



Ten New Fellows Join Fannin's Fellowship Program in the 2018-2019 Academic Year

Houston, TX (July 31, 2019) - Fannin Innovation Studio announces its 2018-19 Entrepreneurship Fellows. Fannin's Fellowship Program is a two-year full-time experiential learning program designed to help talented scientists, physicians, and engineers become strong leaders in life sciences commercialization through hands-on development experiences.

"Fannin's unique Fellowship program continues to attract top talent from not only Houston but nationally as well," says Atul Varadhachary, Managing Partner at Fannin. "We believe that the Fellowship program will prepare these individuals to be among the next leaders of innovation and entrepreneurship in Houston."

The ten remarkable individuals that comprise the 2018-19 Fellowship Class include:

Rima Chakrabarti is a physician focused on bringing novel medical technologies to the bedsides of patients. She graduated from Brown University with honors in Neuroscience and earned her MD from the University of Texas Southwestern. While in medical school, she spent two years as a Howard Hughes Medical Institute research fellow developing a bio-assay for cholesterol and lipid trafficking under the guidance of Nobel laureates and HHMI investigators. She completed her clinical training in internal medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. She relocated to Houston to join Fannin, where she has been gaining experience in early-stage biotechnology development and playing a deep role in the process of commercializing clinically relevant technologies.

Javier Garza earned his B.Sc. and Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering from Texas A&M University, where he conducted research to design and optimize multiple diagnostic biosensing technologies. His engineering background and experience in assay development has allowed him to invent novel biosensors that have led to patent applications, peer-reviewed publications, and presentations at international conferences. Prior to joining Fannin, Javier worked at the Center for Remote Health Technologies and Systems at Texas A&M, where he developed and assessed technologies for underserved populations to diagnose, manage, and prevent diseases. Javier is interested in working with teams of best-in-class scientists and business professionals to help identify, develop, and commercialize revolutionary products that address unmet needs to improve healthcare.

Deepti Gopinath received her B.Tech. in Biomedical Engineering from the Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) and completed her thesis, "Assessment of SiPMs and Scintillation Crystals for Use in PET Toolkit Detector Modules," at the UC Davis Medical Center. While earning her B.Tech, Deepti interned at several medical device companies to learn about the processes involved in creating and commercializing medical devices. She then went on to attain her MEng in Biomedical Engineering from Duke University. Deepti relocated from North Carolina to Houston to join Fannin and she is excited to learn more about medical device commercialization in Fannin's dynamic, hands-on environment.

Christine Luk received her B.A. in Biochemistry and Cell Biology with a minor in Global Health Technologies from Rice University in 2018. She developed cervical cancer training models for low-resource settings with Rice 360° Institute for Global Health. Interested in furthering her studies in engineering medical devices, in 2019, she received her master's of bioengineering in the Global Medical Innovation program from Rice. While completing her master's, she co-founded a startup developing devices for women's health and worked at the Johnson & Johnson Center for Device Innovation at the Texas Medical Center to develop novel electrophysiology devices.

Amrita Oak received her Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering and Material Science from Michigan State University. Her doctoral research was focused on understanding the effects of saturated fatty acids on cellular stress pathways and how that stress leads to the aggressiveness of hepatocellular carcinoma. As a graduate student, Amrita became interested in technology commercialization and development. She was selected to the exclusive Spartan Innovations Venture Fellow program at MSU. The Venture Fellows program is designed to support a team of top-tier candidates in their endeavor to move inventions by MSU faculty, staff, and graduate students towards commercialization with the goal of launching a start-up company. Amrita relocates from Lansing, Michigan to Houston to join Fannin. She plans to further develop her skills in this area as she supports the development of Fannin's portfolio technologies.

Dhane Stomp is a former Fannin intern and is excited to continue at Fannin as a Fellow. Prior to joining Fannin, Dhane was a resident physician in general surgery at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, in the Texas Medical Center, where he gained broad exposure to all aspects of perioperative patient care in trauma & acute care, elective general, cardiovascular, bariatric, and burn surgery, as well as extensive training in surgical critical care. Dhane earned his MD from Baylor College of Medicine in 2016, where his research focused on endovascular management of unstable trauma patients. Before moving to Houston, Dhane earned his B.Sc. in Finance from the University of Florida in 2011, where he demonstrated the effectiveness of an evidence-based patient management strategy to significantly reduce hospital admissions.

Robert Sons drives multiple pre-clinical development projects at Fannin, in addition to sourcing and evaluating in-licensing opportunities. Before joining Fannin, Rob was a Technology Transfer Manager, Cancer Research Training Award Fellow, at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), where he obtained experience in due diligence, intellectual property portfolio management, and the initiation, maintenance, and negotiation of co-development and licensing relationships with industry partners. During his time at NCI, he also supported an internal proof-of-concept fund that led him to develop a deep appreciation for identifying

and characterizing high-value technologies at an early stage. Rob earned his Ph.D. in Cell and Developmental Biology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he investigated the biogenesis and regulation of RNAi and co-founded UNC's Science and Business Club. He earned his B.S. in Microbiology (Honors Scholar) from Colorado State University.

Mai Tran earned her Ph.D. in Cancer Biology in 2013 from the UT-MD Anderson Cancer Center where she received extensive training in the molecular mechanisms of cancer initiation, progression, and metastasis. Her study played an essential role in the discovery of different subtypes of muscle-invasive bladder cancer. Mai then gained valuable experience in education and publication from serving as a lecturer for the School of Biotechnology – International University and a managing editor for the Vietnam Journal of Science from 2013 to 2016. Prior to Fannin, Mai was a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Michigan Medical School. She has discovered a mechanism of chemoresistance in metaplastic breast carcinoma, an aggressive subtype of triple-negative breast cancer. Mai relocates from Ann Arbor to Houston to join Fannin. With her strong interest in making a difference in patient care, she is excited about working at Fannin Innovation Studio with excellent scientists and business professionals to bring revolutionary discoveries to patients.

Vincent Zaballa received his B.Sc. in Biomedical Engineering with a minor in Electrical Engineering from Texas A&M, completing his thesis "Characterization of Automatically Reticulated Shape Memory Polymer Foams" to earn research honors. After interning at Covidien, in Boulder, Colorado, finishing with a medical device patent and publication, he graduated with his MEng in Biomedical Engineering from Texas A&M. He then attended Imperial College London as a Whitaker International Fellow, participating in the Medical Device Design and Entrepreneurship module and earning his MRes upon successful defense of his thesis. After London, he worked as a data scientist, helping consultancies and winning a hackathon to start a water-data startup. Vincent relocated from Colorado to Houston to join Fannin.

Stephanie Vega graduated with a B.S. in Biology from the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) where she was an NIH-funded MBRS-RISE program scholar and worked as a research assistant. She then earned her Ph.D. in Microbiology & Immunology from the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB). For her doctoral project, she developed a novel 3D bioengineered human lung organoid as an experimental model to study lung injury, pathogenesis of pulmonary fibrosis, and respiratory infections. While at UTMB, she also worked on a research project with NASA and SpaceX to send the bioengineered human lung organoid model to the International Space Station to study the influence of spaceflight and microgravity on lung repair mechanisms. Prior to joining Fannin, Stephanie was a postdoctoral research fellow at UTMB working on a human stem cell project for The Moody Project for Translational Traumatic Brain Injury Research (Moody Foundation) and relocated from Galveston to Houston to join Fannin.

“We are excited to welcome such a talented group of individuals to the Fannin team. The fellowship program continues to expand, bringing us diverse talent to support the development of our portfolio assets,” said Andrea Ford Letkemen, Fannin’s Director of Professional Development.

About Fannin Innovation Studio

Houston-based Fannin Innovation Studio is an early-stage life sciences development group focused exclusively on commercializing biotech and medtech technologies. Fannin partners with life science innovators to create startup companies, providing management, funding, and business development. To further bridge the commercialization gap, Fannin’s fellowship and internship programs provide aspiring entrepreneurs with hands-on development experience with its portfolio companies. For more information, visit www.FanninInnovation.com, come by the Studio at 3900 Essex Lane -- Suite 575 in Houston, or email us at innovate@fannininnovation.com.

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