



Diao Promoted to Manager, Duncan and Foley to Associate Principal at Fannin

HOUSTON, September 12, 2018 – Fannin Innovation Studio announced the promotion of three of its Fellows to newly created leadership roles within Fannin to support Fannin’s expanded pipeline of technologies. Junchen Diao has been named Manager, Business Development, and Aundrietta Duncan and Chris Foley have been named Associate Principals. All three will continue advancing therapeutic assets in the Studio’s portfolio.

“We are excited about the continued growth in the caliber and size of the Fannin team,” said Atul Varadhachary, Managing Partner of Fannin. “Junchen, Aundrietta and Chris all demonstrated outstanding capabilities during their fellowships at Fannin and will be strong additions to Fannin and the broader Houston life sciences ecosystem,” he said.

“The Fannin Fellow Program provides a unique opportunity for early-career scientists and engineers in Houston’s Texas Medical Center institutions to make the transition into life sciences commercialization through hands-on learning and mentoring. We are delighted that our fellowship has attracted extraordinarily strong candidates like Junchen, Aundrietta and Chris,” said Melissa Singh, Fannin Principal and Fellowship Program Director and former Fellow.

Junchen Diao, PhD, joined Fannin first as an intern and then as a Business Development Fellow where he led the business development activities related to seeking partnerships for Fannin and its technologies. Junchen earned his PhD in Systems Biology from the MD Anderson Cancer Center UT Health Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in Houston where he studied behavior of a multidrug resistant gene controlled by different regulatory networks for the application of biomaterials production. He also was the founder and CEO of JCBiomed LLC, a scientific editing and consulting company.

Aundrietta Duncan, PhD, joined Fannin as an Entrepreneurship Fellow where she focused on the development of several nanoparticle-based technologies, a carbon-based nanoparticle that functions as an antioxidant and a recombinant HDL particle capable of delivering nucleic acids. Aundrietta earned her PhD from the MD Anderson Cancer Center UT Health Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in Houston. Her research focused on the role of TRIM24, an epigenetic reader protein, as an oncogene in the mammary gland.

Chris Foley, PhD, spent six months with Fannin as an intern before joining as an Entrepreneurship Fellow. As a Fellow, Chris focused on several of Fannin’s therapeutics projects including the development of a monoclonal antibody for the treatment of pediatric cancers. He earned his PhD from Baylor College of Medicine where he studied potential avenues for therapeutic intervention through targeting transcriptional

coactivators in advanced prostate cancers. In addition to his graduate studies, he interned with the Baylor Licensing Group.

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About Fannin Innovation Studio

Houston-based Fannin Innovation Studio is an early-stage life sciences development group focused exclusively on commercializing medical technologies. Fannin partners with life science innovators to co-found startup companies and provides a pooled management team, funding, and administrative support. To further bridge the commercialization gap, Fannin's internship and fellowship programs provide aspiring entrepreneurs with hands-on development experience with its portfolio companies. For more information, visit www.FanninInnovation.com or email innovate@fannininnovation.com.

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