

People

Seminal contributions to understanding neural networks rewarded

Geoffrey Hinton has been named as the first recipient of the David E. Rumelhart Prize for his seminal contributions to the understanding of neural networks.

The award is given by the Glushko-Samuelson Foundation and the Cognitive Science Society for scientific insight, as well as intellectual generosity and effective mentoring, in human cognition.

Robert Glushko, President of the Glushko-Samuelson Foundation said: 'Hinton stands out not only for his own contributions but for his exemplary record in mentoring young scientists.' His insights into the analysis of neural networks are thought to have played a central role in launching the field in the mid-1980s.

Craig Liddell joins new Bioinformatics Research Center board

Craig Liddell, Vice-President of Informatics at Paradigm Genetics (Research Triangle Park, NC, USA), is to join the scientific advisory board of the newly established North Carolina State University Bioinformatics Research Center.

His role will be to advise on the implementation and integration of computer systems into the Center's laboratories and help guide the organization's strategic direction.

Eric Lander, Director of the Whitehead Center for Genome Research and Professor of Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology supported the appointment: 'Graig Liddell will be a great asset to the Center's development as a fully integrated bioinformatics research facility.' He added that 'The future of genomics will be more statistical than it has been. I am pleased to see a group of broadly trained mathematicians directed toward projects such as deciphering the human genome.'

Prior to joining Paradigm in July 1998, Liddell was Associate Professor of Plant Pathology and Principal Investigator at the Computing Research laboratory at New Mexico State University (NM, USA).

New Chief Executive Officer for NewBiotics

NewBiotics (San Diego, CA, USA) has announced that Thomas Mizelle will become the company's new Chief Executive Officer. He will replace Roger Headrick, who will become the Chairman of the Board of Directors for NewBiotics.

Mizelle has 20 years of experience in sales and marketing, business development, operations and management gained through managing both private and public companies. He also has experience of transforming biotech start-ups into product-producing biopharmaceutical companies and this experience should prove invaluable as the company moves towards its first drug in clinical trials.

Previously, Mizelle was Chief Operating Officer at Vion Pharmaceuticals where he negotiated a merger with MelaRx and took the company public. Before this, he was Senior Vice-President of Sales and Marketing at Immunex Corp.

New Scientific Advisory Board for NeoTherapeutics oncology subsidiary

NeoTherapeutics has appointed five key researchers in oncology to the newly formed scientific advisory board of its subsidiary, NeoOncoRx. The board will include Enrico Mihich, Herbert Pinedo, Derek Raghavan, Hagop Kantarjian and Eric Rowinsky.

Mihich is Director of Experimental Therapeutics at the Grace Cancer Drug Center, Roswell Park Cancer Institute and a Research Professor of Pharmacology at the School of Medicine, State University of New York (Buffalo, NY, USA). He was previously Head of the Drug Development and Pharmacology Unit for 16 years and a past President of the American Association of Cancer Research (AACR). He is also a member of the Board of Scientific Advisors of the National Cancer Institute.

Pinedo is Professor of Medical Oncology and Chief of the Department of Medical Oncology at Free University (Amsterdam, The Netherlands). He is also currently Chairman of the Scientific Board of the

European Cancer Centre and past President of the European Society of Medical Oncology. He is also the founder and past Director of the New Drug Development Office of the European Organization for the Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC).

Raghavan is Professor of Medicine and Urology at the University of Southern California (USC) School of Medicine, Chief of the Division of Oncology and Associate Director of Clinical Research for the USC-Norris Cancer Center. He was also a member of the FDA Oncologic Drug Advisory Committee and has served as Chairman of the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Clinical Investigational Review Committee.

Kantarjian is Chairman of the Leukemia Department and Professor of Medicine at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center (TX, USA).

Rowinsky is Director of Clinical Research for the Cancer Therapy and Research Center's Institute for Drug Development and a Clinical Professor of Medicine at the University of Texas Health Science Center (TX, USA).

New CSO and Director of Business Development for Noxxon Pharma

Michael Courtney and Mathias Grote have joined Noxxon Pharma AG (Berlin, Germany) as Chief Scientific Officer and Director of Business Development, respectively.

Courtney was previously Executive Vice-President and Chief Scientific Officer of Transgene SA, establishing corporate strategies and negotiating strategic alliances. His role at Noxxon will involve supporting the selection of clinical candidates and coordinating work undertaken with collaborators.

Meanwhile, Grote comes to the company from 15 years working at Chiron Behring in a number of senior positions including Head of Business Development of the Vaccines Division. His role at Noxxon will involve building on the company's current base of established collaborators.

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