



*Fannin's office expansion adds 60% more space and encourages a collaborative working environment with a central lab for testing.*

**Atrapos awarded  
NIH GRANT,  
SMARTT Support  
for development of  
PM-431  
...in our next issue**

## Studio Expansion Plan Goes Down to the Wire

The expansion almost didn't happen. Fast-growing Studio member Procyrion was days away from committing to move to the 2nd floor. Fannin was out of space, and the suite next door looked unavailable.

But a chance conversation by Atul in April unearthed the key news that the adjoining Suite 555 would actually be coming to market. An intense negotiation between Fannin, the landlord and Procyrion ensued, with an expansion design crafted and interim swing-space provided to allow operations to continue uninterrupted. This was critical, as Procyrion was in final preparations for its first-in-human trial, and Fannin was adding both fellows and interns.



The scramble was worth it, as construction commenced in August (with the entire Studio participating in a "wall-breaking," see photo left) and the October move-in occurred on schedule. Serena, as overall "project manager," did yeoman's work keeping the architect, interiors constructor and equipment suppliers coordinated. The great results have been celebrated by the entire Fannin team.

"We learned so much from the original Studio design about the collaborative spaces needed, and we absolutely wanted a basic lab and prototyping area. The goal in the design was to include all these elements, while preserving an open overall "lab" type feeling, and so far I think the team is very pleased with the results," said Mark Worscheh. "Of course, we also had to do all this with a modest budget on a per-square-foot basis."

As Fannin moved into the expansion space, Procyrion grew to occupy almost all of the former Fannin end of the Studio, with modifications and updates made there to make the space more functional for their needs. Everyone now shares expanded common amenities, making the Studio concept a benefit for all users.

### INDUSTRY EVENTS OF NOTE

#### JP Morgan 35th Annual Healthcare Conference, San Francisco, Jan 9-12

**Who goes? >>** Everybody in industry goes, with as much happening outside the conference as inside. CEOs, investors and analysts dominate.

**What do you learn? >>** Big industry and investor trends, key strategic initiatives. The VCs and early-stage players learn what buyers are looking for. Procyrion and Pulmotect will be there.

#### Biotech Showcase 9th Annual Conference, San Francisco, Jan 9-12

**Who goes? >>** This piggy-backs JPM and draws a mid-cap/private crowd, but with more business development and VC interest going on.

**What do you learn? >>** Latest deal structures, VC and BD trends, potential strategic meetings.

#### BIO CEO & Investor Conference, New York, Feb 13-14

**Who goes? >>** Similar to JPM, but East Coast

**What do you learn? >>** Focused on public biotech, this also covers industry topics.

## FEATURED FANNIN TEAM MEMBER

### DIPALI DATE, PHD



#### DIPALI SERVES AS A BUSINESS

Development Fellow for Fannin Innovation Studio. Her focus is on identifying strategic industry partners for Fannin's portfolio companies. She graduated with a PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology from the University of Toledo and an MBA from Cleveland State University. Dipali's academic experience at Cleveland Clinic Lerner Research Institute and Case Western Reserve University was focused on cancer biology and immune cell biology.

Dipali is experienced in sales and project management in the pharmaceutical and biotech industries. Dipali is originally from India and enjoys reading and playing with her one year old son. She aspires to combine her love for food and travel to embark on a culinary tour of the world.



**BELLICUM PHARMACEUTICALS** was awarded \$16.9 million by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) to develop BPX-501, its T-cell therapy for acute myeloid leukemia. Bellicum went public in 2014 and raised nearly \$140 million in its IPO. Xconomy's David Holley reports that Bellicum has four ongoing clinical trials for BXP-501, which can be used for stem cell transplants.

**JOHNSON & JOHNSON** is launching a new Center for Device Innovation (CDI) in Houston's Texas Medical Center. Dr. William "Billy" Cohn, a cardiac surgeon and serial medical device entrepreneur, will serve as the center's director. CDI will house both internal R&D projects for Johnson & Johnson medical device companies and external projects from local entrepreneurs in the healthcare space.

**VIRACYTE, LLC**, a clinical stage biopharmaceutical company developing immunotherapies for severe infections, recently appointed Brett P. Giroir, M.D., as President and CEO. Dr. Giroir previously served as CEO of Texas A&M Health Science Center and has over 25 years' experience in health care and R&D leadership. ViraCyte's lead products, licensed from BCM, are currently in Phase 1 and 2 clinical trials, treating patients who have failed conventional therapy.

**LONZA HOUSTON INC.** (local branch of Switzerland-based Lonza Group Ltd.) is expanding to a brand new 250,000 square-foot facility in Pearland. Expected to open late 2017, the new space will house clinical manufacturing and R&D facilities for viral gene and cell therapeutics. Lonza is looking to hire over 100 employees to staff the new facility in the near future, and is prepared to hire hundreds of scientists and engineers over the next decade, according to the *Houston Business Journal*.

**TMCx**, a life-science startup accelerator, hosted a demo day in November featuring its first cohort of medical device startups. The nine companies that graduated from the program included Allotrope Medical (Houston), Bloom Labs (New York), BriteSeed (Chicago), Flexios (Houston), IntuiTap Medical (Houston), Ortricath (Houston), NovaScan (Milwaukee), Voyager Biomedical (College Station, TX), and WeaRobot (Monterrey, Mexico).

### FANNIN STUDIO UPDATES

- **PROCYRION** - Continues to make progress with its Aortix catheter-deployed circulatory pump. In mid-October the company initiated its first-in-human (FIH) study, with four patients successfully implanted with the Aortix device at the Infirmary Italiano in Asuncion, Paraguay. In other news, Procyrion's Senior Director of Quality, Katherine Cox, was selected by *Quality Magazine* as a "Quality Professional of the Year." This is a huge honor. Congrats Katherine! Procyrion also ranked #202 in *Entrepreneur* magazine's 360 list of small companies growing "in harmony" based on impact, innovation, growth and leadership.
- **PULMOTECT** - Received FDA approval for the Phase Ib trial of its lead product, PUL-042, to be conducted at MD Anderson in Q1 2017. In addition, it has presented to multiple government agencies including the National Institute of Health (NIH), Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA, under HHS), and the Department of Defense - Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) in efforts to expand the use of PUL-042 for unmet needs. Pulmotect has also been selected to present at the Biotechnology Showcase in conjunction with the JP Morgan conference in January.
- **ATRAPOS** - The company has been actively exploring potential industry partnerships with an outreach campaign to more than 60 potential biotech and pharma partners. Twelve companies have expressed potential interest, and the company is currently engaged in active partnering discussions with six companies, including four taking place under a confidentiality agreement.
- **GUIDABOT** - Principal Michael Heffernan was recently featured in the *Texas Tribune* regarding GuidaBot's development of an MRI-compatible robotic manipulator. The Q&A session covered GuidaBot's genesis, recent National Science Foundation grant award of \$225,000, and potential applications in neurosurgery.