

SciTech e-Merging News

Volume 3, Issue 2

Bio Blurb

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITORS:

Greetings, dear readers! Below please find the latest issue of the BioBlurb. As always, we encourage attorneys, law students, and industrial professionals to submit biotech-related stories of interest to the following e-mail addresses. In this issue, learn what road blocks induced pluripotent stem cells are facing now, how a protein is successfully targeting leukemia cells, and what Tuesday's Supreme Court ruling means for vaccine product liability.

Thank you,

Neil Cooper
coopern2011@lawnet.ucla.edu

Mark Metzke
metzke2011@lawnet.ucla.edu

Also find the BioBlurb on Facebook and LinkedIn (search "ABA SciTech" on the following pages)!

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CONTRIBUTOR CREDITS FOR THIS WEEK:

Many thanks to Hugh Wellons for his story contribution this week!

RESEARCH, BREAKTHROUGHS, NEW DIRECTIONS

"Protein and microRNA Block Cellular Transition Vital to Metastasis" Like a bounty hunter returning escapees to custody, a cancer-fighting gene converts organ cells that change into highly mobile stem cells back to their original, stationary state, according to ScienceDaily (Feb. 25, 2011).

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110225164707.htm>

"Nanoparticles help improve survival after blood loss" Scientists have used tiny particles called nanoparticles to improve survival after

life-threatening blood loss. The advance by scientists at Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University could improve battlefield and trauma care. Nanoparticles containing nitric oxide (NO) were infused into the bloodstream of hamsters, where they helped maintain blood circulation and protect vital organs, according to Yahoo! News (Feb. 23, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/4m8srrg>

"Melanoma-seeking nanoparticle enters testing" Researchers are targeting melanoma with a nanoparticle that's been in development for more than 10 years. The nanoparticle is designed to not only hunt down cancer, but also to highlight its spread through the body, according to FierceBiotech (Feb. 22, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/4g3vtwh>

"Reprogrammed Stem Cells Hit a Roadblock: Reprogramming Cells Leads to Genomic Aberrations" A study that has just been published in the journal *Cell Death and Differentiation*, to be followed by two articles in the journal *Nature*, is dampening the hopes of using induced pluripotent stem cells. Conducted by the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Geneva and the European Institute of Oncology in Milan, with the participation of Trono's laboratory, it concludes that these reprogrammed cells exhibit a "genomic instability" that appears to be caused by the process used to return the cells to their embryonic state, according to ScienceDaily (Feb. 22, 2011).

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110221071528.htm>

"Erg Gene Key to Blood Stem Cell 'Self-Renewal'" Scientists from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute have begun to unravel how blood stem cells regenerate themselves, identifying a key gene required for the process, according to ScienceDaily (Feb. 22, 2011).

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110216110542.htm>

"Scientists ID and engineer leukemia-fighting protein" Scientists have identified a protein that's crucial to the immune system's ability to fight leukemia cells--and bioengineered a version of that protein that selectively binds to the cancer cells and kills them within 24 hours, according to FierceBiotech (Feb. 22, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/46nzzxv>

"Nano-sized vaccines" MIT engineers have designed a new type of nanoparticle that could safely and effectively deliver vaccines for diseases such as HIV and malaria, according to MIT News (Feb. 22, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/4uzfzxf>

LAW & POLITICS

"More News on DNA in Forensics" The Genomics Law Report recently noted that DNA profiling has greater public approval in the UK than in America. The UK presently operates the largest DNA database in the

world with over 5 million profiles. Nevertheless, that country has just taken a giant step in the opposite direction, according to the Genomics Law Report (Feb. 22, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/4hdbdgg>

"Studying Aging, and Fearing Budget Cuts" Dr. Richard J. Hodes presides over the nation's prime source of grants for studies of aging at a worrisome time for researchers. Just when the cohort of elderly Americans is surging, many scientists fear that government budget cuts may hamper a broad array of research efforts on Alzheimer's and other diseases of aging – not to mention the eye-catching recent progress on reversing age-related decline in genetically altered mice, according to the New York Times (Feb. 21, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/4c5ueel>

"Supreme Court rules vaccine makers protected from lawsuits" Federal law protects pharmaceutical companies from lawsuits by parents who claim that vaccines harmed their children, the Supreme Court ruled Tuesday, according to the Washington Post (Feb. 22, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/45tzurj>

"FDA's Rules for Copying Amgen, Roche Drugs Coming 'Very Soon'" U.S. regulators plan to unveil rules for reviewing the first copies of biologic medicines "very soon," according to Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Margaret Hamburg, as reported by Bloomberg (Feb. 18, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/4omottk>

MARKET

"AmoyDx Gains CE Mark for EGFR, KRAS, and BRAF Tests" Amoy [Diagnostics](#) obtained CE Mark approval for its [EGFR](#), [KRAS](#), and [BRAF](#) mutation detection kits. All three assays were previously sanctioned in China, according to Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology News (Feb. 25, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/46kuufr>

"Univercell Licenses iPS Academia Technology to Generate iPSC-Derived Cardiomyocytes" [Univercell](#)-Biosolutions negotiated a worldwide nonexclusive license to an induced pluripotent stem cell (iPSC) technology developed by iPS Academia Japan, an affiliate of [Kyoto University](#). The firms expect this initial agreement will be followed by future collaborations, according to Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology News (Feb. 24, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/49udnps>

"Two European cell therapy companies merge" Belgium's TiGenix and Spain's Cellerix, both cell therapy-focused biotechs, have decided to merge their operations. The combined company will have \$33 million on hand to support its pipeline, FierceBiotech (Feb. 25, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/4dmkqb4>

"R&D realignment prompts Roche to dump Transgene HPV pact" Roche has decided to exit its pact to develop and commercialize TG4001 (RG3484), a therapeutic vaccine to treat high grade cervical intraepithelial neoplasia lesions caused by human papillomavirus infection, according to FierceBiotech (Feb. 24, 2011).

<http://tinyurl.com/4jo442b>

Neil Cooper & Mark Metzke
UCLA School of Law
J.D. Candidates - Class of 2011
coopern2011@lawnet.ucla.edu
metzke2011@lawnet.ucla.edu

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