CMBE SIG Council Statement

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Academics face an increasingly dynamic and challenging environment as we build our careers in the wake of a pandemic. We can benefit from professional communities that provide focused mentorship and continued scientific engagement within our field. While BMES serves as a useful umbrella organization for biomedical scientists, <u>CMBE brings specificity to the BMES</u> <u>community</u> by uniting researchers studying how physical forces mediate biological processes. As a new PI deeply invested in this scientific area, I hope to cultivate an engaged CMBE community that fosters thoughtful discussions

and collaborations between the multidisciplinary scientists in our evolving field.

<u>My vision for CMBE</u> is shaped by my experiences with this community through different stages of my academic training. The annual conference serves as a great way to highlight exciting new research while also supporting and promoting early career scientists via awards and invited talks. Between meetings, however, attendees rely on new publications and other conferences to stay in touch, making it difficult to preserve a sense of unified community with such a disjointed and individually-driven approach. Recently, CMBE's increased activity on social media has promoted sustained engagement between community members. My goal as a SIG member will be to enhance these efforts via <u>increasing interactive</u> <u>touchpoints throughout the year</u>, including: 1) tweetorial threads highlighting new research from CMBE members; 2) workshops with senior community members on topics such as navigating the tenure track or commercialization of research; and 3) peer support groups for scientists at different stages of their careers. I aim to employ an <u>evidence-based approach</u> by using quantitative metrics to assess which activities provide the highest sustained engagement on and off social media. I anticipate this method will allow us to best assess and address the evolving needs and interests of our community.

Increased engagement must be accompanied by sustained efforts to foster a diverse community that actively <u>welcomes</u>, <u>supports</u>, <u>and promotes marginalized groups</u> within our field. DEI discussions/workshops/awards at BMES are helpful in the context of the broader life sciences community. However, as CMBE draws scientists from fields focused on physical processes, it pulls from non-BME departments facing <u>specific challenges with diversity</u> that are not captured by the life sciences experience alone. I hope to work with CMBE on actionable mechanisms (diversity-focused awards, travel support, mentorship) to ensure our community is representative of diverse voices as the field grows.

Within BMES, <u>my prior service</u> includes being a track chair (2023), session chair (2022), abstract reviewer (2019-2022) and ethics subcommittee member (2017-2020). I currently serve as the programming chair for the SFB Young Scientists Group, and have organized workshops at the SFB annual meeting on topics ranging from leveraging social media to navigating faculty applications to commercializing research. I am also engaged in the materials science and robotics communities and have helped chair sessions and organize workshops at several MRS and IEEE conferences. While other professional societies focus on specific applications of our group's research, I view CMBE as a true home for the fundamental mechanistic questions that inspire and motivate my lab and many others I admire. <u>I hope that serving on the CMBE SIG will help me shape a community that can serve as a welcoming home for emerging scientists in our field in the coming years.</u>