

France, and the Strakan Group (<http://www.strakan.com>) in the UK have recently publicised their merger, which should be completed by summer 2004. The headquarters of the newly merged company will be based in Scotland, UK, with the R&D departments based in Paris, France. Because the merger is one of equals, the merged companies will be re-named.

Business was written by Jayne Carey

## People

### Appointments

#### Raul Rodriguez promoted to Executive VP and Chief Operating Officer at Rigel

Rigel Pharmaceuticals (<http://www.rigel.com>) recently stated that Raul Rodriguez has been appointed as Executive VP and Chief Operating Officer of the company. Rodriguez has been at Rigel for over four years and his most recent position was Senior VP in Business Development and Commercial Operations.

The Chairman and CEO of Rigel, James M. Gower, commented on the recent appointment by saying 'I am very pleased to expand Raul's role within the Rigel team. His broad managerial experience in biotech and pharmaceutical companies will be a key asset to Rigel as it moves forward in implementing its product-driven business strategy'.

Rigel specializes in the discovery and development of small molecule drug candidates for therapies with unmet medical needs, such as hepatitis C, rheumatoid arthritis and asthmatic and allergy-associated conditions.

#### New VP of R&D appointed at Sigma-Aldrich

David A. Smoller has recently been appointed as the new VP of R&D at Sigma-Aldrich (<http://www.sigmaaldrich.com>). As David Julien, President of the Biotechnology Division at Sigma-Aldrich, comments on this appointment 'We are pleased to have such an innovative leader

join our organization. Dr Smoller's commitment to cutting edge research and technology, as well as his broad skill sets in business and science will be beneficial to our department as well as to the entire Company'.

Smoller's background is particularly extensive and will benefit Sigma-Aldrich in several aspects. In 1992, Smoller founded Genome Systems in St Louis, MO, USA, a company that specialized in technologies for genome-related projects. Later, in 2001, Smoller also founded ProteoPlex (<http://www.proteoplex.com>), another company based in St Louis, which focused on functional genomics. At ProteoPlex, Smoller took up the position of CEO and President, before moving to his current position at Sigma-Aldrich.

Sigma-Aldrich is one of the leading companies in the life science and high technology field. This company specializes in biochemical and organic chemical products, in addition to kits for scientific and genomic research, biotechnology, pharmaceutical development, the diagnosis of disease and chemical manufacturing.

#### Avinash Nangia appointed as VP of R&D at Spherics

Spherics (<http://www.sherics.com>), a company that focuses on the application of bioadhesive technologies to assist or improve the non-invasive delivery of small-molecule drugs and biopharmaceuticals, has announced the appointment of Avinash Nangia as the new VP of R&D. Nangia, who has worked in the drug delivery industry for over 13 years, has significant experience in delivering drugs from development to the market at several pharmaceutical companies, including the Alza Corporation (<http://www.alza.com>) and GlaxoSmithKline Canada (<http://www.gsk.ca/en>).

'We are delighted to have Avinash, who brings to Spherics a great track record in applying oral drug delivery technologies to formulate and develop successful products' said Ze'ev Shaked, President and CEO of Spherics. 'This key hire reflects the strong growth of our company and is in line with our R&D strategy to develop super generics based on our bioadhesive oral delivery technologies.'

Nangia comes to Spherics from Andrx Pharmaceuticals (<http://www.andrx.com>), where he served as Director of R&D and

was instrumental in developing new technologies for the company.

### Awards

#### Excellence in Technology Award presented to Ian Wilding

The Frost and Sullivan's esteemed 2004 'Excellence in Technology Award' in the field of drug discovery and development was presented to Ian Wilding, Executive Chairman of Pharmaceutical Profiles (<http://www.pharmprofiles.co.uk>). Pharmaceutical Profiles, based in Nottingham, UK, was recognized for its innovative approach to introduce novel technologies for the early phase of drug development.

#### Alfred P. Sloan, Jr. Prize awarded to Bruce Stillman

Bruce Stillman, president and CEO, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory (<http://www.cshl.org>) in Cold Spring Harbor, NY, has been awarded the Alfred P. Sloan, Jr. Prize, one of three awards given annually by the General Motors Cancer Research Foundation (GMCRCF). The Sloan Prize recognizes the most outstanding recent contribution in basic science related to cancer research. Along with the Kettering Prize and Mott Prize, also awarded by the GMCRCF, this high honor has been bestowed on a select number of the world's top scientists, 11 of whom have subsequently won Nobel Prizes.

Stillman, along with co-winner Dr. Thomas Kelly, director, Sloan-Kettering Institute of New York (<http://www.mskcc.org>), was cited for his major contributions to our understanding of the biochemistry and regulation of DNA replication in cells with a nucleus (eukaryotes), which include human cells.

'Understanding the process of DNA replication in normal cells has been important for us to understand what goes wrong in cancer cells,' Stillman said. 'We've learned so much about the process of chromosome duplication and how it integrates into the biochemical pathways that are defective in cancer cells.'

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