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JOINT AAPM | COMP MEETING

Quantifying Leadership Development: Outcomes from the 2023–2024 AAPM MPLA Pathways to Leadership Cohorts

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BEST OF PROFESSIONAL POSTER
Mon, July 20 · 9:40–10:20 AM
Poster Lounge, Exhibit Hall · MO-940-BOP-2

KEY FINDINGS

+3.28

Number of new AAPM committee memberships per 2023 cohort member (~2 years post-program). This represents a net increase in AAPM involvement.

+1.61

Number of new leadership positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, Associate Editor) per 2023 cohort member.

p < .001

Gains in self-reported leadership confidence across all five domains assessed.

100%

Of survey respondents felt their voice was heard and respected in cohort meetings.

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

- 6-month MPLA cohort program, launched 2023
- 8–10 members per group, co-facilitated by senior AAPM leaders (Board, EXCOM, or Council Chair experience)
- Monthly 1-hour meetings + 3–5 hrs/month of asynchronous pre-work
- Members observe a Board of Directors meeting and sit in on ≥2 AAPM group meetings
- Grown from 3 to 4 concurrent groups: 24 participants + 10 facilitators in 2025 from residents to mid-career
- 40 Cohort members in early 2026

GET INVOLVED WITH MPLA

Pathways to Leadership — program page (AAPM members)

MPLA Leadership Club — monthly drop-in discussion forum

Fundamentals Cohort 2027–2028 — get launch notifications (start here)

Advance Cohorts 2026–2027 — sign up (for Fundamentals alumni)

MPLA volunteering — committee classified-ad alerts

INTRODUCTION

Engaging and preparing emerging leaders is essential to sustaining the growth, vitality, and long-term success of the AAPM. The Medical Physics Leadership Academy (MPLA) launched the Pathways to Leadership cohort program in 2023 to help members understand the structure of the organization, observe current leaders in action, discuss leadership strategies, and build relationships with AAPM leadership.

Purpose: to evaluate the program's impact on member engagement and leadership development by summarizing outcomes from the initial cohorts.

THE 6-MONTH PROGRAM

1. **Leadership Handbook & SMART goals**
2. **Structure of the AAPM**
3. **Leadership strategies & tools**
4. **Leadership observations** — Board of Directors + ≥2 group meetings
5. **Q&A with AAPM leaders** — EXCOM members, Council Chairs
6. **Reflection & conclusion**

Figure 1. *Progression of the 6-month cohort program.*

METHODS

Engagement outcomes (2023 & 2024 cohorts). Program rosters were retrospectively reviewed to quantify each participant's net new AAPM involvement since program entry: voting committee memberships, leadership positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, or Associate Editor), and guest roles. The 2025 cohort was excluded (still in progress).

Analysis cohorts: 2023 (n=18, ≈ 2 years post-program) and 2024 (n=25, ≈ 1 year post-program).

Program evaluation (2024–25 cohort). Electronic surveys were administered at program start and completion (response rates: 83% pre, n=20; 58% post, n=14). Confidence items used a 5-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree); pre/post differences were evaluated with 1-tailed paired t-tests.

"Overall, this experience has strengthened my confidence and preparedness to take on greater leadership responsibilities in both my clinic and AAPM."

— Cohort participant, 2024–25

ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Cohort members translate participation into sustained AAPM involvement: 2023 members averaged +3.28 committee memberships and +1.61 leadership positions two years on, while the 2024 cohort already shows immediate uptake at one year.

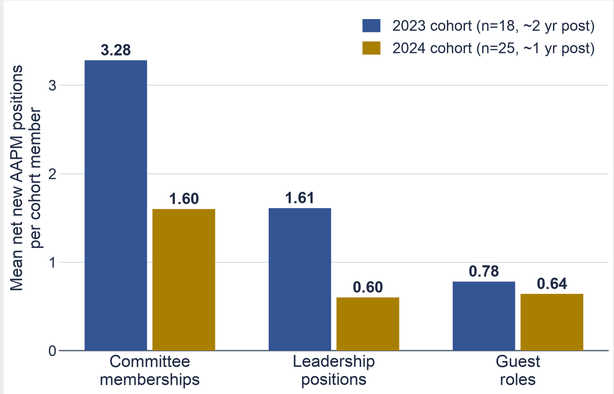

Figure 2. *Mean net new AAPM positions per cohort member since program entry. SD: 2023 — 2.35, 1.29, 1.06; 2024 — 1.26, 1.00, 0.81.*

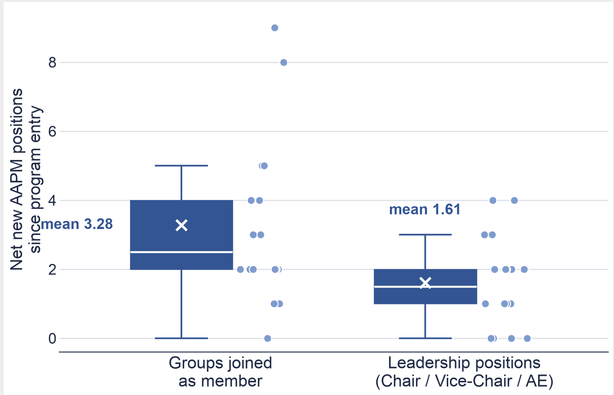

Figure 3. *Individual outcomes for the 2023 cohort (n=18): boxes show median and IQR, × marks the mean, dots are individual members.*

78% of 2023 cohort members (14 of 18) now hold at least one AAPM leadership position

PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

100% felt able to have their voice heard

100% felt views and concerns were respected

92% built new relationships within AAPM

Program aspect (rated 1–5)	Mean (SD)
Content for discussion	4.3 (0.6)
Discussion topics	4.4 (0.5)
Discussion facilitation	4.5 (0.7)
Respect of other members	4.7 (0.5)
Size of group	4.4 (0.6)
Value of participating	4.5 (0.5)

Table 1. *Post-program ratings of program structure, 2024–25 cohort (1 = Terrible, 5 = Great; n=14).*

LEADERSHIP CONFIDENCE

Confidence in taking on leadership roles increased significantly in every domain assessed (all p < .001, 1-tailed paired t-test).

Confidence leading in …	Pre	Post	Δ
Within current workplace	3.0	4.5	**+1.5**
Chairing an AAPM committee / subcommittee	2.7	4.1	**+1.4**
Leading an AAPM Task Group	2.4	3.9	**+1.5**
Running for elected AAPM position	2.3	3.6	**+1.3**
Regional chapter leadership	3.4	4.5	**+1.1**

Table 2. *Mean confidence taking on leadership roles (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). SDs: pre 0.6–1.1, post 0.5–0.9; pre n=20, post n=14.*

DISCUSSION

Both engagement and confidence outcomes support the program as a leadership pipeline: higher involvement in the 2023 cohort at two years suggests engagement continues to compound after completion, while the 2024 cohort shows immediate uptake within its first year.

Participants cited direct access to AAPM leadership: the EXCOM Q&A, observing a Board of Directors meeting, and learning the structure of the organization as the most impactful elements (Figure 4), which mirrors the barriers they reported at entry: unclear pathways, confidence, and access to leaders.

Figure 4. *Program aspects cited as highest-impact in post-program open responses (mentions, n=14).*

CONCLUSIONS

The Pathways to Leadership program is cultivating engaged and confident leaders within the AAPM. Members transition into committee and leadership roles at meaningful rates and report significantly greater confidence across all leadership domains This appears to be a vital pipeline sustaining the organization's volunteer leadership structure.

References: 1. AAPM MPLA, Pathways to Leadership in AAPM — w3.aapm.org/leadership/community/pathways.php. 2. Cetnar A. Pathways to Leadership in AAPM: Cohort Report 2024–25. AAPM MPLA-CO.

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