



# MONTANA BIOSCIENCE ALLIANCE

## BioScience Under the Big Sky Summer Newsletter

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Happy Summer and Welcome to our Summer Newsletter!

Welcome New Members:

Cerium Networks, Billings

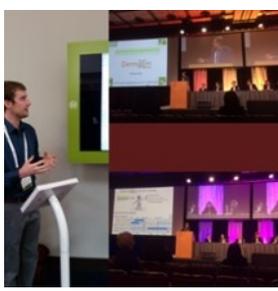
Expesicor LLC, Kalispell

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### MEMBER NEWS

#### MEMBER NEWS

**BELGRADE, Mont., Feb. 22, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – Xtant Medical Holdings, Inc. (NYSE MKT:XTNT),** a leader in the development of regenerative medicine products and medical devices, today announced the appointment of Carl O'Connell as the permanent CEO, effective February 17th, 2017. Mr. O'Connell previously served as president of Xtant since October of 2016 and was appointed as interim CEO on January 21st, 2017. [Read More](#)



### **Philippe Diaz from the University of Montana won the "Shark Tank: Making your Pitch:**

What do investigators/partners look for when evaluating a University-based technology?" at the Society for Investigative Dermatology Annual Meeting on April 26. This is one of the largest meetings for dermatological research with more than 1,500 attendees and more than 1,000 posters. Philippe had five minutes to pitch their technology/company and five minutes to address the panel comments. The poster was presented by Philippe's graduate student, Joachim Veit on April 27 and has been selected for an e-poster presentation and three minute elevator pitch. Go Griz!

### **McLaughlin Research Institute Receives Two Significant Donations**

Great Falls, Montana - June 1, 2017 - McLaughlin Research Institute (MRI) recently received two donations totaling nearly \$1,000,000. The first gift is a charitable remainder trust established by Irving Weissman and the second is a bequest made by the late Leroy Strand. "This is a real vote of confidence in MRI," said Randy Gray, Chair of the Board of Directors. Dr. Michael Kavanaugh, the director of MRI, said "The generous contributions from Irv Weissman and Leroy Strand to the McLaughlin Research Institute will help us move forward with a number of innovative and exciting neurodegenerative disease research projects, including a new clinical research site at the Institute." [Read More](#)

### **Local biotech raises \$15 million for development of opioid alternative** By Lewis Kendall Chronicle Staff Writer

Jan 8, 2017

A Bozeman biotech firm announced it has raised \$15 million to put toward developing a pain medication alternative to opioids.

In addition to the funding, Bozeman-based SiteOne Therapeutics announced a partnership with pharmaceutical giant Amgen, which will assist with the research and development of the company's drug.

"The primary focus of this was obviously the financing of SiteOne to accelerate the buildout of the development team," said SiteOne CEO Stan Abel. "Having access to (Amgen's) neuroscience team and extensive experience is something we can benefit greatly from. These resources really allow us to build the team and accelerate our progress toward clinical development." [Read More](#)

### **Nano Valent Appoints Timothy Enns as Chief Executive Ofcer LOS ANGELS, CA (PRWEB) JANUARY 10,**

2017 Nano Valent Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a development stage cancer focused pharmaceutical company, today announced the appointment of Timothy Enns as the company's new Chief Executive Ofcer and President. In his role, Mr. Enns will be responsible for the execution of Nano Valent's business strategy which entails the development and commercialization of the company's novel Hybrid Polymerized Liposomal Nanoparticle (HPLN) based Antibody-Drug Conjugate (ADC) therapeutics. [Read More](#)

### **Golden Helix: Spearheading Innovation in the Biotech Industry**

The biotech industry, being influenced by many factors, is a rapidly changing climate of cutting edge technology. Golden Helix is at the forefront of innovative bioinformatics and leads the technology industry in the advancement of research in life sciences and translational medicine. With nearly two decades of data analytics experience, Golden Helix is today a premier provider of advanced analytics capabilities in the genomics market space focused on three aspects: value, quality, and customer

## UNIVERSITY NEWS

### **MSU researchers publish findings with implications for rare neurodegenerative disease, now eye clinical trials**

May 16, 2017 – By Evelyn Boswell for the MSU News Service

BOZEMAN - A Montana State University scientist who researches a genetic disorder that leads to blindness and early death is about to take the next step toward offering a solution.

Frances Lefcort, a professor in the Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience in the MSU College of Letters and Science, said she is now in discussions to develop a clinical trial that will test in humans a compound that has already proven itself in mice.

Lefcort was the principal investigator of a new MSU study that discovered that the compound BGP-15 prevents the death of nerve cells and even restores their function.

The findings hold particular promise for people with Familial dysautonomia (FD), a rare condition that disrupts the development of the peripheral nervous system and causes it and retinas to degenerate. The peripheral nervous system, or PNS, connects the central nervous system to limbs and organs.

Lefcort and her team recently published their findings about BGP-15 in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). Lead author was Sarah Ohlen, who earned a doctorate this spring. Ohlen was a graduate student in MSU's Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience in the College of Letters and Science.

[READ MORE](#)

### **UM Sets Research Funding Record for Third Straight Year**

Research continues to surge at a record pace at the University of Montana, with the institution setting a record for external funding for the third year in a row.

UM brought in nearly \$88 million in new funding during the past fiscal year to support homegrown Montana research, entrepreneurship and statewide outreach. This exceeds the previous year's record of \$86 million. [Full Story](#)

### **Master of Science in Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling receives CACREP accreditation**

MSU BILLINGS NEWS SERVICES - The Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) has granted the MSU Billings Master of Science in Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling program full accreditation for a term of eight years. Effective July 1, 2017, CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs) assumed responsibility for continuing the mission and vision of CORE through its accreditation process. Because of the recognition by CORE as a fully accredited program, the MSU Billings CRMHC program has been accepted as a CACREP accredited program for the term of eight years. Dr. Diane Duin, Dean, COHP states "this is the result of very hard work by Dr. Blackwell, Dr. Dell, Karen Mikelson and the REHA Grad Assistant, Patti Mazukiewicz. Their work over many months has been duly recognized by CORE (now CACREP)." Accredited programs provide the following to students:

- recognition that the program has been evaluated and meets or exceeds the highest academic standards
- knowledge that the graduate has met prerequisites for credentialing and is ready for entry into professional practice

understanding that the focus of the program will be on professional counseling.

## INDUSTRY NEWS

**Senate Passage of FDA User Fee Package Important Victory for Patients, Medical Innovation****Washington, DC (August 3, 2017)**

Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) President and CEO James C. Greenwood issued the following statement regarding passage of the Food and Drug Administration Reauthorization Act (FDARA) by the U.S. Senate today:

"The user fee program reauthorization package passed by the Senate today is an important victory for patients and for the next generation of medical innovation. This legislation will advance patient involvement in drug development and bring patient perspectives more clearly to bear on regulatory decisions. It also ensures that the FDA continues to have the resources necessary to carry out its critical human drug review programs, and takes steps to modernize and improve the clinical trial process, which remains the most time-consuming, complex and expensive stage of drug development.

[Read More](#)

On August 18, 2017, the President signed into law the Food and Drug Administration Reauthorization Act (FDARA), which includes authorization of PDUFA through September 2022

A first: Drug lowers heart risks by curbing inflammation by MARILYNN MARCHIONE AP Chief Medical Writer Updated Aug 27, 2017

For the first time, a drug has helped prevent heart attacks by curbing inflammation, a new and very different approach than lowering cholesterol, the focus for many years. People on the drug also had surprisingly lower cancer death rates, especially from lung cancer. An anti-tumor effect is an exciting possibility, but it needs much more study because the heart experiment wasn't intended to test that.

Doctors say the results on the drug, canakinumab (can-uh-KIN-yoo-mab), open a new frontier. Many heart attacks occur in people whose cholesterol is normal and whose main risk is chronic inflammation that can lead to clogged arteries. [Full Story](#)

**WHAT:National Institutes of Health (NIH) scientists have filled a research gap by developing a laboratory model to study ticks that transmit flaviviruses, such as Powassan virus.**

Powassan virus was implicated in the death of a New York man earlier this year. The unusual model involves culturing organs taken from Ixodes scapularis ticks and then infecting those organ cultures with flaviviruses, according to researchers at Rocky Mountain Laboratories, part of NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). The researchers say the culture model will greatly increase knowledge about how flaviviruses infect ticks and could become a tool to evaluate medical countermeasures against tick-borne viruses. WHO:Marshall E. Bloom, M.D., chief of NIAID's Biology of Vector-Borne Viruses Section, is available to comment on this study. CONTACT:To schedule interviews, please contact Ken Pekoc, (301) 402-1663, kpekoc@niaid.nih.gov.

**EMPLOYMENT AND FUNDING**

**The National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) has several open Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program funding opportunities.** SBIR and STTR funding supports small business entrepreneurs working on the advancement and commercialization of translational research technologies. NCATS is particularly interested in applications focused on drug discovery and development; biomedical, clinical and health research informatics; and clinical research management.

The next deadline to apply for the following opportunities is Sept. 5, 2017, 5:00 p.m. local time: 2017 Omnibus Grant Solicitation\*

- SBIR: PA-17-302 (R43/R44)
- STTR:PA-17-303(R41/R42)

Development of Highly Innovative Tools and Technology for Analysis of Single Cells

- SBIR: PAR-17-147 (R43/R44)
- STTR: PAR-17-148 (R41/R42)

#### Platform Delivery Technologies for Nucleic Acid Therapeutics

- SBIR: PAR-17-035 (R43/R44)
- STTR: PAR-17-036 (R41/R42)

#### Tools for Cell Line Identification

- SBIR: PA-16-186 (R43/R44)

\* For the 2017 Omnibus Grant Solicitation, NCATS will not accept SBIR/STTR applications that include clinical trials.

Visit the NCATS website to learn more about funding opportunities for small businesses, as well as eligibility requirements and research priorities. Contact NCATS SBIR and STTR program staff to discuss your research idea or to schedule a one-on-one meeting with a program officer.

Connect with us! Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. Use #NCATSsbir and join the online conversation.

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NCATS' SBIR and STTR programs are engines of innovation for developing and commercializing tools, technologies and intervention platforms to support the creation of new therapeutics and diagnostics. SBIR and STTR are government set-aside programs for domestic small businesses to engage in research and development that has the potential for commercialization and public benefit.

#### ITHS Translational Pilot Award with a Special Emphasis on Diabetes 2018-2019 RFA

ITHS is offering a Translational Pilot Award with a Special Emphasis on Diabetes in conjunction with the Diabetes Research Center to support studies that address impactful research issues within the translational science spectrum, with the long-term goal of improving the health of patients with diabetes.

Examples might include pre-clinical work with animal models, clinical observational or implementation studies, or public health outcomes research related to diabetes and its complications. [Read More](#)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

**Montana and the Montana BioScience Alliance were well represented at the BIO International Convention, June 17-19, 2017 in San Diego, Ca.** with a 10 x 20 booth. Keeping busy in the booth were Ken Fichtler, Andy Shirliff and Katie Willcockson from the state, Melanie Schwarz from Big Sky EDA, Sharon Peterson, Ron Zook, Montana BioScience Alliance and Ninuo Xia from MSU. Montana companies represented were Swan Valley Medical, Microbion, Montana Molecular, Saje Pharma and others.

BIO 2017 drew 16,123 biotechnology industry leaders from 48 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and 73 countries to San Diego, the "genomics capital" of the world. As the largest global biotechnology event, BIO 2017 provided attendees with unique perspectives on the immense opportunities and complex challenges ahead for the industry. David Cameron, the former Prime Minister of the UK, and Ann Romney, the wife of Mitt Romney and a staunch patient advocate delivered keynote addresses that touched on challenges in both the political and health arenas. [Read More](#)

**San Diego, CA (June 20, 2017) - The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) released "Bioscience Innovation in the States: Legislation and Job Creation through Public-Private Partnerships" today at the 2017 BIO International Convention.**

The fourth edition of the Best Practices Guide is the bioscience industry's leading comprehensive analysis of state legislative and regulatory initiatives in support of economic development was released [Read Here](#) At the convention, cabinet-level appointees representing Texas, Massachusetts,

Rhode Island, and Puerto Rico participated in the report's release by discussing bioscience industry economic development and state policies that have proven successful in assisting industry growth.

**The Montana BioScience Annual Meeting took place at the MSU Billings College of Allied Health Professions, July 12, 2017.** New board members elected are: Stan Abel, SiteOne Therapeutics, Jay Evans, Inimmune, and Tim Layton, Genentech. Officers elected were Stan Abel, President/Chair, Ron Zook, Vice President/Chair, Chris Aageson, Secretary and Carol Beam, Treasurer. Board members reelected to 3 year terms are: Janelle Booth, Joe Fanguy, Paul Cook, Chad DeLong and Don Beeman.

Following the meeting, the group participated in the Governor's Montana Innovation Symposium. Ron Zook moderated and Stan Abel, John Delaney, Rob Goodwin, Don Beeman, Dave Burkhart, Mike Kauffman and Tim Layton participated in a breakout group, "Bioscience Innovation under the Big Sky" The Symposium was a great networking opportunity.

**Victory in Montana Governor Bullock Signs Biosimilars Legislation. Thank you Rep. Ron Ehli and Sen. Mary McNally for your sponsorship!**

For years now, many arthritis patients have utilized biologic medications to great effect. Biologics have allowed those with arthritis, as well as many other chronic diseases, to stabilize their condition and help them better quality lives. Now, due to innovation, new medications are coming to market which could provide arthritis patients with more, and potentially less expensive, options. These new medications are called "biosimilar" medications which are similar to, but not exact copies of name brand biologics. [Read More](#)



Sharon Peterson represented the Montana BioScience Alliance at the BIO fly-in in Washington DC on April 4th and 5th 2017. In addition to informative meetings regarding national bioscience issues, meetings were held with Senator Tester and Senator Daines and their staffs. BIO has put together a toolkit of materials you can use to hopefully help encourage your members to sign up for BIOAction. The toolkit includes an email (both HTML and PDF) as well as several different web banners that can be downloaded. The toolkit is located online at <https://www.bio.org/bio-action-toolkit>. BIO Fly-In Policy Priorities Document [Here](#)

On April 13, 2017 a very successful meeting - of the newly formed Bozeman Chapter of the Montana BioScience Alliance - took place at the Takeda facility in Bozeman. Special thanks to Brit Fontenot, City of Bozeman, Paul Reichart, Prospera, Alistair Stewart, MMEC, Becky Maharin and Kathy Jutila, MSU for organizing. And special thanks to all who attended - especially Andreas Scherer, Golden Helix who stepped up to take the lead. Looking forward to working closely with this group to grow bioscience in the Gallatin Valley. An organizing meeting was held August 17 at Microbion in Bozeman.

## Save the Date as the Rocky Mountain Life Science Investor & Partnering Conference

returns in 2017 to Vail, CO!

October 2 - Conference Arrival and Opening Reception

October 3 - All Day Conference and Partnering

Registration and Presenting company applications open early 2017 - stay tuned for more details. We're bringing together leading investors, emerging companies and senior executives to cultivate partnerships within our industry.

The Rocky Mountain region is the largest and most advanced area between both coasts

[More information](#)

### CLASSIFIEDS



BIO Business Solutions - Delivering savings to biotech companies

Thousands of biotech and related companies nationwide save money every day on essential products and services through an excellent cost-savings program offered by the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), the international organization that represents the biotechnology industry. Through its partnership with BIO, Montana BioScience Alliance offers its members the opportunity to take advantage of several of the organization's BIO Business Solutions programs. These include:

- \* [Business insurance](#) (clinical trials, product, property & casualty) from the Chubb Group of Insurance Companies
- \* [Packaged & Bulk Gases from AIRGAS](#) Healthcare
- \* [Secure Document](#) sharing and virtual data from ShareVault
- \* [Moving and relocation](#) services from Humboldt
- \* [Laboratory Supplies, Equipment and Chemicals](#) from VWR
- \* [Risk Solutions, Executive Liability Insurance](#) from AON
- \* [Office Supplies](#), Furniture, Equipment and Technology Products/Design, Print and Ship Services from Office Depot
- \* [Environmental Services](#) Environmental Services from Clean Harbors
- \* [Shipping Services from UPS](#)
- \* [Workwear Services from UniFirst](#)
- \* [Cleanroom Services from UniClean](#)
- \* [News and Business Information](#) and Multi Media Distribution from Business Wire
- \* [Nikon Research Grade Microscope Systems](#)
- \* [Refurbished Lab Equipment from ALT](#)
- \* [Gene Sequencing Solutions from Illumina](#)

For more information on these excellent cost-savings programs, please visit <http://bbs.bio.org/content/montana-bioscience-alliance-mba>



*The Montana Bioscience Alliance serves as a hub for Montana's biotechnology companies, entrepreneurs, laboratories, hospitals, clinics and universities to commercialize, grow and sustain globally competitive bioscience companies -- ultimately to create high-quality jobs and economic opportunity in Montana.*

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