

Showcasing Bioscience in Rhode Island

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GUEST EDITOR

Denice Spero, PhD, is a research professor and co-director of the Institute for Immunology and Informatics at the University of Rhode Island (URI) and a founder of Rhode Island BioScience Leaders.

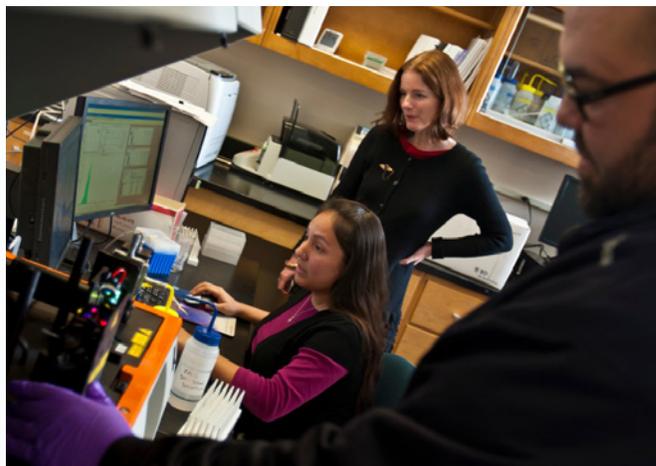
There are a number of well-recognized bioscience companies located in the greater Providence area. They represent a significant and growing source of jobs and future revenue, which promises to play a role in the revitalization and expansion of Rhode Island's economy. In an effort to support these companies and to showcase their research, the *Rhode Island Medical Journal* is highlighting five of these innovative enterprises in this issue. The companies selected are members of the Rhode Island BioScience Leaders organization, and their research spans a wide range of science, from biologics and informatics to innovative coatings for medical devices. They include ProThera Biologics, EpiVax, Tivorsan Pharmaceuticals, BioIntraface, and VeroScience.

COMPANIES AT A GLANCE

PROTHERA BIOLOGICS was founded in 2002 by Yow-Pin Lim, MD/PhD, and Douglas Hixson, PhD, to commercialize their research on Inter-alpha Inhibitor Proteins (IAIP) for the treatment of pathological conditions caused by dysregulated inflammatory response such as sepsis/septic shock, Anthrax infection/intoxication, necrotizing enterocolitis and acute ischemic stroke.

EPIVAX, INC., founded by Anne De Groot, MD, William Martin and attorney Fred Stolle, has developed a set of immunoinformatics tools and is leveraging these tools to design better vaccines, de-immunize protein therapeutics and to develop new immune modulatory therapies (T Regulatory Epitopes) to treat a wide variety of diseases.

TIVORSAN PHARMACEUTICALS, formed by Justin Fallon, PhD, professor of neuroscience at Brown University, is a protein therapeutics company pioneering a unique approach to treating serious neuromuscular disorders, including Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) and Becker muscular dystrophy (BMD). This method, using recombinant human biglycan (rhBGN), is based on 24 years of basic science work in the Fallon laboratory at Brown University.



COURTESY OF DENICE SPERO

Denice Spero, PhD, in rear of photo, is co-director of the Institute for Immunology and Informatics at the University of Rhode Island.

BIOINTRAFACE, founded by John Jarrell, PhD, utilizes platform technologies to create economical metal oxide and polymer materials and coatings to control the bioactivity and antimicrobial properties of medical devices and implants.

VEROSCIENCE, founded by Anthony Cincotta, PhD, is developing drugs to treat metabolic and immune system disorders such as type 2 diabetes, obesity, and cancer through its platform technology, Neuroendocrine Resetting Therapy (NRT). This Tiverton-based company has the distinction of being granted FDA marketing approval for its drug Cycloset in May of 2009. Cycloset is indicated as an adjunct to diet and exercise to improve glycemic control in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus.

The Bioscience industry represents a significant part of the future knowledge economy of Rhode Island, and its continued growth and success will lead us into a future with an expanded business base creating new drugs and devices to ultimately improve human health.