

# Kayla Rodriguez Graff

## Issac Rodriguez

Co-Founders, SweetBio

**Siblings Kayla Rodriguez Graff, MBA and Isaac Rodriguez, PhD are co-founders of SweetBio**, a Memphis, Tennessee based, commercial-ready medical device company with FDA-cleared, honey-incorporated wound care products.

Kayla is a thought-provoking business leader specializing in disruptive business models. Her diverse background includes 4 years of medical device venture development and 6 years customer experience and operations strategy at Target Corp., supported by her MBA and Cornell Project Management education. She brings a fresh perspective to the medical device space and spearheaded raising \$4M for SweetBio to support product development through FDA clearance (achieved May 2019). Kayla's ability to build critical relationships and set strategy has led to strategic partnership relationships that will propel SweetBio into national commercialization.

Some of Kayla's notable achievements are being recognized as **Memphis Business Journal's Top 40 Under 40 in 2019**, Memphis Flyer 20 under 30 in 2017 and One Smart Cookie by Girl Scouts of America, has presented at the U.S. Senate on Women Entrepreneurship, and was featured in a national television commercial for Prudential Insurance. Kayla currently serves as a board member of Epicenter, LifeScienceTN and WomenUnited and formerly Shelby County Mayor Luttrell's Young Professional Board, Greater Memphis Chamber of Commerce SoundCheck Young Professionals board, Mayor Strickland Transitional team and American Cancer Society Young Professional Board.

Dr. Isaac Rodriguez is a Gates Millennium Scholar and earned a B.S. M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Biomedical Engineering. After graduating with his doctorate, he moved to Memphis where he spent 2.5 years as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Memphis. While at the UofM, Dr. Rodriguez co-invented the honey biomaterial technology that has now become the basis for SweetBio's product lines.

Some of Dr. Rodriguez's notable achievements include serving as the keynote speaker for NASA Langley's 2017 Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration, an invited speaker in 2018 for The Empowerment Conference, being cited over 750 times in academic journals, being named as one of Memphis' Top 40 Under 40 in 2015 by The Memphis Business Journal, and being honored in 2017 by his alma mater (VCU) as a Top 10 Alumni (out of 80,000) to graduate in the last 10 years. Dr. Rodriguez currently serves as a board member of New Memphis Institute, Seeding Success, Setting the Standard (STS) Enterprises, the Collegiate School of Memphis, and formerly Shelby County Mayor Luttrell's Young Professional Board and Mayor Strickland Transitional team.

SweetBio is proud to have expanded their team in 2017 with their COO, Axel Strombergsson, who brings a depth and breadth of expertise in operations, manufacturing, project management and more. Martin Klazmer joined the team in 2019 as Vice President of Commercialization and brings a decade of experience in launching and scaling medical device products. Kevin Graff rounds out their team with deep financial, accounting, private equity and M&A expertise as their part-time Chief Financial Officer. SweetBio is an alum of the Springboard Enterprises Health Innovation Hub 2019 cohort, graduate of the ZeroTo510 and LaunchTN accelerator programs, was a finalist in Steve Case's 2018 Rise of the Rest tour

and recognized by Inside Memphis Business as a 2016 Innovation Award winner. SweetBio was recently highlighted on 60 Minutes and Forbes.