

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**Fannin Innovation Studio Names
Melissa Singh Principal**

Houston, TX (February 15, 2016) – Life science commercialization company Fannin Innovation Studio (www.FanninInnovation.com) today promoted its first entrepreneur fellow, biomedical scientist Melissa Singh, Ph.D., to principal. With this move, entrepreneur fellow Erol Bakkalbasi, M.Sc. has been named senior entrepreneur fellow.

Singh earned her BS in Chemistry from the University of Maryland, PhD in Biomedical Science from University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, and was a Ruth L. Kirschstein postdoctoral fellow at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center where she focused on the discovery of novel therapeutic strategies for patients with glioblastoma.

Joining Fannin as an intern in June 2014, Singh was quickly promoted to entrepreneur fellow before being named company principal.

In her role, she leads the research and development activities for Fannin portfolio companies Avid Chemotherapeutics, developing a nanoparticle therapeutic for hard-to-treat cancers; and ACF Pharmaceuticals, a collaboration between The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Cayman Chemicals and Fannin to explore the potential of novel, small molecule anti-cancer agents.

“Melissa is a highly-talented leader who possesses both the scientific skill set and the management capabilities required to advance the development of our portfolio companies,” said Dr. Atul Varadhachary, Managing Partner, Fannin.

As principal, Singh will also be responsible for Fannin’s intern / fellowship program and will serve as the liaison between Fannin and educational institutions and oversee overall program development. Since its launch, 75 interns have successfully completed the company’s experiential learning program. Of those graduates, 41 percent are women.

Following the same path as Singh, molecular biologist Bakkalbasi, a graduate of Rice University and Baylor College of Medicine, also started with Fannin as an intern before being promoted to fellow in 2015. Now as senior fellow, Bakkalbasi serves as the lead for portfolio company Exotect, which is investigating a novel molecular pathway that controls mucus overproduction in asthmatics. He also provides support to point-of-care diagnostic developer, BreviTest.

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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 by providing a pooled management team, central office space and seed funding. To further bridge the commercialization gap, Fannin's internship and Entrepreneurship Fellows 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.

Media Contact

Anna Halvorson

Penman PR

anna@penmanpr.com

713.510.0500