

IN BRIEF

Science and Engineering Notes from Around Connecticut



Biomedical Research

UB TO RECEIVE NIH GRANT. The **University of Bridgeport (UB)** was selected by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to receive the first annual award of a planned five-year, \$447,252 grant to support its “Enhancing Research Administration at an Emerging Research Institution in Urban, Southwest Connecticut” project. UB is only one of two US universities to receive funding. The grant, announced August 31, will be used to build research administration capacity and support faculty involvement in biomedical and bio-behavioral research. CASE member **Tarek M. Sobh**, senior vice president for graduate studies and research and dean of the **School of Engineering**, will act as senior advisor.

GLOBAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP MARKS 10th YEAR. This fall, The **Yale Partnership for Global Health** began its tenth year promoting biomedical research by scientists at universities throughout the Global South (Africa, Latin America, and developing Asia including the Middle East) to reduce infectious diseases by educating, training, and supporting careers of biomedical and public health researchers. The program was developed in 2006 by **Elijah Paintsil**, associate professor of pediatrics and pharmacology at **Yale School of Medicine**, and CASE member **Michael Cappello**, professor of pediatrics at **Yale School of Medicine** and co-director of the **Yale Africa Initiative**. The Yale Partnership for Global Health brings young medical researchers to Yale and provides mentorship and training.

UConn EXPANDS LAB SPACE FOR STARTUPS. The **University of Connecticut’s (UConn) Cell and Genome Sciences** building in Farmington marked the opening of new laboratory space with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 22. The labs are leased to 18 technology or biomedical startups within the **Technology Incubator Program**. The incubation program includes 30 companies, many started by UConn students or faculty, based on research done at UConn. These companies generated \$45 million in revenues. One startup, **Shoreline Biome LLC**, is developing a product to map microbes in patients and test subjects. Other companies are working on devices to track chronic illnesses by analyzing a patients’ breath and a personalized diabetes medicine for patients with genetic cholesterol disorders.



Business & Industry

CI, WEBSTER LAUNCH INNOVATION FUND. In August, **Webster Bank** announced a partnership with **Connecticut Innovations** to create the \$1.5 million **UConn Innovation Fund** to provide \$100,000 to any in-state start-up research or technology company developed by a UConn student, faculty member or alumnus. UConn’s **Technology Innovation Program** companies are also eligible for the investment. The Innovation Fund will be managed by a **UConn Evaluation Board**, fund managers, and an investment committee represented by UConn, CI and Webster Bank.

MARINE ONE MAINTENANCE TO LEAVE SIKORSKY. According to **Paul Jackson**, a spokesman for **Sikorsky Aircraft**, the US Navy will no longer use Sikorsky’s maintenance program for Marine One helicopters in Stratford, moving the work to the Fleet Readiness Center Southeast in Florida, which is owned by Lockheed Martin. The choppers will continue to be built by Sikorsky. The decision affects about 85 workers at Sikorsky.

P&W EXPANDS IN CT, WORLDWIDE. On September 16, **Pratt & Whitney** announced plans to hire 25,000 employees worldwide in the next decade, with about a third of new hires in Connecticut. The hiring will, in part, replace 18,000 expected retirees and will include 1,000 engineers in Connecticut in the next year and more than 1,000 in manufacturing. According to Pratt’s president, **Robert Leduc**, the company plans to double production by 2020 and double it again by 2027. Pratt has 34,000 employees worldwide and about 9,500 in Connecticut. Much of the expansion is based on demand for Pratt & Whitney’s next-generation PurePower® Engine, known for using less fuel than competitors.

ACCELERATE UCONN. **Accelerate UConn**, a **UConn** program launched in the spring of 2015 with funding from the National Science Foundation Innovation Corps, was created to catalyze the transition of new scientific discoveries and capabilities from the lab to the marketplace. Applications for 2016 were submitted in September. Participating teams received an introduction to the I-Corps Curriculum and Lean Launchpad methodology, learning how to gauge the market opportunity for their product or technology. Participating teams received \$3,000 in seed funding and were provided with personalized coaching and feedback.

RENOVA ACQUIRES GENOMAS. On September 29, **Renova Health Inc.** announced its acquisition of Hartford-based **Genomas Inc.**, a genetic diagnostic company that enables physicians to evaluate, select and manage patient medications based on DNA analysis. Results are delivered through an online portal that provides a genetic assessment of current medications or those under consideration. Renova Health added pharmacogenetic tests performed via FDA-approved in vitro diagnostic (IVD) genotyping kits and acquired referrals for over 400 patients. Genomas is led by CASE member **Gualberto Ruano**, who also leads **Hartford Hospital’s Genetics Research Center**.



Communication

STATE UPGRADING EMERGENCY CALL SYSTEM. **Connecticut** is upgrading the emergency system for landline calls, using Next Generation 911. The upgrade, announced in August, allows dispatchers to accept text and video messages and to pinpoint the exact location of a cell phone caller.

MOBILITIE SEEKING OKAY FOR CELL PHONE TOWERS. On September 2, **Ridgefield** received notice that **Mobilitie**, a California-based telecommunications company, wants to build a 120-foot cell phone tower on state-owned land as part of an expansion that could potentially include more than 100 municipalities across Connecticut. **Mobilitie** claims its technology will improve wireless service in the area and, as the transport utility poles and facilities that are not dedicated to any particular customer, other entities can use the structures pending available capacity. **Kevin Maloney**, spokesman for the **Connecticut Conference of Municipalities**, said that similar applications have been received by more than 100 towns and cities throughout Connecticut. **Mobilitie** holds a Certificate of Public Necessity and Convenience issued from the state **Public Utilities Regulatory Authority**, allowing the company to provide certain telecommunications services in Connecticut.

CLOUD-BASED PATIENT PLATFORM ANNOUNCED. Hartford-based **CareCentrix** recently announced the launch of HomeBridge,

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