

BioNTX Brings Texas Two-Step to BIO 2023



(from left to right) Mark Tengler and Sara Rice, Spectrix Therapeutics, Aaron BenComo, MD and Kathleen M. Otto, BioNTX at the Texas Pavilion

The North Texas booth in the Texas Pavilion proved to be a hot stop-over for scientists, researchers, and corporate executives alike. Thousands of life sciences professionals from over 30 countries and countless US states visited the Texas Pavilion showcasing the growing opportunities in every corner of our state.

North Texas, Austin, San Antonio, Houston and El Paso were all in attendance looking to attract new enterprise by touting our rich culture, accessible grant funding, business climate and favorable tax structures. “Everything [you] can do in Cambridge, we can do in Texas,” said Victoria Ford, President of the Texas Healthcare & Bioscience Institute. “And everything you need... is less expensive in Texas.” Clearly, Texas was a big winner at this year’s BIO and North Texas is on the cutting edge!

[Learn more about BIO](#)



Symposium Shines Light on the Future

Johnson & Johnson

INNOVATION



(from left to right) Marian Nakada, PhD, Johnson & Johnson Innovation, Reetika Bhardwaj, PhD, ARCH Venture Partners, Joan Martinez, PhD, Columbia Technology Ventures and Sabriya Stukes, PhD, Indie Bio

The Blue Knight Symposium brought a massive turnout during BIO 2023 this year, drawing hundreds of interested investors and researchers wanting to catch a glimpse into the future of infectious disease and public health.

The joint initiative between Johnson & Johnson Innovation (JLABS) and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), part of the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; has been universally hailed as a transformative project to better health in the US.

Aiming to stimulate the innovation and development of science and technologies that may improve health security and response by supporting companies focused on public health threats and emerging infectious diseases; the Blue Knight Symposium was a cannot-miss event.

Using Molecular Cooperativity to Revolutionize Cancer Diagnosis & Treatment

onconano
medicine



Tian Zhao, PhD, MS

OncoNano Medicine has been hard at work the past few years, preparing a pipeline of technology and therapies that rival many other well-established pharmaceutical operations. Though this has not always been the case, as Dr. Tian Zhao, VP of Research and Development explains.

Tian is not only OncoNano's first employee, but he is also one of the inventors of the technologies that OncoNano Medicine is built upon. Founded in 2014, with an initial CPRIT grant totaling somewhere around \$6M, OncoNano Medicine was born in a lab at UT Southwestern and was focused largely on developing its technology to image solid tumors during surgery.

"In the early days, we rented a tiny cleanroom space at UT Southwestern and handled all of our own GMP manufacturing", Tian recalls. When asked why to manufacture all your own product in the early stages, Tian simply replies "To de-risk the program and save time". Hard work to say the least. Originally from Wuhan, China; Texas holds a special place in his heart. Sitting in his office in Dallas, he remembers, "Texas was the first place I landed, it's where I met my wife, it's where I got my Ph.D, and it's where my children were born."

The future certainly seems bright for OncoNano with Dr. Zhao behind the science. Last December, OncoNano received a Breakthrough Therapy Designation from the FDA for the real-time cancer imaging agent, now called pegsitacianine, based upon meaningful data from its Phase 2 clinical trials in metastatic disease of the peritoneum. Additionally, OncoNano received FDA authorization to proceed with clinical trials of its first therapeutic candidate, a STING agonist using OncoNano's micelle platform, and will begin dosing in its Phase 1 trial in the coming few months. "OncoNano's technology portfolio was designed for a multitude of differing applications ranging from imaging to cancer therapeutics to STING and pH modulation, which creates a lot of pipeline opportunities for us," says Dr. Zhao.

Nanomedicine looks and sounds great, though there are still plenty of roadblocks in the way of its success. "One of the issues with nanomedicine," Tian states, "is the public skepticism surrounding it. We make it a priority to validate our data and then educate". Everyday new steps are taken to ensure the success of the pipeline at OncoNano, where the goal is unquestionably helping patients and changing the way medicines are

developed.

[Learn more about OncoNano Medicine](#)

BioLabs Begins New Era of Expansion in NTX



The life sciences ecosystem in Dallas has gotten a boost with the announcement of plans for the development of Bridge Labs, the next phase of Pegasus Park in Dallas by J. Small Investments, Montgomery Street Partners, and an affiliate of Lyda Hill Philanthropies.

The facility will feature 135,000 square feet of purpose-built research and development space. Bridge Labs is adjacent to the 37,000-square-foot BioLabs facility that opened in 2022 and will feature the first institutional-quality, non-incubator space in the region with best-in-class specifications such as upgraded power, HVAC and gas service, and state-of-the-art laboratory amenities and shared spaces.

[Learn more about Bridge Labs](#)



FDA Announces Additional Steps to Modernize Clinical Trials

The U.S. FDA is announcing the availability of a draft guidance with updated recommendations for good clinical practices (GCPs) aimed at modernizing the design and conduct of clinical trials, making them more agile without compromising data integrity or participant protections.

“A more robust clinical trial ecosystem that is capable of producing reliable evidence more efficiently may support more informed decision-making in developing medical products to help patients,” said FDA Commissioner Robert M. Califf, M.D. “These draft recommendations propose a major step forward in this work. Building quality into the design and conduct of trials and encouraging the use of innovative trial designs and health technologies are essential to truly advance clinical trials and generate meaningful results.”

[Read full press release](#)

Why Gene Therapies Must Go Virus-Free

nature



Gene therapies have made spectacular progress in delivering new cures for previously intractable disease, however they remain the world’s most expensive treatments. Now companies like RedCode Therapeutics are now using new delivery technologies that promise not only to overcome the limitations of viral vectors but to slash production costs too.

Virus-based vectors — particularly those based on adeno-associated virus (AAV) and lentiviruses — have dominated the first wave of gene therapies to gain regulatory approval. But their widespread deployment in dozens of clinical trials has exposed their limitations. To provide a viable alternative, non-viral technologies need to satisfy certain well-defined requisites. They must accommodate a large payload and deliver it to specific organs, lack immunogenicity to allow redosing, and have a high safety margin and low production costs. Although most are still preclinical, the field is gaining momentum.

[Read full press release](#)

Caris Life Sciences Unveils First-in-Class AI Research Platform



Caris Life Sciences®, the leading molecular science, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning technology company actively developing and delivering innovative solutions to revolutionize healthcare, and ConcertAI, the leading oncology real-world evidence data and AI technology company, announced an expanded translational sciences and clinical development solutions partnership.

[Read full press release](#)

Lantern Pharma Goes Global to Develop Breakthrough Antibody



Lantern Pharma Inc., a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company using its proprietary RADR® artificial intelligence and machine learning platform to transform the cost, pace, and timeline of oncology drug discovery and development, announced it will be leveraging its AI platform, RADR®, in a research collaboration with Bielefeld University (Germany) to develop antibody-drug conjugates (ADCs) with high therapeutic and antitumor potential.

The collaboration will leverage insights from Lantern's recently developed RADR® AI ADC module in combination with research from Professor Norbert Sewald, Ph.D., the principal investigator for Bielefeld and leader of Magicbullet:Reloaded, a European consortium focused on developing novel drug delivery mechanisms, including ADCs.

[Read full press release](#)

Colossal Biosciences Named XB100 Deep Tech Company



Colossal Biosciences was named one of the best and brightest companies that are commercializing scientific research into deep technology and impacting society in a profound way.

The XB100 is the definitive ranking of the world's top 100 private deep technology companies, brought to you by XPRIZE and Bessemer Venture Partners.

[Read full press release](#)

Mark Cuban Cost Plus Partners with Coherus to Make HUMIRA® Biosimilar



Mark Cuban Cost Plus Drug Company, PBC and Coherus BioSciences, Inc., announced plans to offer Mark Cuban Cost Plus Drug Company customers YUSIMRY (adalimumab-aqvh), a biosimilar of HUMIRA® (adalimumab injection), in July 2023.

"Humira is the top-selling medicine of all time, but for those without insurance or who are underinsured, this therapy and other biologic medicines have been out of reach due to price," said Alex Oshmyansky, Co-Founder and CEO, Mark Cuban Cost Plus Drug Company.

[Read full press release](#)

Baylor Doubles Down on STEM+ Camp Launch



(from left to right) Baylor University Professors:
Suzanne Nesmith, PhD and Sandi Cooper, PhD

Blasting off this summer is Baylor University's STEM+ Camp Launch, designed for incoming fifth grade students from three Transformation Waco schools. Sponsored by the Baylor School of Education, with collaboration from the School of Engineering and Computer Science and funding from Waco's Cooper Foundation, the program consists of three one-week sessions, taking place June 5th - 23rd.

STEM+ Camp Launch introduces students to STEM subjects and gives them the "opportunity to engage with STEM in a positive way and see that it could be a potential career path," said camp co-director and co-founder Sandi Cooper, PhD, professor of mathematics education at Baylor.

[Learn more about Baylor's STEM+ Camp Launch](#)

Vaccines to Stop Cancer Spread? UNTHSC Graduate Thinks So



Michael Donkor, PhD

Michael Donkor, PhD, wants to improve the chances of survival for cancer patients by stopping the spread of tumors throughout the body. He created a vaccine that stops the spread of breast cancer to the lungs. This research, conducted for his dissertation research, was successful in mouse models and could be expanded to test the vaccine in other pre-clinical settings.

The research could lead to more breakthroughs that increase survivorship among patients who are diagnosed with primary breast tumors.

[Read full press release](#)

UTA Researcher Investigates

Cardiovascular Health Disparities



Liao Yue, PhD, MPH

A University of Texas at Arlington researcher hopes to harness the power of technology to help an underserved group of Americans on the path to a healthier future.

Liao Yue, assistant professor of kinesiology and director of the Physical Activity and Wearable Sensors Research Lab, has received a Career Development Award from the American Heart Association to study cardiovascular disease in Black American women.

“The U.S. has a stressful and unhealthy environment for Black women that makes it harder to start and keep a healthy lifestyle,” Liao said. “If we want to create programs to help Black women adopt a healthy lifestyle, we must address the challenges they face in their daily lives.”

[Read full press release](#)

Dallas ISD and UTSW's Biomedical Prep School Is Making Waves, One Year In



When Dallas ISD opened its Biomedical Preparatory at UTSW campus last year, it received 530 applications for 128 spots. This year, applications blew that ratio out of the water. The school started in 2022 with pre-kindergarten through first grade and is adding one grade per year, meaning just 44 additional spots are opening up for the 23-24 school year. So how many applications did the school receive for those 44 spots? 517.

“We have a first-class biomedical research institution that has incredible intellectual and physical resources that allow us to provide for the academic enrichment of young children,” Ginsburg told UTSW’s CenterTimes. “I wanted UT Southwestern to expand access to its resources in nontraditional ways for the benefit of the community.”

[Read full press release](#)

UTSW Receives NIH Funding to Propel Heart Muscle Cell Regeneration Research



Ongoing research at UT Southwestern Medical Center exploring the ability of human heart

cells to regenerate after a heart attack or other cardiovascular event will be accelerated by a new award from the National Institutes of Health.

The five-year, \$10.7 million program project grant will fund studies to investigate how the immune system regulates the heart's ability to regenerate and respond to injury. The project builds upon more than a decade of research at UTSW into heart regeneration led by Hesham Sadek, MD., PhD, Professor of Internal Medicine, Biophysics, and Molecular Biology at UTSW, that has resulted in a number of discoveries.

"If successful, this could lead to the discovery of new therapeutic targets for the treatment of heart failure in humans," Dr. Sadek said.

[Learn more about UTSW's heart regeneration research](#)

BioNTX Tech Transfer Office Showcase

Now accepting applications until August 21, 2023



Texas academic institutions who have technologies available for licensing, collaboration and/or acquisition have the opportunity to pitch their best intellectual property to an audience of industry leaders and investors at BioNTX's [iC³ Life Science Summit!](#)

Application requirements

- Early-stage development and/or most promising intellectual property
- Recommended from their respective Tech Transfer Office (TTO)
- Non-confidential information only
- Each academic institution can submit up to 2 separate applications

[Apply now!](#)

Jones Lang LaSalle Maintains Rank in Top 200 of Fortune 500



Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), a leading real estate firm accelerating the growth of the bioscience ecosystem in North Texas, announced that it placed at number 190 on the prestigious Fortune 500 list, which ranks the 500 largest companies based in the United States by total revenue for their respective fiscal years.

"Around the world, JLL is committed to providing clients with outstanding real estate advice and solutions, combining industry leading talent, technology and data-driven insights," said Christian Ulbrich, JLL CEO. "Our continued recognition as one of the top 200 companies in the Fortune 500 list reflects our resiliency and strong performance even during times of geopolitical challenge and economic volatility."

[Read full press release](#)

High-Risk, High-Reward Research Accelerating in Texas

Applications open June 27, 2023



TAMEST *Texas Academy of Medicine,
Engineering, Science & Technology*

Apply to TAMEST's The Hill Prizes, funded by Lyda Hill Philanthropies, which will celebrate top Texas innovators and researchers whose work could significantly impact science and society in five categories: Medicine, Engineering, Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences and Technology.

Each of the five prize recipients will receive \$500,000 in funding from Lyda Hill Philanthropies to accelerate their work.

[Learn more about The Hill Prizes](#)

Submit Your Abstracts for CPRIT's Innovations in Cancer Prevention & Research Conference VI

Abstracts due July 31, 2023



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH
INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

Submit your abstracts to the Innovations in Cancer Prevention and Research Conference VI. Each accepted abstract will be presented as a poster during poster sessions to be held on each day of the conference with ample time for attendees to talk with presenters.

CPRIT's Innovations in Cancer Prevention and Research Conference VI will highlight the exceptional progress across cancer research, prevention, and product development at medical and academic research centers, in communities, and at companies around Texas. The conference will feature informative sessions on CPRIT-funded initiatives on computational biology and modeling for drug discovery, the use of artificial intelligence in imaging, the expansion of drug development resources and biomanufacturing facilities in Texas, and immunology and vaccine development in cancer.

[Submit your abstracts now](#)

HSC Next SBIR Phase 0 Program



The HSC Next SBIR Phase 0 Program provides innovative Tarrant County companies with one-on-one guidance, beginning with technology assessment. Select companies will enter a comprehensive one-month, cohort-based program that meets weekly and guides

them through the grant writing processes. Additionally, participants receive one-on-one mentorship with SBIR experts that help founders fine-tune their proposals to increase the likelihood of receiving federal funding.

[Apply now](#)

Accepting Application for TechFW's Accelerator Program

TECHFW

Apply to TechFW's Accelerator Program to get connected to resources you need to commercialize your technology. The cohort will begin tentatively on September 13.

**Applications due
September 5, 2023**

[Apply now](#)

Advancing Women-Led Technology to the Next Level of Innovation

Applications due June 23, 2023

TECHFW

 **TEXAS WOMAN'S
UNIVERSITY**

TechFW and the TWU's Center for Women Entrepreneurs have designated 5 awards for women entrepreneurs to participate in either the ThinkLab™ Accelerator or SmartStart™ Incubator program at TechFW, which will give them access to entrepreneurial coaching and provide innovators opportunities to take their ideas to market.

[Apply now](#)

Save the Date! iC³ Life Science Summit

iC³ = Innovation x Capital x Collaboration x Commercialization

BIONTX

Please join BioNTX and network with us and the bioscience and healthcare innovation community. Texas industry leaders discuss business strategies, and the broad spectrum of Texas bioscience research in our growing ecosystem.

[Register now](#)

[Reserve a hotel room for iC³](#)

Thank you 2023 sponsors!



HAYNES BOONE



COLLABORATIVE DRUG DISCOVERY



Learn more about our 2023 iC³ Life Science Summit

Upcoming Events & Opportunities in North Texas



WISH Network Series

Join Health Wildcatters at their Women In Science and Healthcare Series Event where they continue to gather, meet like-minded individuals, and learn more about the WISH network. Get involved and hear from their June guest speaker Veena Somareddy, Co-Founder & CEO of Neuro Rehab VR.

June 19, 2023

[Learn more here](#)



Dallas Cup of Capital

Join Capital Factory at their most popular coffee networking event that makes it easy for you to meet your next co-founder, investor, mentor, or Capital Factory champion.

June 20, 2023

[Learn more here](#)



Health Supernova

Join Capital Factory to network with meaningful connections among health tech innovators at their newest center of gravity for biotech innovation — Pegasus Park.

June 20, 2023

[Learn more here](#)

Post-Legislative Session Update & Healthcare Impact to North Texas

Join ACHE of North Texas to learn about the most recent Texas legislative session and its impact on the health care community in North Texas.

June 20, 2023

[Learn more here](#)



UNTHSC New Instrument Launch

Join 10x Genomics learn more about the expanded capabilities of 10x Genomics assays and the single cell and spatial instruments that enable them.

June 22, 2023

[Learn more here](#)



2023 National Meeting

Join NIIMBL to engage in unparalleled conversations with other key thought leaders around the crucial topics facing our community with confidence that those discussions are protected by the umbrella of NIIMBL confidentiality.

June 27 - 29, 2023

[Learn more here](#)



10 Year Celebration Happy Hour and Art Show

Join Health Wildcatters for a Happy Hour and Art Show as they celebrate their 10th year.

June 27, 2023

[Learn more here](#)



Deep Dive into ASAP 340B's Policy Principles

Join the ASAP's 340B Program for a discussion about the policy solutions that are needed to save the 340B program so that it works for true safety-net providers and the patients they serve.

June 28, 2023

[Learn more here](#)



Taysha Gene Therapies R&D Day

Join LifeSci Events on their virtual R&D Day with Taysha Gene Therapies, who will discuss updates on the investigational TSHA-120 program in GAN and the investigational TSHA-102 program in Rett syndrome.

June 28, 2023

[Learn more here](#)



2023 Chronic Disease Day Kick-off

Join Good Days to celebrate Chronic Disease Day, which will feature remarks from the Chronic Disease Alliance, patient advocates, local and state legislators, and state health agency representatives.

July 7, 2023

[Learn more here](#)

