

People

Appointments

New Senior VP for Rigel

Robin Cooper has joined Rigel Pharmaceuticals (<http://www.rigel.com>) as Senior Vice President of Pharmaceutical Sciences. After more than 30 years working at Eli Lilly and Co., Cooper will lead the transition of Rigel's drug candidates into clinical trials. Cooper made the decision to move to Rigel because of 'the excellent quality of the science', and said he is 'looking forward to helping accelerate Rigel's pharmaceutical drug development efforts.' Before his appointment at Rigel, Cooper held various chemistry research positions at Eli Lilly, successfully bringing five compounds into the clinic. Since 1997, he has also been a consultant to several pharma and biotech companies in addition to Rigel, including Pfizer, Procter and Gamble, and Chiron. M. Gower, Chairman and CEO of Rigel, said: 'Robin is an industry veteran whose expertise helps solidify Rigel's execution, assuring that more and better drug candidates move into clinical trial.'

Innate Pharma appoints Director of Clinical Development

Aziz Benzohra has been appointed by Innate Pharma (<http://www.innate-pharma.com>), a biopharmaceutical company that specialises in novel anti-tumor therapies, as Director of Clinical Development. In his new role, Benzohra will be responsible for selecting indications for clinical development and designing and monitoring clinical trials. The appointment comes as the company moves a second product into Phase I of clinical development. Benzohra has a wealth of experience in oncology clinical trials, and was previously Head of the Oncology and Gynaecology Group at Pharmacia. Before that, he was International Medical Project Leader at Pierre Fabre Oncology, and he began his career at Roche in 1994, where he was Project Leader in oncology-haematology until 1999. Hervé Brailly, CEO of Innate Pharma, commented on the

appointment: 'The recruitment of Aziz Benzohra is an important step in Innate Pharma's company strategy. It demonstrates that our process of developing new anti-tumoral medicines is moving forward fast.'

Management changes at ArQule

Chiang J. Li has joined ArQule (<http://www.arqule.com>) as Chief Scientific Officer and Vice President, Head of ArQule Biomedical Institute, where he will be responsible for the company's discovery research. Li was previously Co-founder and Vice President of Research at Cyclis Pharmaceuticals, and has a wealth of expertise in cancer treatments and molecular biology. While at Cyclis, he directed discovery research that led to a portfolio of cancer therapeutics, and culminated in the successful IND filing of the company's first drug candidate, CO501. Li pioneered the concept of Activated Checkpoint Therapy, which forms the scientific basis of ArQule's oncology portfolio. As part of his appointment, Li will take extended leave from both his faculty position at Harvard Medical School, and his attending physician position at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. 'Dr Li will play a critical role in advancing ArQule's portfolio of next-generation anti-cancer candidates, said Stephen A. Hill, President and CEO of ArQule, '[He] is an accomplished scientist with an outstanding track-record of innovations.' Li said he was 'attracted by the exciting opportunities in the new Research and Development programs at ArQule [and] look[s] forward to contributing to the success of ArQule and to helping to improve treatments for cancer patients.'

Awards

Owen Witte wins Villiers award

The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society has awarded its Villiers International Achievement Award to Owen N. Witte, in

recognition of his significant contribution to the understanding of blood cancers and resulting improved therapies. Witte is a researcher at the University of California at Los Angeles Jonsson Cancer Center and an Investigator at the Howard Hughes Institute. He is also a Professor of Molecular and Medical Pharmacology at the David Geffen School of Medicine. Over the past 20 years, Witte's work has led to an understanding of the consequences of the Philadelphia chromosome in chronic myelogenous leukemia (CML) and related acute leukemias. His discovery of the mutant tyrosine kinase that causes CML was the basis for the development of Gleevec, the groundbreaking drug that is now a frontline therapy for CML, and is now being extended to use in the treatment of other cancers. Dwayne Howell, President and CEO of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, said: '[Dr Witte's] work has given hope to thousands of patients, and we are proud to recognize his great accomplishments in the fight against these life-threatening diseases.'

Harvard researcher wins BMS Award

R. John Collier, the Maude and Lillian Presley Professor of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics at Harvard Medical School (<http://www.harvard.edu>), has been awarded the Thirteenth Annual Bristol-Myers Squibb award for Distinguished Achievement in Infectious Diseases Research. The award recognizes his contribution to the understanding of how bacteria cause disease at a molecular level. Collier demonstrated for the first time that a bacterial toxin can enter a mammalian cell and act directly on intracellular machinery, when he discovered that diphtheria toxin prevents protein synthesis. This pioneering research has contributed to the development of vaccines such as that for whooping cough, and now has potential in the field of immunotoxins for cancer, and therapeutic strategies against anthrax.

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