New biotech company grows from MCG diabetes and genomic research

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AUGUSTA, Ga. - A new biotech company has grown out of laboratory and clinical studies at the Medical College of Georgia with the goal of improving the diagnosis and treatment of diabetes and cancer.

Dr. Jin-Xiong She, director of the MCG Center for Biotechnology and Genomic Medicine, is president and CEO of the new Jinfiniti Biosciences LLC, housed in the MCG's Life Sciences Business Development Center, a turnkey incubator for these type of startup companies. Dr. Richard A. McIndoe, the center's associate director, is Jinfiniti's vice president for operations and information technology.

Jinfiniti provides a variety of high-throughput scientific services including nucleic acid isolation, genomic analysis, antibody production, immunoassays, medicinal chemistry and toxicity evaluation for academic and pharmaceutical institutions. The company also is developing biomarkers that will enable simple urine or blood tests for early disease detection and monitoring of treatment outcomes. Additionally, the company is developing new drugs and companion biomarkers for personalized medicine.

Dr. Charles Nawrot, MCG associate vice president for technology transfer and economic development, called She's company a logical outgrowth of his science which has focused on translational studies such as identifying high-risk genes for type 1 diabetes then studying in humans how they interact with the environment to cause disease.

"Dr. She's research is at the forefront of diagnosing and treating diabetes and cancer," Nawrot said. "Jinfiniti Biosciences will be the vehicle by which his biomarker discoveries will be made available to the public. Soon we will have patient-specific therapies that result from his research into the molecular basis of these diseases."

Moving laboratory findings into clinical practice is a major thrust of groups like the National Institutes of Health but the transition is a tough one, said She, Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholar in Genomic Medicine.

"There are many wonderful scientific discoveries but the vast majority never translate into medical practice." She wants to help scientists close that gap. "Very few people are going to knock on your door to further develop the technology. That is what startup companies are trying to do: take discoveries to the next step so that big companies become interested."

She's new company has financial support from the Georgia Research Alliance Venture Lab Fund and two extramural research contracts. Jinfiniti also is pursuing angel investors and venture capital. The Office of Technology Transfer and Economic Development, MCG Research Institute and administration also have been exceedingly supportive, She said.

He is a little nervous about the opportunity but happy to take on the challenge.

"What impresses me the most about Dr. She is his drive and dedication to research and building this new company," Nawrot said. "Nothing will stop him short of success. I'm so glad that the MCG incubator can be a part of Jinfiniti's growth."

SOURCE [2]

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