



**IMSH**<sup>TM</sup>

Society for Simulation in Healthcare

JANUARY 10 – 14, 2026 | SAN ANTONIO, TX

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#IMSH2026

See the [SSH Events App](#) for Schedule Updates

# SIM HEYDAY ON THE HORIZON

As the Incoming President-Elect for the Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH), Matthew Charnetski, MSMS, CHSE, CHSOS, is approaching IMSH 2026 with a blend of enthusiasm and recognition of new possibilities.

Asked for his current views on the state of healthcare simulation, he offered, "I have the privilege of working for a hospital-based sim program that also supports a medical school, a nursing school, and a school of health professions. And from that perspective I think the current state of simulation is widespread, low-level adoption. But we're just seeing that grow every day, which is super exciting. And I think we are really entering, for lack of a better term, 'The Heyday of Simulation,' where healthcare simulation is being acknowledged for all of its different benefits and values in research, in systems integration, in teaching and assessment, in interprofessional education, and all of the different ways that simulation is contributing to positive patient outcomes."



Matthew Charnetski

"It's just such an exciting time to be in sim," he continued. "We're seeing technology we've never seen before, where industry and subject matter experts and >

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# MONDAY PLENARY RECOGNIZES THE PAST; LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

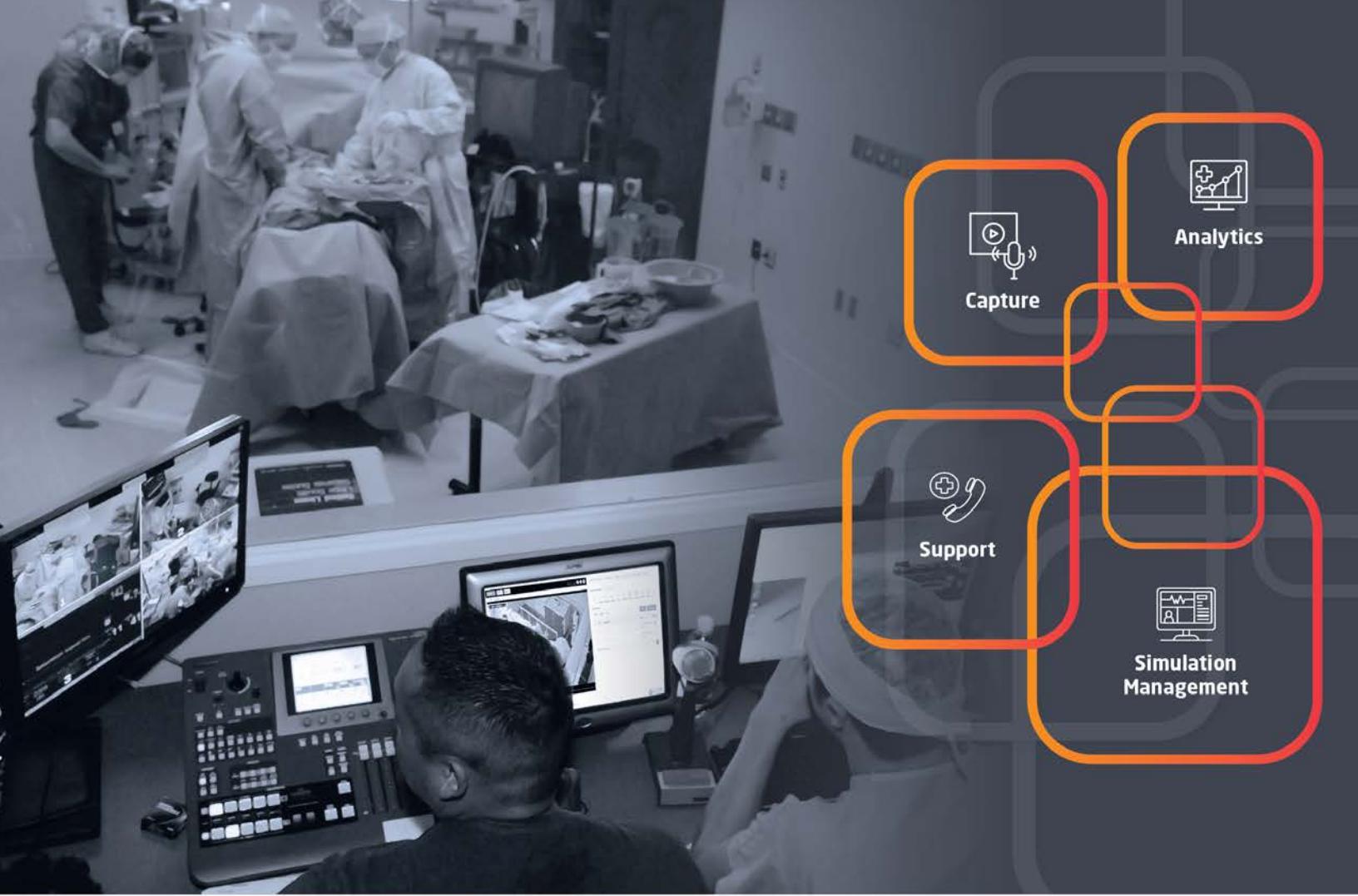
Monday morning's Plenary Session kicked off IMSH 2026 Day Two with a quick recap of Sunday's events.

This year's Planning Team Co-chairs, Syretta Spears, Amy Follmer, and John Alex, took the stage and congratulated the 170 runners who took part in the 5K Run / Walk / Roll; reviewed >

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# UNBOUND

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# TODAY AT IMSH



## Tuesday, January 13

**Plenary Session – The Michael S. Gordon Center Lecture on Medical Education featuring Shawn Kanungo**

Stars at Night Ballroom – 8:15-9:30 am

### Exhibit Hall Open

Exhibit Hall – 9:30 am-3:00 pm

### Research Posters Displayed

Exhibit Hall – 9:30 am-2:00 pm

### SSH Corporate Roundtable Learning Labs

Rooms 301A, 301B – 9:45-10:45 am; 11:00 am-12:00 pm; 1:30-2:30 pm

### Corporate Roundtable Product & Technology Showcase on the IMSH Press Box Stage

Exhibit Hall – 10:00-11:40 am

### Lunch

Exhibit Hall – 11:30 am-1:30 pm

### Technology Experiential Area

Exhibit Hall – 11:30 am-1:30 pm

### What's New in Sim Showcase

Exhibit Hall Theatre – 12:10-1:00 pm

### Mainstage Presentation – The International Liaison Council on Simulation: Charting the Future of Research in Simulation

Lila Cockrell Theater – 1:30-2:30 pm

## Wednesday, January 14

### IMSH Connections: Wrap Up Session

Lila Cockrell Theater – 7:00-8:00 am

### Closing Plenary Session featuring Liz Bohannon

Stars at Night Ballroom – 8:15-9:30 am



See the SSH Events App for schedule and topic updates



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# CISA PROGRAM ADDS THREE AFFILIATES

The Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) Accreditation Council has announced at IMSH 2026 the signing of memoranda of understanding (MOU) with three additional International Affiliate Organizations through the Commission for International Simulation Accreditation (CISA). The CISA initiative allows SSH to partner with international affiliates to commission them to accredit organizations in their countries or regions using SSH accreditation.

Last year at IMSH 2025, the program announced its pilot MOU with the Sociedad Mexicana de Simulación en Ciencias de la Salud (SOMESICS). The three additional organizations signing agreements this year are the Sociedade Brasileira de Simulação na Saúde (SOBRASSIM) in Brazil; the Sociedad Chilena de Simulación Clínica y Seguridad del Paciente (SOCHISIM) in Chile; and PediSTARS, the Pediatric Simulation Training and Research Society of India.

Jarrod Young, MBA, BSE, CHSOS-A, FSSH, Accreditation Council Chair, explained the process of these agreements, beginning with the MOU. "From there, the SSH Accreditation Council, and leadership through Accreditation, begin working directly with the leadership of those affiliates," he said. With the goal of them becoming an International Accreditation Organization, "we start working with them to develop their processes, policies, and procedures, how they're going to conduct business," so they can begin "taking on program reviews like we do here in the US."

Young continued, "Once they become commissioned from us, then they can start seeking out programs to accredit under the flag of both their organization and SSH. So through these agreements, because we set it on the SSH Accreditation best practices and standards, we recognize any program that they're going to accredit."

SOMESICS, Young said, is "almost at that finish line for us to have them officially

commissioned, and we've actually even begun working with them to start seeking out some programs within Mexico that they think want to be their first pilot programs to receive accreditation from this new agreement. Young foresees that in early 2026, "we would probably see the first program in Mexico accredited under this new partnership agreement."

Looking ahead, Young said over the next year, "we see ourselves really focusing on four pilots that we have, making sure that we get our partners to a really strong place to be able to launch this."

"From there, over the next three years, I think we really want to learn more lessons from the vantage point of our partners," he added. "I think we see these first early adopters that really had a lot of interest in this to be a sounding board, a counsel for us to be able to see how we can continue to get better."

Young expressed a huge thanks to SSH leadership, to SSH Executive Director Jennifer Manos, to Kristyn Gadlage, SSH Director of Accreditation, to Council volunteers, and past Society leaders "for all the work that they've put in to make this happen." 🌟

## UPCOMING PLENARY SPEAKERS ENGAGE AND INSPIRE

Today's Michael S. Gordon Center Lecture on Medical Education features Shawn Kanungo, a globally-recognized innovation strategist and bestselling author who works at the intersection of creativity, business, and technology. In his high-energy keynote, Kanungo draws on his extensive experience to provide audiences with an optimistic roadmap for the future that embraces unexpected approaches to innovation to remain competitive and relevant.

Kanungo was named the 'Best Virtual Keynote Speaker I've Ever Seen' by Forbes, and recognized as one of Edify's Top 40 Under 40. He brings over two decades of experience working with Fortune 500 companies. His expertise spans artificial intelligence, cloud technologies, and behavioral economics, enabling him to guide organizations through complex transformations.

While others predict the future of work, Kanungo delivers electrifying keynotes packed with cutting-edge real-world examples and

actionable insights. By fusing deep strategic expertise with practical innovation frameworks, he shows organizations how to turn disruption into opportunity - enabling them to thrive in an era of constant change.

Wednesday morning's closing plenary session will feature Liz Bohannon, who was named by Forbes as one of the top public speakers in America.

Described as "a workplace connection expert," her approach is designed to teach attendees how to harness the power of community to create a workplace culture (and life) marked by connection, collaboration, and growth.

Designing workplaces that elevate connection and authentic community is the fastest path to collaboration, fulfillment, and impact, and it is at the heart of The Community Quotient™, a dynamic and refreshing perspective that's disrupts conventional thinking on organizational design.

Her authenticity in championing workplace cultures of connection and community stems from her profound understanding of the human



Shawn Kanungo



Liz Bohannon

experience within organizations. Through her background as a Top 1 % VC-backed female founder, internationally renowned keynote speaker, and bestselling author, she brings a wealth of practical insights and heartfelt passion to her mission. 🌟

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## SIMULATION SURVEY

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**Share your insights in our Healthcare  
Simulation Survey.**

All participants will receive a report of the results and be entered into a drawing for a **IMSH 2027 Conference Pass.**

Your feedback helps strengthen data-driven progress in the simulation field.



Continued from page 1

< > simulationists are all driving together in the same broad direction. That hasn't always been the case in the past, which makes this such an exciting time to be part of this community and engaged in this profession."

As the Incoming President-Elect, Charnetski anticipates that his near-term focus of effort will be devoted to what he describes as "pathways."

He explained, "One of those pathways involves continuing all of the really important work that's been done among and between all of the simulation Societies, to really encourage collaboration and a kind of collegial interaction. Because at the end of the day, not only am I here to serve the SSH membership, but I'm here to serve the larger simulation community. And I think it's through those collaborations that we really have the opportunity to extend our reach and to really keep running with this profession. And so it's just super important to me to work with not just the North American-based Societies, but the international ones as well. There are so many people doing such great work, and we've already collaborated with so many of them. I just want to build on that."

He said that a second anticipated activity pathway, which he said he is "most excited about," involves "working to continue to highlight all of the really fantastic work that is going on, from staff, from volunteers, and from all the different angles of the Society."

Finally, Charnetski wants to focus on what he calls "the creation of more obvious pathways to service."

"One of the things that I've heard over the years of being a member and of being involved and then and subsequently being on the SSH Board, is that there are people who want to do things for the Society and with the Society, but they just don't know how to do it. And they are strong voices. They are qualified people. They're exceptional human beings. And it's just finding that pathway to help those members who say, 'Oh, I'd like to be a co-chair for planning one of the meetings,' or 'I'd like to be involved with this different Section or Special Interest Group or Committee, or do more with Accreditation, or whatever it happens to be. But I want to help highlight

the pathways for people to get involved, so that we just keep getting more people involved."

He added, "The Society is approaching around 5,000 attendees at IMSH. That's incredible. And that's a lot of people to be able to leverage into some really great work. So if they're looking for those opportunities, I want them to be able to find them."

Asked about challenges and opportunities that he sees in the future, Charnetski offered, "I think one of the big opportunities and challenges that we have is that we are a very large Society. We are international in many respects. We have a lot of international attendees to the conference and international members. And we want to continue to grow in that way. It's also a very particular dance that a large society

been a super meaningful part of my life, not just professionally, but personally as well. It has been such a fulfilling organization, and that's why I keep signing up to do more, to volunteer, and to help."

He added, "Keeping that in mind, I urge attendees to really lean into IMSH Day Three. We're all tired. But we're also super energized and excited. And IMSH is such a unique opportunity for simulation to come together and for us to find our people and to find our community, and also explore all of the other parts of our community. So make sure to honor that and to carry that with you when you leave, because I was just talking to a group today about how those of us working professionally in sim are so consistently having to push against the people who may not want more sim. The people who want more sim are great to work with. It's so energizing. It's so fulfilling. But those of us, particularly in leadership roles of varying capacities, and not just in title but in duties, are also always having to push against the people who aren't on board yet regarding simulation and try to win them over and bring them along. And IMSH is such a great opportunity to fill our tank back up before we go back out to be pushing that forward. The best example I hear from people is when they are home at their institution, wherever that happens to be, and they talk about sim, they have to start with bare bones basics, and then slowly get people to understand what we can do. But when they come to IMSH, they don't have to talk about all of that stuff. They don't have to talk about the standards of best practice. They don't have to talk about the value of accreditation. We're already there. So instead they can talk about the big ideas, about the exciting things, the stuff they want to do. So take advantage of that."

Charnetski concluded, "The Society for Simulation in Healthcare is the fabulous community that represents a portion of the larger global simulation community. Remember that we play a role in this, and that there is always more we can do. There are always people doing interesting things out there, and the more we listen, and the more we share, the more we're going to be able to tap into that and really grow into our fullest expression of healthcare simulations." 🌟

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has to do to both honor and respect the work being done by all of these other different great Societies. Just because they're not as big as SSH doesn't mean they're not doing great work as well. And there also are times when we need to be able to step in and offer leadership and help different groups work together or provide resources that we have because we are so large. So we have to make sure that we're continuing to use our size advantage for that bigger sim community; not just our membership, but global simulation."

Elaborating on some of his key messages for IMSH attendees, Charnetski said, "The Society for Simulation in Healthcare has

Continued from page 1

<> the Day One Plenary messaging, and highlighted the opening of the “record-breaking involvement” of over 140 companies in the Exhibit Hall this year.

“The competition was fierce during the Second Annual Cornhole Tournament, which had over 50 attendees face off, with all funds raised supporting the SSH fund,” Alex said. And congratulations to our first, second, and third place teams for their skill, pinpoint accuracy, and uncanny ability to put square bags into round holes.”

The Plenary then took a slightly more serious turn with the recognition of recipients for the Bob Waters Scholarship Award and Beverlee Anderson Education Scholarship.

2025 SSH President Jared Kutzin also used the venue to officially announce the 2026 Pioneer Award for Distinguished Contributions to Healthcare Simulation to Dr Amitai Ziv, highlighting his “unwavering dedication, innovative spirit and commitment to excellence in simulation-based training [that] has transformed healthcare education, vastly impacting the field globally.”

A video presentation reviewing just some of his many contributions touched on significant milestones, like his founding of MSR (“Messer”), the Israel Center for Medical Simulation. In Hebrew, Messer means the message of value, also reflecting: Master, Simulate, Reflect and serves as a cultural change vehicle, a safe place to make mistakes and reflect them.

Presentation of the Pioneer Award was made by SSH Past-President Bill Dunn, who explained, “I have long admired, and consider a close friend, Dr. Amit Ziv. His career path has been very, very multifaceted, though simulation-based learning and patient safety applications have been a consistent theme. Dr Ziv was an early adopter of simulation in his career path; his doctoral dissertation, in fact, in medical school back in 1989 was peer assessment as a tool in medical education.”

Identifying just a few of Dr. Ziv’s myriad achievements in healthcare simulation, Dunn concluded, “My two minutes can’t possibly do justice to this man’s wealth of contributions to the global aims and applications of simulation. I can personally attest to the selfless humanitarian side of this man; his commitment to excellence, his foresight and strategy, and his activism exemplify the spirit of the founders of this Society. This serves as a challenge to all of us, and I think in reflecting this morning on his impact, I doubt that there’s a person in this room that his career has not impacted yours.”

Accepting his award, Dr. Ziv thanked SSH and “the global family, friends and colleagues, and partners in this shared journey, grounded in unwavering commitment to patient safety.”

“Throughout my work in medical simulation, I have met kindred spirits; professional, united by values, responsibilities, and purpose,” he said. “These are the best of our profession, people driven not by recognition, but by a

passion to education, humanity, and service at its core. Simulation is an act of humility. It asks us to reflect, to learn from our errors, and to accept that excellence in healthcare is never complete, especially in these very troubling days when humanity is challenged worldwide by conflicts and sorrow. We all carry a very powerful responsibility to transform hostile realities into spaces of learning, understanding, and hope. Those who choose this path commit to lifelong improvement, to becoming more competent, more compassionate, and more mindful for how we care for one another.”

Kutzin then returned to the stage to present SSH Presidential Citations to Pier Luigi Ingrassia, MD, MPH; Allison F. Perry, MA; and Marie Gilbert, DNP, RN, CHSE.

Previous SSH Pioneer Award recipient Lou Oberndorf then took the stage to introduce Kevin Brown, lecturer for the Lou Oberndorf Lecture on Innovation and Healthcare Simulation.

“This morning is about us as a Society,” Oberndorf said. “It’s about us as a community. I want to thank the Organizing Committee. They’ve just done a phenomenal job and they keep raising the bar for the next year, the year after that, and the year after that, I really want to give them a round of applause.”

After thanking the SSH executive leadership for helping to support this annual lecture, and offering his own congratulations to Amitai Ziv, he said, “IMSH is really a refresher for me, because it reminds me what we’ve been through, what we’ve accomplished, and how far we’ve come. When I met with the Committee last year after the Plenary, and we talked about what their theme is for this year, and it was *UNBOUND*, that immediately struck a resonant tone for me, because after 20 years, [of] sometimes struggle, we have early pioneers. We have pioneers all through this audience. Some of us get to stand up here and get a plaque, but those plaques ought to be given out to many, many of us, because you all deserve it. You’ve all been pioneers.”

Sharing a few lines from lecturer Kevin Brown’s bio, he added, “Kevin understands what divides organizational excellence and customer loyalty. He knows firsthand how great brands think. We normally don’t think of ourselves as a brand, but we are a brand. We are a simulation community, a healthcare simulation community. We are a brand, and we are unified globally with common purpose, common ideals, and common practices.” 

## 2026 Pioneer Award for Distinguished Contributions to Healthcare Simulation

### Amitai Ziv, MD



# PLENARY SPEAKER LOOKS TO HEROES

**K**evin Brown stepped onto the IMSH Plenary stage with urgency, gratitude, and a challenge. “We have a long way to go and a short time to get there,” he said early, setting the pace. “Buckle up. It’s about to get real.” Speaking directly to the International Meeting on Simulation in Healthcare audience, Brown framed the next 47-and-a-half minutes as precious, purposeful, and personal.

Just weeks before IMSH, Brown was not sure he would be there at all. “Three and a half weeks ago, a brilliant team of doctors removed the upper lobe of my left lung,” he shared. “If not for the work that you do, if not for the willingness to see beyond what is required and do the remarkable, I wouldn’t be on this stage.” His opening message was clear. This room was filled with people whose work saves lives, even when they never meet the people they save. “When I say I’m grateful,” he told attendees, “I truly am grateful.”

Brown anchored the talk in stories, beginning with his wife, Lisa. “I’ve been married to a hero,” he said. Married for 30 years, she is the person who grounds him and challenges him. On the morning of the talk, she called him at 4:30 am. “You’ve got the finest human beings on the planet,” she told him. “I want you to be amazing. Leave it all on the stage.” Her final instruction was simple and powerful: “Don’t forget to smile.” Brown explained why it mattered. “Smiling is the gateway to connecting. We draw people in. We tear down walls and build bridges with a simple smile.”

The idea of heroes, Brown explained, had once overwhelmed him. Asked years ago to give a speech on heroes, he panicked. “I didn’t have a hero speech,” he said. His wife’s advice changed everything. “Just tell them your story,” she said. “Everyone can learn from failure, poor decisions, and bad judgment.” When Brown pressed her on how his story connected to heroes, she asked him a question that became the foundation of his work. “When you look in the mirror, do you see yourself, or do you see all of the people who helped you become you?”

Brown paused on that question. “You’re not self-made,” he said. “You’re the sum total and the byproduct of every single human who’s ever shown up in your life.” Heroes, he realized,

are often not the ones on posters or stages. They are the people who “passed through this little space called now and left you better than they found you.”

For nearly two decades, Brown has asked one question around the world. “What does a hero look like?” The answers were familiar. Military members. World leaders. First responders. Parents. Teachers. Coaches. Sports legends. Again and again, people defined heroes as “ordinary people doing extraordinary things.” At first, it sounded right. Over time, it began to trouble him. “If you buy into that definition,” he said, “you have to first convince yourself that you’re ordinary in the first place. And I don’t think that’s how it was drawn up.”

Brown rejected the idea that anyone in the room was ordinary. “The very fact that you’re in this room proves that point,” he told IMSH attendees. He reframed the definition entirely. “Heroes are not ordinary people who do extraordinary things. It is just the opposite. Heroes are extraordinary people who choose not to be ordinary.” Ordinary, he said plainly, “is a choice.”

To explain what we lose when we choose ordinary, Brown returned to childhood. He described tying a towel around his neck and pretending to be Superman, climbing higher and higher until gravity taught him a painful lesson. “From that moment on, Superman was grounded,” he said. The real loss came later. “I wanted to ask that kid one question. When did you forget how to fly?”

As adults, Brown said, life squeezes the imagination out of us. “Our vision begins to narrow, and we no longer see the world as it can be. Tragically, we start to see it as it is.” We stop creating. We stop believing. We stop seeing each other fully.

Then Brown introduced the story that defined the rest of the keynote. “I need to introduce you to my son,” he said. “His name is Josh.” Josh has autism, and as a child he fell in love with Walt Disney World. On their first trip, a breakfast interaction changed everything. After an uncomfortable exchange with a server, the Executive Chef came out. “Good morning, Sunshine,” she said to Josh. She asked questions. She listened. She cared. When Josh asked for apple pancakes, she admitted she did not have the ingredients. The next day, she did.

“Why would you do that?” Brown asked her.

“I thought that’s what he wanted,” she replied.

Brown let the moment land. “Give the people we serve what they want or need, whether we have it or not,” he said. “Ballgame.” That chef, known to Josh as Aunt Bea, did more than make pancakes. She made Josh feel seen. The family returned to her restaurant every day. They wrote letters. They stayed connected for years.

Brown used the story to challenge the audience. “Nobody notices normal,” he said. “Satisfaction is code for ordinary.” What people remember are the moments when someone exceeds expectations or misses them entirely. “Don’t you want enthusiastic ambassadors for what you do?” he asked.

Years later, Josh returned to Disney to reunite with Aunt Bea. By then, the impact of that single moment had multiplied. “After you left, we did the work,” she told the Browns. “We created a new program for kids like Josh. In 2016, we’ll serve over one million kids just like him.” One small decision had changed an entire system.

Brown tied the lesson back to leadership. “We are drawn to people who are willing to reach beyond what is required to do the remarkable,” he said. Leaders do not wait for perfect conditions. “They raise their hand and say, what can I do with what I have to create a better outcome?”

Brown closed by returning to the mirror. “Can you look in the mirror and see the faces of the people who make you better?” he asked. Then he asked the harder question. “Who looks in the mirror and sees your face?”

He reminded the IMSH audience that they never know what someone else is carrying. “The only way you can truly bless them is to give them the gift of your presence right here.” Heroes, he said, live on through their work. “Faces you’ll never see, names you’ll never know, are better because you showed up here to do this work.”

After nearly two decades of asking what a hero looks like, Brown offered his final answer. “It looks just like you,” he said. And he left the room with a belief he refuses to let go. “At 58 years old, I’m still naive enough to believe that we can change this world. From where I stand, this world could use a few more heroes.”

On Monday afternoon, the Exhibit Hall was the site of SimVentors awards.

Winners in the four categories included:

**IMPACT:** Table 67 - Development and Validation of a Cost-Effective 3D-Printed Cricothyrotomy Simulator for Emergency Airway Training - 55315

**INNOVATION:** Table 1 - Immersive Three-dimensional (3D) Visualization of a Heart using a Collaborative Extended Reality Platform - 46197

**APPROACH:** Table 3 - Simulating the Future: AI-Powered VR Training for Advanced Practice OSCE Readiness - 39189

**PEOPLE'S CHOICE:** Table 60 - AmniGo: The Green Sim - 63393



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## ACCREDITATION COUNCIL BREAKS BARRIERS, INSPIRES INNOVATION

The recent work of the Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) Accreditation Council resonates with the IMSH 2026 theme *UNBOUND*. In recent years, our collective work has continued to break down barriers, inspire innovation, and expand what's possible.

In 2024, SSH Accreditation launched the Commission for International Simulation Accreditation (CISA) in an effort to break down historical barriers that exist between accreditation and the global recognition of transcendent simulation programs. This started with a single pilot program in Mexico with SSH Affiliate SOMESICS.

In 2025, we continued to break barriers with the global launch of CISA. We have been in communications with three affiliate organizations who are committed to establishing CISA Partnerships, thus continuing to extend the global impact of SSH Accreditation to South America and Asia. These anticipated agreements continue to make SSH Accreditation accessible to programs that were previously unable to submit an application due to cost, language, or other culture barriers.

At IMSH 2025, SSH Accreditation announced the launch of our newest area of Program Accreditation: Human Simulation. This represents the most recent area of accreditation development. The development of the Human Simulation Standards emphasizes the importance of this methodology and recognizes the innovative work of Standardized Patient programs.

After two pilot rounds of program applications, during which nine programs received accreditation in Human Simulation, we launched this standard for all programs in the Fall 2025 application cycle.

In this cycle, we received eight program applications for accreditation in the area of Human Simulation.

As we look to the future, SSH Accreditation will continue to reimagine what is possible. To date, we have recognized over 300 Accredited Programs. In 2025, we completed 65 Full Accreditation reviews, 19 Provisional Accreditation reviews, and two Mid-Cycle Accreditation reviews, totaling 86 Accreditation reviews performed in 2025.

If getting a front-row ticket to the behind-the-scenes work of the best simulation programs in the world interests you, consider applying to become an Accreditation Site Reviewer. 

## BREAKING BARRIERS: PHARMACISTS' ROLE IN INTERPROFESSIONAL SIMULATIONS



**“P**harmacists simming? What does that look like? How many times can you sim counting pills?” we’ve been asked. Well, there’s a bit more to pharmacy than counting pills in fancy intervals. And, as members of the Pharmacy Special Interest Group (SIG), we love breaking barriers through collaboration to advocate for earlier and more routine integration of pharmacists into healthcare simulation.

In the complex healthcare environment, safety is created when resources – especially people – are leveraged for the expertise and unique skill set brought to the table. Pharmacist presence in interprofessional simulations promotes a greater understanding of the discipline’s expertise in all aspects of medication management, far beyond the traditional “lick and stick” dispensing function that comes to mind for many.

For this reason, our SIG has focused on educating about the role of pharmacists within the interprofessional team to enhance representation in simulation. Our members work routinely with medicine, nursing, physician associate, and other programs to integrate pharmacist learners where they’ll encounter our clinicians in practice, to enhance understanding of our role and the unique perspective we bring.

We have found partners in the Patient & Medication Safety Affinity Group, with whom we’ve developed interprofessional simulations focused around medication safety. Some of these will be explored here at IMSH 2026. By inclusively “training as we play,” simulation helps us become a stronger and safer healthcare team.

We’re always looking to expand partnerships for interprofessional initiatives, so please reach out to us if you’d like to collaborate to help us in breaking barriers by introducing or expanding pharmacists in your simulation education. 

## MINDFULNESS AFFINITY GROUP EMBODIES SPIRIT OF ‘UNBOUND’

Over the past year, the Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) Mindfulness Affinity Group has embodied the spirit of *UNBOUND* by exploring how inner awareness, reflective presence, and cognitive-emotional regulation can strengthen human performance in healthcare simulation. Our vision extends beyond technical or procedural advancement; we are committed to expanding what is possible when the inner world of the educator is recognized as a core component of simulation culture, safety, innovation, and resilience.

In 2025, we hosted many inspiring guest speakers whose work and expertise helped broaden our collective understanding of mindfulness-aligned simulation practice. Erin Carn-Bennett guided us through reflective strategies for emotional well-being and educator sustainability, highlighting how mindfulness supports long-term simulation leadership. Dr. Jenny Rudolph facilitated a powerful dialogue, reinforcing how mindful awareness enhances our lives as members were encouraged to try “Workouts of the Week” exercises from the podcast hosted by Rudolph. Dr. Jamie Carbone presented research-informed insights into meditation and its impact on decreasing anxiety in pre-sim. Donna Ackerman, a holistic nurse, introduced members to “mind clearing” experiential practice focused on mental spaciousness, clarity, and cognitive-energetic reset; skills essential for educators navigating complex environments, decision fatigue, and emotional residue.

In addition to these dialogues, Esmira Yusufova, the chair of the group, offered an experiential artistic session using Neurographica for emotional reset and stress relief.

As we move into 2026, our group aims to cultivate practices that help educators, clinicians, and learners become more centered, connected, creative, and conscious. In a field defined by innovation, mindfulness reminds us that the most powerful transformation begins within.

We welcome all SSH members: curious beginners, seasoned practitioners, scholars, clinicians, artists, and innovators. Join us as we continue exploring what it means to be truly “unbound” from the inside out. 

# IMSH 2025 DESIGN RECEIVES RECOGNITION

The graphic design partners supporting the International Meeting on Simulation in Healthcare (IMSH) 2025 were awarded a bronze level TRENDY award in the category of 2025 Best Convention Promotion Package.

According to Ellen Kim, founder and creative director of GRAPHEK a design agency, that company has been partnered with SSH on IMSH branding and marketing collateral since 2016. The award was presented by the Salute to Association Excellence, which has recognized trade and professional society professionals "who go above and beyond for their members and missions" for more than 40 years.

As Kim explained, the 2025 award drew more than 600 attendees to hon-

or outstanding association leadership nationwide, with each honoree carefully selected by an independent committee.

She noted that the 2025 IMSH design needed to reflect connection, engagement, sparks of change, advocacy, and demonstrate forward movement.

"The chosen concept emphasizes the connection between humanity and simulation technology," she said. "Two hands are coming together at the focal point, with a prominent glow as they begin to interact. The technological hand begins to glow with energy as this connection is being made, showcasing the engagement of community and pride towards standards, advocacy, and advancement that IMSH achieved in the past 25 years." 

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# LARSON REFLECTS ON SSH TENURE

Judy Larson, Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) Director of Meetings and Exhibits, has announced her plans to retire after nearly 18 years with the organization.

As Larson prepares for retirement, she reflected on a journey that mirrors the growth and maturation of SSH itself. As she described the early days, it's clear how much both she and the organization have evolved together.

"I started with SSH on April 1, 2008, and we'll leave the April Fool's jokes alone," she laughed. "I was the first full-time employee. Our first annual meeting was in Disney's Contemporary Resort in Orlando in 2009, and it was myself and an Executive Director, Robin Wooten." Larson quickly pointed out that the SSH Staff now numbers 17, reflective of the organization's growth.

Asked about how she has seen SSH evolve during her tenure, she recalled, "When I first started, there was a lot of focus on getting the science of simulation out there." Simulation, she explained, wasn't widely understood outside the field. "I would go to many industry events, meeting planner events, and I would always have to explain what simulation was." Her go-to comparison became a familiar one: "I would draw the correlation to airline pilots. They train in a simulator before they train in the cockpit." Only then would the realization come. "And then the 'Oh.' So this is what we do with medical doctors, nurses, first responders...And the light bulb would come on."

Today, that explanation is no longer necessary, she observed, and that simulation is more well known. "Now I continue to go to industry events, and people know what it is," she said. Simulation appears regularly in the media, and often through SSH members themselves. "Often one of our members appears on TV, and people say, 'I saw your association. I saw what they do on TV. I saw a simulation on TV.'"



Judy Larson

Larson didn't hesitate when asked about her favorite aspect of having been part of SSH. "It's the passion of the members," she said. "I'm a friendly person, a talkative person, and I would say 99 percent of our members are likewise." What also stands out significantly to her is how SSH staff are viewed. "We're never seen as 'just staff.' We're treated as part of the team."

One of Larson's proudest accomplishments centers on bridging gaps between groups. With a role as both an exhibit manager and meeting manager, she watched SSH rethink how it engaged industry partners. She remembered sitting in a room in March 2010 in New Orleans, asking, "What if we had a corporate industry group?" What began as the "Corporate Council" evolved into today's Corporate Roundtable. Her biggest pride, she said, is that "We turned an 'us and them' into a 'we.'"

Over the years, Larson has seen that shift come to fruition, with recognition and appreciation of industry to the point, she noted, that "industry has a seat at the Board table. I had hopes and a vision that would happen once it got started. I was amazed at how fast it actually took hold."

Larson also enthused about a milestone – this year's *Exhibitor Guide* distributed to all IMSH 2026 attendees. "It's been a dream of mine to see a product guide, and we see the first-ever product guide make its introduction this year."

Larson said her future plans "are to somehow mentally stay connected in meeting planning, because it's my love. I've been doing it for 40-plus years, and it's part of my identity. It's part of who I am. And I love the industry."

As she steps away, Larson offered her thoughts and a heartfelt message to the SSH community. "In association terms, you're still young," she said. "You have a bright future and a growing future ahead of you." But she cautioned against losing what makes SSH special. "Don't lose sight of the community that you came from, because that community is what stands apart, and makes you special. You see that as you're walking back and forth between the hotels and in the convention center; people all over just standing and talking, and that community, that face-to-face contact, that human connection. And so, you'll grow, and that'll be the schematics of, quote, 'the business.' But don't lose your footing."

In summarizing her heartfelt message, Larson, with her characteristic warmth, wants the community to know this: "It's been an honor and privilege to be on this journey with you." 

 **Don't lose sight of the community that you came from, because that community is what stands apart, and makes you special.**

## SSH DAISY TEAM AWARD SPOTLIGHT

The Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) and the DAISY Foundation presented the first-ever SSH DAISY Team Award in Simulation at IMSH 2026. The new award was created in 2025 in a partnership between the two organizations.

In his Sunday morning plenary address, Jared Kutzin, 2025 SSH President, highlighted the award, explaining that the DAISY award, which stands for Diseases Attacking the Immune System, was created by the DAISY Foundation, a not-for-profit organization established in the memory of J. Patrick Barnes by members of his family. Barnes died in late 1999 at the age of 33 from complications from a little known auto-immune disease called Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP).

Kutzin said SSH partnered with the DAISY Foundation to implement the award, adding, "It exemplifies a team that has compassionate care, collaboration, and excellence in healthcare simulation, education, or practice. Teams that apply for the award should focus on programs and stories that demonstrate a significant positive impact on frontline clinicians or teams that have gone on to impact patient safety or outcomes."

Noting that SSH had received 47 applications for the inaugural award, he highlighted the first year recipients: The Anti-Racism and Trauma-Informed (ART) De-escalation Training Program.

Teammember Maggie Ryan, MS, RN, CHSE, Director of Education, STRATUS Center for Medical Simulation, Brigham and Women's Hospital, recently explained the program to *IMSH Daily*.

"The team that is named in the award is a small representation of the larger team that has built and developed this course," she said. "It's led by Dr. Dana Im, who is an emergency medicine physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital, as well as Andrew Dundin, who is an emergency medicine nurse. It's a multidisciplinary team that has built this simulation education program on trauma-informed care and de-escalation using standardized patients at STRATUS."



"So the team accepting the award," Ryan continued, "is really representative of the emergency medicine team at the Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Faulkner Hospital, as well as the STRATUS team, which is the Simulation Center, as well as the Standardized Patient Actor Program, which is out of Mass General Institute of Health Professions. So all three of those groups are being represented in this team."

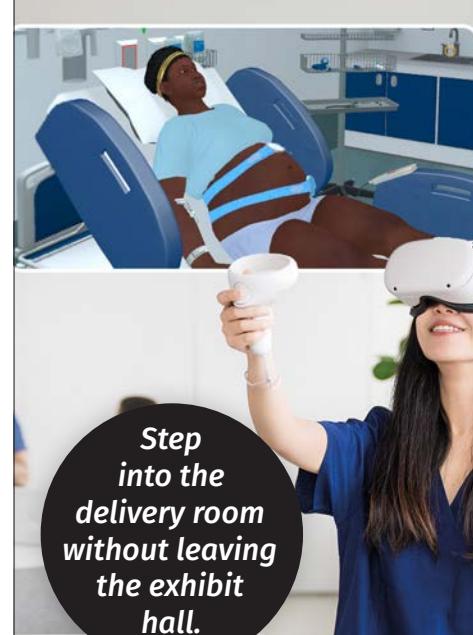
This interdisciplinary team's work has developed an innovative, evidence-based, and compassionate curriculum that has trained more than 560 clinicians across diverse roles, including nurses, residents, attending physicians, advanced practice providers, social workers, security officers, psychiatrists, and chaplains.

Ryan said she believes one of the major reasons why this team fit so well with the SSH DAISY Team Award criteria as well as the mission of the DAISY Foundation of compassionate, patient-centered care is "because it really focuses on the end goal of education that informs compassionate care, teaching providers to be able to approach patients with empathy, respect, and cultural humility, all in these tense escalation situations that happen in the emergency department."

For the team, receiving this award is "an incredible honor," Ryan said. "But I think the most important part is the program's impact on patient care and the hope that, if even a handful of patients feel the lessons that are taught in this, it's worth it. I think that is really the ultimate goal, and why it is so wonderful to be recognized."

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## MEETINGS OVERSIGHT COMMISSION: 'UNBOUND' FOR A NEW YEAR

The Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) Meetings Oversight Commission enters the new year with Sean Cavanaugh assuming the role of Chair. This year marks a significant transition and a renewed commitment to excellence as the Commission embraces the IMSH 2026 theme, *UNBOUND*.

Erin Graham steps into the position of Vice Chair, while Taylor Jessup joins the team as the new SSH Staff Liaison. The Commission recognizes the commitment of all its hard-working members who make this vital work possible: Erin Blanchard, Aaron Calhoun (SSH President-Elect), Cheryl Camacho, Matt Charnetski, Carol Durham, Barry Issenberg, Keith Littlewood (SSH Board Liaison), Jennifer McCarthy, and Michael Norris. Together, this group focuses on pushing the boundaries of what SSH meetings achieve, ensuring they are more impactful, accessible, and innovative than ever before.

The Meetings Oversight Commission plays a vital, behind-the-scenes role in supporting the core mission of SSH. The Commission provides longitudinal guidance related to the location, structure, and planning of all simulation meetings sponsored by the Society, including annual, international, and regional events. This essential oversight ensures every SSH meeting becomes a high-quality platform that inspires the community to be "unbound" in the pursuit of excellence.

Inspired by the *UNBOUND* theme, the Commission initiated efforts designed to break barriers and expand possibilities for attendees and presenters alike. It reviewed and refined processes, ensuring meeting structures are inclusive, dynamic, and reflect cutting-edge healthcare simulation. Creating flexible and innovative meeting structures will better inspire innovation and strengthen connection across our global membership.

As the SSH community looks forward to a year of inspiring SSH-sponsored meetings, the Meetings Oversight Commission remains committed to ensuring they are truly "unbound" experiences for everyone. The Commission is excited to see the incredible work that will emerge from this community. 

- Sean Cavanaugh, Chair, and Erin Graham, Vice Chair, SSH Meetings Oversight Commission

## HAVE YOU SUBMITTED TO STORM?

Discover the future of healthcare simulation operations as we approach ten issues of the *Simulation Technology & Operations Resource Magazine (STORM)*. Surpassing 45 articles published in *STORM*, it has become a platform for innovation, promoting best-practice standardization, critical technology evaluation, and transparent methods for easy adoption.

As a peer-reviewed electronic journal, *STORM* serves as a platform for showcasing exemplary work and introducing innovative, well-developed methods for integration at your home institution. We encourage you to submit your work in one of our key categories: Training, Policy and Procedure, Emerging Technologies, and Professional Development.

We are also proud to announce that as of 2025, the *IMSH Conference Proceedings Oral Presentations* will now be published as a Special Edition of *STORM*, further strengthening our presence and providing another outlet to present exemplary work.

For more information about *STORM* and moving your work toward publication, plan to attend our panel session, *Getting Published in STORM: Turning Your Big Ideas into Best Practice for Healthcare Simulation Operations* [Tuesday, January 13, 4:00 - 5:00 pm, Room 211], where we will provide personalized feedback on how to develop a plan to transform your innovative work into a publication that can be adopted as best practice for simulation operations.

Over the past five years as Editor-in-Chief, I have been inspired by the progress our editorial board and peer reviewers have made in developing this resource and refining the review process. I am confident that *STORM* will continue to be a premier resource, highlighting the critical role of Operations Specialists in driving the success of healthcare simulation programs.  For more information, scan the QR or go to <https://www.ssih.org/simulation-technology-operations-resource-magazine-storm>.

-David Biffar, *STORM* Editor-In-Chief



## ADVANCING PATIENT SAFETY THROUGH A UNIFIED FRAMEWORK FOR LATENT SAFETY THREAT REPORTING

Simulation-based discovery of latent safety threats (LST) has become an essential tool for healthcare improvement, yet many organizations still face challenges in translating these findings into sustainable change. To address this gap, three SSH communities – the Hospital-Based Simulation Programs Section, Patient Safety and Simulation Collaborative Affinity Group, and In Situ and Mobile Simulation Outreach Affinity Group – collaborated to develop a position statement on best practices for identifying, reporting, and mitigating LSTs uncovered through *in situ* simulation.

Through literature review and surveys of Society for Simulation in Healthcare community members, this collaboration created a shared framework that supports consistent, transparent, and actionable reporting processes. The resulting position statement defines key terminology, delineates levels of program maturity in LST management, and outlines structured practices for LST detection, follow-up, and mitigation. Importantly, it emphasizes shared accountability between simulation programs, clinical leadership, and quality and safety teams, ensuring that insights generated from simulation inform meaningful system improvement.

The framework encourages organizations to embed simulation findings within their existing safety infrastructure, allowing local programs to adapt the approach to their scale and resources. This adaptable model helps simulation programs move beyond traditional educational boundaries to play a central role in advancing system reliability and patient safety culture.

By unifying perspectives across multiple SSH communities, the project reflects the ongoing evolution of simulation as a discipline – one that continuously challenges convention and broadens its impact on healthcare delivery. The position statement is expected to serve as a foundational reference for organizations seeking to strengthen their LST reporting and mitigation practices, promoting a consistent approach to learning from system vulnerabilities before they reach patients. 

- Mimi Nimmo, RN, MSN, CHSE, CCRN-K, Chair, SSH In Situ and Mobile Simulation Outreach Affinity Group

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