels.

Newsworthy items are also added to the GEPA [research education newsfeed](#) on the URMC website.

GEPA's Web Content Manager and Digital Content Strategist collaborates with GEPA and graduate programs to maintain all GEPA websites, develop new sites as needed, and optimize sites for usability and to attract maximum traffic.

myHub

myHub is supported by Elaine Smolock, Director of Writing Services and Training Grant Development; Eric Vaughn, Director of Career Services; Amber Rivera, Director of Learner Life and Wellness; Tori D'Agostino, Finance and Operations Senior Manager; Colleen Bailey, Department Coordinator; GEPA's Administrative Coordinator; Jeff Koslofsky, Senior Marketing Strategist; and Kate Bognanno, Web Content Manager and Digital Content Strategist.

myHub brings together eight critical areas, including learner life/wellness, writing services, fellowships and grants, career services, internships, graduate student and postdoctoral groups, alumni mentorship, and events.

Communications

Opportunities to Explore (OTE) Newsletter and Weekly Email Digest

OTE is a weekly email newsletter that provides preparatory program students, graduate students, and postdocs with news, events, employment information, and other opportunities specific to learners in the biomedical and health sciences. The weekly email digest streamlines communication of individual events and announcements into one, twice weekly email, ensuring timeliness with less inbox clutter.

Social Media Channels

myHub operates the following social media channels.

- LinkedIn - University of Rochester SMD - Graduate Alumni
- Instagram - ursmd_myHub
- YouTube Channel

Career and Professional Development

Alumni Engagement

Ambassador Program

myHub collaborates with Alumni Relations to manage the URSMD Ambassadors Program. This program develops relationships and fosters pride between current clinical and research trainees and URSMD alumni through events, programs, tours, volunteering, and more. In addition to increasing learner presence at alumni events, the program educates current learners about the variety of professional opportunities available in science and medicine. There are around 12 graduate students and postdocs serving as ambassadors.

SMD Alumni Council

myHub participates on the SMD Alumni Council in an ex officio capacity. The Alumni Council is the administrative body representing all alumni of the SMD, is advisory to the Dean and supportive of the faculty, administration, students, postdocs, and alumni.

myHub's participation helps ensure that GEPA's mission and SMD's graduate and postdoctoral community are understood by the Council and represented in the Council's activities.

Podcast – The Next Step

The Next Step is in its second season and features career stories and advice for trainees from GEPA alumni. Conversations are live streamed on the SMD LinkedIn channel and repurposed as a podcast that lives on YouTube, YouTube Music, Apple, and Spotify.

Career Services and Internships

myHub provides career services support via individual trainee meetings, events and workshops, and program- and department-specific events.

Individual Trainee Meetings

Career Services dedicates about 185 hours per year to individual trainee meetings plus about 155 hours of related prep work.

Individual Trainee Meetings Supported by myHub Career Services

Project	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Resume/CV/cover letter	61	141	136
Career exploration	25	62	51
Job search strategy	24	12	48
Interview preparation	14	17	38
Other*	18	30	32
LinkedIn/Meliora Collective profile development	14	29	30
Internships	10	24	24
Networking strategy	19	44	20
Informational interviews	22	12	19
Individual development plan	20	2	17
URBEST	5	1	11
Annual Totals	**231**	**393^**	**426**

Includes meet and greet, negotiation, personal website creation, professional email/communications basics, teaching recognition, teaching statements, and travel awards

^Increase due to enhanced reporting capabilities via new database adopted this year.

Events and Workshops

Career Services dedicates about 145 hours per year to events and workshops plus about 390 hours of related prep work.

Events and Workshops Supported by myHub Career Services

Title	Role	Partner(s)	Year	Annual Participants*
Career Stories	Leader	Elaine Smolock, Alumni/Advancement,	Monthly	100

Title	Role	Partner(s)	Year	Annual Participants*
		Trainee Groups, SMD Master & PhD Programs		
Academic Track Programming	Leader	Elaine Smolock	Biennial	55
Individual Development Plan	Leader		Annual	20
Informational Interviewing, Communication, Networking	Leader	Elaine Smolock	Annual	70
Internship Exploration & Sharing	Leader	Trainees who have conducted internships	Annual	20
Job Search Strategies & Career Searches	Co-Lead	David Cota-Buckhout (ASE GEPA)	Annual	25
Career Exploration & Planning (myHub URBEST Retreat)	Leader	InterSECT Job Simulations & myIDP	Annual	75
Graduate Career Consortium PhD & Master's Virtual Career Expo	Co-Lead	David Cota-Buckhout (ASE GEPA)	Annual	25
Graduate Student Alumni Networking	Co-Lead	David Cota-Buckhout (ASE GEPA) and SMD Alumni and Advancement	Annual	75
myHub Career Modules Orientation	Leader		Annual	50
Overview of myHub & GEPA	Co-Lead	Amber Rivera, Elaine Smolock	Annual	100
Teaching Experiences	Leader		Annual	10
Dress for Success	Assist with Promotion	Gwen Greene Center & JC Penney	Annual	5
LinkedIn Photoshoot	Leader		Annual	50

Represents approximate count

Organization-Specific Events

Career Services dedicates about 10 hours per year to organization-specific events plus about 20 hours of related prep work.

Organization-Specific Events Supported by myHub Career Services

Title	Program/Department	Year	Annual Participants*
CV and LinkedIn Workshop	PREP Program	Annual	5
Navigating Your Future - Career Planning	Summer Scholars	Annual	30
International Education Week Career Program	IEW Week	Annual	40
Individual Development Planning for BME 402	Biomedical Engineering	Annual	20
Showcasing your Qualifications for a Competitive Edge	Future Faculty Series	Annual	65

| myHub Overview | Pathology, Microbiology & Immunology Programs | Annual | 40 |

Represents approximate counts

URBEST Internships

myHub oversees and promotes experiential learning opportunities to SMD trainees including internships. Participants in the internship program can apply for funding to assist with travel, lodging, and other expenses related to an experiential learning/internship experience. New internship sites established in 2023-24 include Magnit and the Wilmot Cancer Institute Biobank shared resource.

URBEST Internship Summary 2022-23

Year	Count	Mean Duration	Sites
2024	3	4.5 months	Moderna, SMD myHub Career Services, Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders LLP, Wilmot Cancer Institute Biobank shared resource, Magnit, Regeneron
2023	6	4 mnths	Freenome, Genitex, Moderna (2), Troutman Pepper
2022	2	3 mnths	Moderna, UR Genomics Research Center

Leadership and Management for Scientists Course

myHub leads this 15-week course that focuses on topics research trainees may not otherwise be exposed to during their scientific training including cultural humility, finance/managing resources, interviewing – selecting team members, leadership, managing people, mindfulness coaching, negotiation, networking, project management, resolving conflict, strategic planning, and understanding your personal strengths. Around 25 SMD and ASE students and postdocs enroll in the course annually.

Writing, Fellowships, and Grants Services

myHub provides writing, fellowships, and grants support via individual trainee meetings, events and workshops, and program- and department-specific events.

Individual Trainee Meetings

Writing Services dedicates about 125 hours per year to individual trainee meetings plus about 65 hours of related prep work.

Individual Trainee Meetings Supported by myHub Writing Services

Project	2021-22^	2022-23	2023-24
Fellowship/grant	19	18	38
Thesis	17	30	23
Manuscript	13	12	14
Qualifying exam	12	13	9
Meet and greet	5	6	8

Project	2021-22^	2022-23	2023-24
Literature review	4	5	8
Other*	16	8	7
Rotation report	1	0	2
Abstract	1	0	0
Annual Totals	**88**	**92**	**109**

*Includes research, personal, teaching statements; grad/med school application prep; time management; reference and citation assistance; summary statements
^Reduced in-person/zoom office hours to 10 hours/week and increased online asynchronous material and writing clubs

Events and Workshops

Writing Services dedicates about 50 hours per year to events and workshops plus about 40 hours of time in related prep work.

Events and Workshops Supported by myHub Writing Services

Title	Role	Partner(s)	Year	Annual Participants*
NIH Fellowship and Grant Writing	Leader	n/a	Annual * 3	38
Qualifying Exam Writing Workshop	Leader	n/a	Annual	21
Manuscript Writing (asynchronous)	Leader	n/a	Annual	n/a
Thesis Writing Seminar	Leader	n/a	Annual	12
The Art of Responding to Reviewer Feedback	Leader	n/a	Annual	6
Hanover Workshop NIH Tools of the Trade	Co-Sponsor	Rochester Early-Stage Investigator Network (RESIN)	Annual	16
Hanover Workshop K to R Transition	Co-Sponsor	Rochester Early-Stage Investigator Network (RESIN	Annual	10
Fellowship on the Fifteens	Leader	n/a	Annual * 3	42
Diversity Seminar - Brendaliz Santiago, PhD	Co-Sponsor	Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP)	Annual	10
So You Want to Be a PI: Module 1 Building Blocks for Pursuing a Career in Academia	Leader	n/a	Annual	50

*Represents approximate counts

Organization-Specific Events

Writing Services dedicates about 60 hours per year to organization-specific events including time in related prep work.

Organization-Specific Events Supported by myHub Writing Services

Title	Program/Department	Year	Annual Participants*
Writing a Personal Statement for Medical School	Medical Pharmacology	Annual	6
Applying for a Fellowship	T32 in Biochemistry and Biophysics	Annual	20
East Coast PREP Program Expo	PREP and Immunology	Annual	20
Introduction to Graduate Education Programs	Hampton University	Annual	20
Grants 101 - Don't Worry if You Don't Know Yet	Pathology Student Council Seminar	Annual	10
Writing a Thesis Proposal	Genetic Counseling	Annual	6
Careers in Academia	Postdoctoral Association Pannel Discussion	Annual	40
Writing a Manuscript	Dr. Sheftall Laboratory	Annual	8
myHub Resources	Biomedical Genetics and Genomics Recruitment Event	Annual	6
Crafting an F application	Pathology Student Council Seminar	Annual	5
Writing Manuscripts	RIT U-RISE and Bridges	Annual	10
Introducing Resources to Enhance Writing a Research Article and Putting Together a Research Project	Marriage and Family Therapy	Annual	12
AI in Writing	Toxicology Program Retreat	Annual	20

Learner Life and Wellness

myHub provides learner life and wellness support via individual trainee meetings, events and workshops, program- and department-specific events, the CARE Network, and the Basic Needs Hub. Learner Life and Wellness offers support in areas of personal wellness and stress/burnout relief, communication and interpersonal relationship difficulties, and conflict resolution. Learner Life and Wellness aims to increase graduate students' access to University resources, and to provide employee wellness information to postdocs.

Individual Trainee Meetings

Learner Life and Wellness dedicates about 60 hours per year to individual trainee meetings, plus about 15 hours of post-meeting work to secure support resources and follow-up for trainees.

Individual Trainee Meetings Supported by myHub Learner Life and Wellness

Appointment Type	2023-24
CARE Network	26
Stress and anxiety	18
Personal wellness	12
Counseling: short-term	12
Learner support	11
Information & access to University resources	9
Basic Needs Hub	8
Referral to University resource	7
Interpersonal relationships: non-peer (4), peer (3)	7
Counseling: referral to long-term	3
Referral to community resource	1
Accessibility and accommodations	1
Meet & greet	1
Annual Totals	**116**

Events and Workshops

Learner Life and Wellness dedicates about ten hours per year to mental health and wellness workshops, plus an approximate equivalent amount of time in related prep work.

Events and Workshops Supported by myHub Learner Life and Wellness

Title	Role	Partner(s)	Participants
National Mentoring Month: Thank-A-Mentor	Co-Lead	myHub	100
Mindful Mandalas	Leader	Let's Chalk Rochester	25
Postdoc Mental Health Wellness Workshop: Mastering Distress Tolerance	Leader	Dr. Steven Fugle	25
5th Annual Informational Interviewing Session for 1st Year SMD Students	Co-Lead	myHub	50
Winter Wellness	Leader	Simon Business School	25
Self-Care for Leaders	Co-Lead	myHub	30

Organization-Specific Events

Learner Life and Wellness dedicates 15 hours per year to organization-specific events, plus approximately 25 hours of prep work and committee meetings.

Organization-Specific Events Supported by myHub Learner Life and Wellness

Title	Program/Department
National Postdoc Appreciation Week	Postdoctoral Association
International Education Week	International Services Office
Wellness & Resilience Panel	Cellular, Biochemical and Molecular Sciences Annual Retreat
Graduate Student Appreciation Week	Graduate Student Society
Flourish Festival	Health Promotion Office
Graduate Student Wellness Fair	Health Promotion Office

Basic Needs Hub (BNH)

Learner Life and Wellness responds to all BNH requests for financial assistance from SMD learners. Trainees who request assistance through BNH receive an initial assessment meeting, receive a recommendation to the BNH committee for financial assistance, and are monitored for any follow-up actions as needed. Since the creation of this role in December 2023, Learner Life and Wellness has responded to six Basic Needs Hub requests.

CARE Network

Learner Life and Wellness responds to all CARE referrals for SMD learners. Trainees who have CARE referrals receive an initial assessment meeting and are monitored for any follow-up actions as needed. GEPA senior leadership provides support and oversight to CARE cases handled by Learner Life and Wellness. Since the creation of this role in December 2023, Learner Life and Wellness has responded to 19 CARE referrals. CARE areas of concern include mental health, academic issues, missing/non-responsive learners, family-related concerns including death of a loved one, medical issues, disruptive behavior, violence/threat of harm, financial concerns, and more.

GEPA Awards Ceremony

Learner Life and Wellness collaborates with multiple stakeholders in coordinating the nomination and selection process. Collaborating stakeholders include department chairs, graduate program directors, graduate student and postdoc advising faculty, graduate students, the Graduate Student Society (GSS), postdocs, and a selection committee comprised of faculty.

GEPA and the GSS award up to twelve faculty and staff awards and nine graduate student and postdoc awards annually.

Annual Awards Provided by GEPA and GSS

Award Title	Awardee
Graduate Alumni Award	Faculty
Outstanding Graduate Program Director	Faculty
Outstanding Graduate Course Director	Faculty
Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher	Faculty
Excellence in Postdoctoral Mentoring	Faculty
Outstanding T32 Program Director	Faculty

Graduate Student Society (GSS) Advocacy Award	Faculty
Graduate Student Society (GSS) Mentoring Award	Faculty
Graduate Student Society (GSS) Recognition Award	Staff
Award for Excellence in Equity and Inclusion	Student
Graduate Alumni Fellowship	Student
Irving L. Spar Fellowship	Student
J. Newell Stannard Graduate Student Scholarship	Student
Merritt and Marjorie Cleveland Fellowship	Student
Outstanding Student Mentor	Student
Award for Excellence in Equity and Inclusion	Postdoc
Outstanding Postdoctoral Mentor	Postdoc
Outstanding Postdoc Researcher	Postdoc

Student and Postdoc Organizations

Learner Life and Wellness supports student and postdoc organizations by providing funding, professional development opportunities, institutional policy and procedure guidance/support, and administrative support. Current trainee organizations are outlined below.

Current Trainee Organizations

Organization Name	Scope
Graduate Student Society (GSS)	SMD
Postdoctoral Association (UR PDA)	UR
Alliance for Diversity in Science and Engineering (ADSE)	UR
Graduate Students of Color (GSOC)	UR
International Students & Scholars Association (ISSA)*	SMD
outGRADS	UR
Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics/Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)	UR
SMD Entrepreneurs	SMD
UR Microbiome	UR
UR Science Policy Initiative (UR SPI)	UR
UR Thinkers	UR
UR Writing	SMD

Established during the past year

Trainee Advisory Committee

This committee, which meets monthly, is comprised of representatives from all SMD trainee organizations as well as representatives from the Marriage and Family Therapy and Public Health Sciences Master's programs.

The purpose of the committee is to advise myHub leadership regarding programming and to facilitate collaborations between trainee organizations. The committee holds an annual retreat to bring trainee

group leadership together providing opportunities to network, share goals for the upcoming year, provide feedback on myHub programs, develop collaborations among trainee groups, and share knowledge on various topics including equity and inclusion, marketing, self-care and wellness, and using campus tools such as the Campus Community Connection website and event management platform.

Ombudsperson Program

The Ombudsperson program is available to provide learners with confidential, neutral, independent, and informal advice related to institutional policies, advisor/advisee relationships, other faculty or peer relationships, and more. SMD's three ombudspersons are:

- Bob Freeman, Professor of Pharmacology and Physiology
- Krystel Huxlin, Professor of Ophthalmology
- Chris Seplaki, Associate Professor of Public Health Sciences

Responsible Conduct of Research Training

Responsible conduct of research education is supported by Paul Kammermeier, Professor of Pharmacology and Physiology; Ben Lovell, Academic Administrator; ten faculty lecturers; and approximately 25 small group discussion facilitators.

All SMD graduate students and postdoctoral appointees are required to complete responsible conduct of research education by completing the Ethics and Professional Integrity in Research course and attending the annual lecture.

Ethics and Professional Integrity in Research Course

Ethics and Professional Integrity in Research is a ten-week course that covers the topics below. More than 200 people complete the course on an annual basis. In addition to SMD graduate students and postdocs, the course is completed by select Arts, Sciences and Engineering undergraduate/graduate students and postdocs, School of Nursing students, medical students, residents, fellows, faculty, and staff.

Ethics and Professional Integrity in Research Course Topics

Course Introduction / Data Management & Ownership / "The Lab"
Human (Clinical) Experimentation / Conflict of Interest
Animal Experimentation
Mentor-Mentee Relationship
Collaboration and Team Science
Unconscious Bias and the Impact on our Research Environment
Publishing Research Results – Authorship and Transparency
Scientific Misconduct
Research Rigor and Reproducibility
Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Research

Annual Lecture

The Annual Lecture on Biomedical & Health Science Research Ethics is presented by both internal and external guest speakers. The 2024 lecture did not occur in the first half of 2024.

SMD Unpaid Academic Internship and Shadowing Program

The SMD unpaid academic internship and shadowing program is supported by Tori D'Agostino, Finance and Operations Senior Manager and Colleen Bailey, Department Coordinator.

This program provides SMD departments with a mechanism to enable them to host and onboard student interns in their lab, research area, etc.

SMD Unpaid Academic Internship and Shadowing Program Enrollment Statistics

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total Internships^	165	175	176
% high school	5%	5%	9%
% UR undergrad	70%	63%	57%
% other undergrad	10%	13%	12%
% grad, med, etc.	15%	19%	22%

^Fall counts (August-December)

Training Grant and Fellowship Development and Support

Training grant and fellowship development is supported by Elaine Smolock, Director of Training Grant Development and GEPA's Business Intelligence Developer.

GEPA collaborates with principal investigators, grants administrators, and other SMD Dean's Offices to provide customized institutional letters of support from Deans Libby and Linehan. GEPA provides letters of support for around 20 training grants per year, including the following National Institutes of Health (NIH) mechanisms: D43, K12, R25, T15, T32, T90, U2C TLI, UL1. GEPA also provides the resources outlined below.

Training Grant and Fellowship Resources Available from GEPA

Consultation and assistance with "Mentorship Development Plans" and "Career Development Plans" for Training (T) and Fellowship (F) applications

Database of funding opportunities for international trainees

Education and career development opportunities annual listing

Fellowship (F) and Career Development (K) award checklists based on the SF424 instruction manuals

Individual Development Plan (IDP) requirements for learners

Institutional commitment letter template for fellowship applications

Institutional recruiting efforts related to equity and inclusion

Instructions for obtaining a letter describing "Description of Candidate's Contributions to Program Goals" for NIH fellowship diversity (F31D) applications

NIH F-series and K-series writing workshop materials/recordings are available on the myHub website

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR); Rigor and Reproducibility and Research (R^3) boilerplate text

Raw data for tables 1, 6, 8
Shared resources boilerplate text

Key Accomplishments

Academic Student Services and Program Support

Advisor Designation Form

Developed the [Advisor Designation Form for Full-time, Basic Science, PhD Students](#). This clarifies expectations between advisors and advisees and ensures department chairs are aware of and agree to the financial responsibilities when one of their faculty members takes on a student.

Discounted Parking Rate for PhD Students

Streamlined process to ensure PhD students receive the Band 1 parking rate by sending a list of all incoming PhD students to Parking (rather than individual programs sending lists).

PhD Program Faculty List

Developed a [centralized directory](#) of eligible PhD advisors and committee members for each program. This allows stakeholders to easily review and select faculty members for advising and committee roles.

Registrar's Office Reorganization

Reorganized the SMD Registrar function into a centralized structure to enhance expertise and improve compliance.

Syllabus Template

Updated the [syllabus template](#) for SMD graduate courses to ensure compliance with New York State Education Department requirements. Developed a communication plan to provide this resource to instructors twice annually.

Awards Received

Odyssey Harrington, Office for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs, won the Graduate Student Society (GSS) Recognition Award for fall 2023.

Nathan Smith, Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion, Research and Research Education, won the Graduate Student Society (GSS) Advocacy Award for fall 2023.

Equity and Inclusion

Annual Multicultural Celebration

Established an annual Multicultural Celebration titled "Embracing Differences and Cultivating Harmony: Celebrating Our Multicultural Community," hosted at Dr. Smith's home. The event unites our diverse academic community of students, postdocs, faculty, staff, and alumni to celebrate shared values, foster connections, and build a strong sense of belonging while promoting understanding, unity, and friendship.

Mentoring Workshops

Launched a pilot mentorship workshop, "Cultivating Change: Enhancing Mentorship for Lasting Impact," led by Dr. Jeffrey Ring and Kwasi Boaitey, Director of Culturally Responsive Management, targeting SMD

faculty to improve mentorship and communication skills. Another workshop, "Mentorship Matters: Empowering Growth, Wellness, and Resilience in Research," was designed for learners, focusing on defining roles, responsibilities, mental health, and self-care. Both workshops aim to build mentor/mentee relationships based on shared goals, mutual respect, and accountability.

2024 Juneteenth Celebration

Sponsored the 2024 Juneteenth Celebration, featuring Dr. Russell J. Ledet. He shared his inspiring story, titled "Breaking Barriers: Dr. Russell Ledet's Extraordinary Path from Serviceman to Scholar, Activist, and Trailblazer." David Linehan, SMD Dean, presented Dr. Ledet with the inaugural University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry Juneteenth Award, recognizing his activism, philanthropy, and inspirational contributions that have profoundly impacted and uplifted our community.

Event Co-Sponsorships

Co-sponsored events with multiple organizations including the Empowering Students through Research Enrichment Activities in Cancer Control Care Delivery (EmREACh) program, the Rochester Indian Association, the Alliance for Diversity in Science and Engineering (ADSE), and the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS).

Graduate Recruitment and Admissions

Recruitment

- Expanded URSMD representation at national biomedical science-related conferences to include American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES).
- Provided marketing materials to numerous faculty attending domain-specific conferences.
- Introduced a new on-campus event offering accelerated admissions for master's and advanced certificate entry to local undergraduates and 83% of attendees are matriculated for fall.

Applications

GEPA surpassed 2,000 PhD applications for fall 2024 consideration, setting a record for the highest annual PhD application count.

Enrollment

Both PhD admission selectivity and yield increased this year, indicating that our institution is both attracting and admitting more high quality candidates and yielding more of them.

3-year Bachelor's Policy

Collaborated with SMD Program Directors to develop a policy addressing admissions for students with foreign bachelor's degrees earned in 3 years.

Leadership Support

Interim Vice Provost and University Dean for Graduate Education

SMD GEPA's Rick Libby was appointed as Interim Vice Provost and University Dean for Graduate Education effective July 1, 2024. This appointment further ensures that SMD is well-represented and can affect positive and effective change at the University level.

University-wide Postdoc Support

Upgraded University-wide postdoc support by appointing SMD GEPA's Sharon McCullough into the newly created position of Assistant Vice Provost for Postdoctoral Affairs.

Communications

Collaborated with SMD's Committee on Graduate Studies to establish regular communications regarding vital support services, policies, and procedures. Relevant faculty, staff, and learner now receive regular communications regarding the CARE network, learner support resources, learner performance policies, learner vacation policies, and inclement weather policies.

Marketing, Communications, and Web Services

Paid Advertising

Launched inaugural set of paid Facebook ad campaigns featuring four videos targeting soon-to-graduate undergraduates interested in science. The goals were brand awareness and driving traffic to the GEPA website. A/B testing helped us optimize, leading to a click-through cost of $1.05, 1,766 website clicks, and a reach of 28,930. This initiative sets the stage for larger campaigns next year, where we'll coordinate with the Director of Enrollment to measure the impact on contact form submissions and application page visits.

Social Media Presence

SMD's LinkedIn presence has seen steady growth, with over 2,000 new followers, a 23% increase from the previous academic year. Engagement on the platform surged by 24%, and our daily post reach rose by 49%. The channel continues to be key in building brand awareness and reputation.

Launched a LinkedIn account for Steve Dewhurst, VP of Research, to better connect with the internal research community. This will act as an avenue for Steve to connect personally with the community, but also effectively communicate research-specific messaging to the right audience.

Further expanded our reach through strategic collaborations on Instagram with prominent accounts such as RIT and Juneteenth speaker Dr. Russel Ledet, helping to boost our organic (non-paid) growth.

Postdoc Recruitment Toolkit

Collaborated with SMD faculty members and the Postdoc Association to develop a postdoc recruitment toolkit that includes information about creating job postings, advertising, interviewing, and selection.

myHub

Marketing and Communications

The weekly Opportunities to Explore (OTE) newsletter was moved into the Maestro email distribution platform giving the myHub team access to improved metrics to better understand the messaging our trainee community is interested in.

Utilized more user-generated content to promote events, asking trainees to provide video testimonials encouraging attendance. These videos proved to be more engaging than static event graphics, bringing in more reach and engagement on SMD and myHub social media channels.

myHub participated in the LinkedIn Live/podcast series, The Next Step, in July 2024. During the episode, we looked at highlights of the best advice given from alumni so far this year, and infused myHub resources and upcoming events where relevant.

Career and Professional Development

National Postdoc Association (NPA) Recognition

Recognized by the NPA for real-life alignment with the NPA's Recommended Postdoctoral Policies and Practices (RPPP) regarding Professional Development resources.

myHub Career Exploration Program

The program successfully completed its first year, guiding 60 trainees across four cohorts to develop strategic career plans. Additionally, seven students received funds to support job shadowing, career-prep coursework, and conference attendance. The program used surveys and focus groups to assure a data-driven approach to continuous improvement.

Graduate Career Consortium (GCC) Presentation

myHub co-presented two sessions at the Graduate Career Consortium (GCC) Conference in Philadelphia, PA, on preparing graduate students and postdocs for career exploration using the myHub Career Exploration Modules. Both sessions were well-received, with over 30 attendees each, and sparked interest from two universities in the myHub microlearning modules powered by Archer.

myHub Teaching Retreat

Facilitated myHub's first evidence-based teaching retreat, led by SMD alumnae Jennifer Newell-Caito, Ph.D., and Shoshana Katzman. The two-day event, focused on enhancing teaching skills and fostering inclusive classrooms, had 22 graduate students and postdocs participate, with 95% expressing satisfaction. Feedback included praise for the facilitators and appreciation for the opportunity to develop as inclusive educators.

Learner Life and Wellness

Director of Learner Life and Wellness Position

Established new position within GEPA, Director of Learner Life and Wellness, and hired Amber Rivera into the role. The Director of Learner Life and Wellness provides one-on-one and group assistance with personal wellness goals, wellbeing concerns, interpersonal and communication difficulties with colleagues, peers, and faculty, access to supportive services, and trainee group advising and community building.

Postdoc Workplace Wellness Series

Learner Life and Wellness partnered with the UR Postdoctoral Association to launch a Workplace Wellness Series for Postdocs in 2024-2025. The Workplace Wellness Series will offer bi-monthly workshops for postdocs on wellness topics identified by the PDA as issues of importance in the lives of postdocs working at SMD. Learner Life and Wellness collaborates with URMC's Wellbeing Office, Employee Assistance Program, Office of Equity and Inclusion, alumni, and current faculty to provide workshops and resources for this series. Workshop topics include aligning expectations with supervisors, mentoring, cultural appreciation and cultural humility, burnout prevention, conflict resolution, and building resiliency.

New Graduate Courses Approved

BST 523 Advanced Bayesian Inference

NSC 424 Aging, Alzheimer's Disease and other Dementias
MHB 482 Clinical Ethics & the Law
MHB 472 Philosophical Foundations of Bioethics
MHB 451 Clinical Ethics Practicum I
MHB 452 Clinical Ethics Practicum II
MHB 483 Clinical Ethics Consultation Reading Seminar
MHB 421 History of Modern Medicine, Eighteenth Century to Present
MHB 473 Unsafe America: Accidents, Disasters, and Society, 1800–2020
MHB 401 Data Ethics for Healthcare
MHB 431 Clinical and Translational Research Ethics
MHB 480 Disabled Body in Medicine and Culture (update from previous course: Academic Writing)
MHB 440 History of the Body (update from current version)
MHB 410 Clinical Bioethics (update from previous course: Bioethics at the Bedside)
MP 403 Physics of Medical Imaging

New Graduate Programs and Concentrations Approved

- **New Program**: Advanced Certificate in Clinical Bioethics
- **Program Update**: Master's in Health Humanities and Bioethics (previously Medical Humanities)
  - Concentrations: (1) Clinical and Translational Ethics, (2) Medicine, History and Culture
- **New Concentrations**
  - Biostatistics (PhD in Pharmacology and PhD in Physiology)
  - Computer Science (PhD in Translational Biomedical Science)

Postdoctoral Affairs

Orientation

Hosted GEPA's inaugural in-person orientation for postdocs, supplementing the online orientation all postdocs receive. The in-person orientation enables new postdocs to meet key support resources including URGEPA, SMDGEPA, myHub, Equity and Inclusion, and UR Postdoc Association leadership. It also provides postdocs with the opportunity to begin developing community by meeting other new SMD postdocs.

Wellness Series

See Learner Life and Wellness section.

Recruitment Toolkit

See Marketing and Communications section.

Preparatory Programs

Formalized a department partnership program to enable expansion of the Postbaccalaureate Research Education Program's (PREP) training cohort. This year the department of Neuroscience committed support for one additional PREP scholar.

Training Grant and Fellowship Development and Support

Increased support provided by adding consultation and assistance with "Mentorship Development Plans" and "Career Development Plans" for Training (T) and Fellowship (F) applications and developing

instructions for obtaining a letter describing "Description of Candidate's Contributions to Program Goals" for NIH fellowship diversity (F31D) applications

Elaine Smolock, Director of Training Grant Development, serves as Co-PI, Key personnel, Core Director, or Consultant on the grants outlined below.

Elaine Smolock, Director of Training Grant Development, Partnerships

Program Director	Title	NIH Reporter #
Robert, Jacques Smolock, Elaine	University of Rochester Medical Center PREP Training	1R25GM140202-01
Dewhurst, Stephen	IRACDA at Rochester Partnership to Advance Research and Academic Careers in Deaf Scholars	2K12GM106997-06
Dunman, Paul Ward, Brain	Infection and Immunity: The Pathogenesis of Host-Microbe Interactions	2T32AI118689-06A1
Morrell, Craig Pat White	IMSD: The Hub at Rochester: Education and Advancement of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Graduate Students (THREADgS)	1T32GM148295-01
Robert, Jacques Mosmann, Tim	Training in Immunology Research	2T32AI007285-36
Laccaruente, Amanda Fay, Justin McCall, Matt	GIDS-REM	1R25HG012324-01
Suarez Martinez, Edu	U-RISE Puerto Rico	1T34GM145504-01A1
Jacob, Bonnie	RIT U-RISE	1T34GM145542-01
Jacob, Bonnie Barnett, Steven	Bridges to the Doctorate for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students	1T32GM150252-01
O'Banion, Michael Kerry	University of Rochester Medical Science Training Program	1T32GM152318-01
Georas, Steve O'Reilly, Micheal	Multidisciplinary Training in Pulmonary Research	1T32HL171029-01A1

Appendix A: GEPA Organizational Chart, Fall 2024
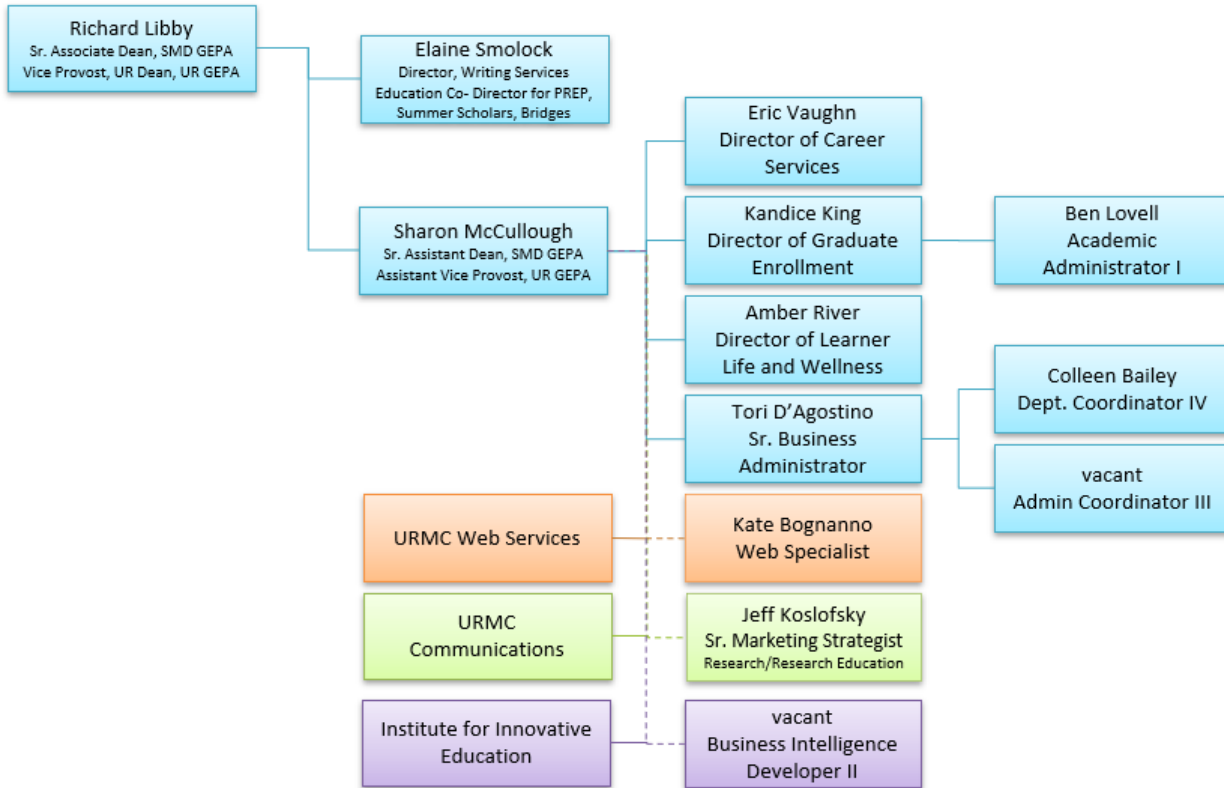
Appendix B: 2023-24 Recruitment Calendar (for fall 2024 entry term)

Open house for prospective PhD students (2)

Information session for Summer Scholars

Information session for Post Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP)

Open house for prospective Master's students

Accelerate UR admissions event for prospective Master's and Advanced Certificate students

Discover URSMD Weekend for prospective PhD students (2)

American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) conference

Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) conference

University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) McNair research conference

Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists (ABRCMS)

Heartland McNair research conference

University of Buffalo McNair summer research conference

Biomed virtual graduate school fair (3)

State University of New York (SUNY) Geneseo graduate school fair

National Institutes of Health (NIH) graduate school fair

State University of New York (SUNY) Binghamton graduate school

Appendix C: Committee and Professional Association Affiliations

Committee Name	Scope	Participant	Start	End
Human Capital Management (HCM) system transition - multiple subgroups	UR	Tori D'Agostino	2024	present
UR Student Finance Divisional Finance SIG	UR	Tori D'Agostino	2024	present
Medical School Administrators Group (MSAG)	SMD	Tori D'Agostino	2022	present
Graduate Student Unionization working group	UR	Sharon McCullough	2024	present
Global SMD Website Working Group - leadership committee	SMD	Sharon McCullough	2024	present
URMC Web Transformation - GEPA committee	SMD	Sharon McCullough	2024	present
Working Group on International Visitors and Research Security	UR	Sharon McCullough	2023	present
Human Capital Management (HCM) system transition - multiple subgroups	UR	Sharon McCullough	2022	present
Marketing/Communications Committee for Research and Research Education	SMD	Sharon McCullough	2020	present
Postdoc Admin/Dean Group (chair)	UR	Sharon McCullough	2019	present
Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), Graduate Research, Education, and Training (GREAT) Group, Postdoctorate Leaders Section	national	Sharon McCullough	2011	present
National Postdoctoral Association (NPA)	national	Sharon McCullough	2011	present
Committee on Graduate Studies (CGS)	SMD	Sharon McCullough	2010	present
Medical School Administrators' Group (MSAG)	SMD	Sharon McCullough	2010	present
Web Steering Committee	SMD	Rick Libby	2023	present
University Committee on Academic Policy and Administration (UCAPA) (formerly CAP + UCEEA)	UR	Rick Libby	2022	present
HERIG - Health Equity Research Interest Group	SMD	Rick Libby	2022	present
Educaitonal Information Technology Governance	UR	Rick Libby	2021	present
University Enterprise Applications Governance Executive Committee	UR	Rick Libby	2021	present
Education Information Technology Advisory Committee (co-chair)	UR	Rick Libby	2020	present
Marketing/Communications Committee for Research and Research Education	SMD	Rick Libby	2020	present
Senior Associate Deans (SAD) quarterly meeting	SMD	Rick Libby	2020	present
Wilmot Education Executive Committee	SMD	Rick Libby	2020	present
Basic Science Chairs	SMD	Rick Libby	2019	present
Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) Admissions Committee	SMD	Rick Libby	2019	present
New Faculty Welcome/Orientation	SMD	Rick Libby	2019	present
Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)	SMD	Rick Libby	2019	present

Graduate Education Steering Committee	UR	Rick Libby	2018	present
University Council on Graduate Education	UR	Rick Libby	2018	present
Associate Dean's Executive Planning Team (ADEPT)	SMD	Rick Libby	2018	present
Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) Strategic Leadership Group	SMD	Rick Libby	2018	present
Committee on Graduate Studies (CGS)	SMD	Rick Libby	2018	present
Medical School Advisory Council (MedSAC)	SMD	Rick Libby	2018	present
Rochester Bridges to the Doctorate/Rochester Postdoc Partnership (RPP) Oversight Committee	SMD	Rick Libby	2018	present
Diversifying International Student Body with Grok Committee	UR	Kandice King	2021	present
University Slate Working Group	UR	Kandice King	2021	present
CUNY City College/UR Joint Program Team	UR	Kandice King	2020	present
University Graduate Admissions Committee	UR	Kandice King	2020	present
National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals (NAGAP) Mentorship Program - Mentor Role	national	Kandice King	2020	present
Slate Users Group	national	Kandice King	2020	present
BioGAP special interest group of National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals (NAGAP)	national	Kandice King	2019	present
National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals (NAGAP)	national	Kandice King	2019	present
Marketing and Communications AI committee	UR	Jeff Koslofsky	2024	present
HighEdWeb Association Volunteer	national	Jeff Koslofsky	2021	present
Western New York Association of College Career Centers, Inc. (WNYACCC)	regional	Eric Vaughn	2024	present
Graduate Career Consortium: AI Community of Practice (member) & Virtual Career Expo (committee member volunteer)	national	Eric Vaughn	2023	present
University Council on Graduate Student Life	UR	Eric Vaughn	2019	present
Career Leadership Collective (member)	national	Eric Vaughn	2019	present
UR Career Leaders Group	UR	Eric Vaughn	2017	present
myHub Trainee Advisory Committee	SMD	Eric Vaughn	2017	present
SMD Alumni Council (ex officio)	SMD	Eric Vaughn	2017	present
Graduate Career Consortium (member), (executive committee member, treasurer 2020-2023)	national	Eric Vaughn	2017	present
National Postdoctoral Association (NPA)	national	Eric Vaughn	2017	present
Dissertation Award Committee (member)	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2024	present
Emerging Research Network (ERN) Poster Judge	national	Elaine Smolock	2024	present

Emerging Research Network (ERN) Recruitment Representative	national	Elaine Smolock	2024	present
CTIS Research Education Branch (member)	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2023	present
NIH Resarch Education (R) Study Section	national	Elaine Smolock	2023	present
GIDS-REM Steering Committee (member)	UR	Elaine Smolock	2023	present
Research Early Stage Investigator Network (RESIN) Member	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2022	present
URMC Faculty Out and Ally List	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2022	present
ABRCMS Poster Judge	national	Elaine Smolock	2021	present
Health Equity Research Initiative Group	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2021	present
Bridges to the Doctorate Executive Committee	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2020	present
Educational Internal Advisory Board for the Wilmot Cancer Institute	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2020	present
Rochester Bridges to the Doctorate/Rochester Postdoc Partnership (RPP) Science Education Co-Director	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2020	present
SACNAS Recruitment Representative	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2020	present
ABRCMS Recruitment Representative	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2019	present
Deaf-Roc Conference Leadership and Committee Organizer	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2019	present
myHub Advisory Group Faculty Advisor	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2019	present
Graduate Student Society Poster Judging Panel	SMD	Elaine Smolock	2018	present
UR Stars Champion	UR	Amber Rivera	2024	present
Basic Needs Hub	UR	Amber Rivera	2023	present
Food Pantry Steering Committee	UR	Amber Rivera	2023	present
Graduate Student Wellness Committee	UR	Amber Rivera	2023	present
International Services Office (ISO) Collaborative Meeting	UR	Amber Rivera	2023	present
Transportation Advisory Committee	UR	Amber Rivera	2023	present
University Council on Graduate CARE Network	UR	Amber Rivera	2023	present
Committee on Graduate Studies (CGS)	SMD	Amber Rivera	2023	present
Graduate CCC Working Group	UR	Amber Rivera	2023	present
Orientation and Onboarding Committee	UR	Amber Rivera	2023	present