

People

New Biosytech boss.

Claude LeDuc was appointed president and CEO of Biosytech (www.biosytech.com), a company specializing in re-



generative medicine products and therapeutic delivery systems.

Previously, LeDuc held positions at Genzyme Biosurgery, Biomatrix, and Serono. Biosytech's quality management system recently met international compliance standards for the conception and manufacture of medical devices. According to Biosytech, LeDuc's years of experience in the commercialization of orthopedic products will enable the company to capitalize on its newly acquired status.

Oil chief on board. Vical (www.vical.com), a DNA vaccine-focused pharmaceutical company, appointed former Sunoco executive Robert H. Campbell to its board of directors. Campbell is currently a director of CIGNA Corp., Hershey Foods, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Rocky Mountain Institute.

LION resignation. Founder and CEO of LION bioscience (www.lionbioscience.com) Friedrich von Bohlen resigned his position effective December 31, 2003. He made this decision as LION shifts its focus more exclusively to providing IT solutions for the life science industry. Martin Hollenhorst, chief financial officer, and Daniel Keesman, chief business officer, will now lead the company.

Deals

Pfizer purchase. Pfizer (www.pfizer.com) entered into an agreement to acquire Esperion Therapeutics (www.esperion.com), a company focused on the development of high-density lipoprotein (HDL)-targeted therapies for treating cardiovascular disease. "We recognize that HDL control is an emerging area, and that early-stage development brings risk," said chairman and CEO of Pfizer Hank McKinnell in a press release. "However, we are confident that the rigorous and long-term clinical trials we plan to conduct will further scientific and medical understanding in this area, which will ultimately benefit patients." Pfizer will acquire the Esperion stock shares for \$1.3 billion.

Antibody manufacturing. Genentech (www.gene.com) and Lonza Group (www.lonza.com) signed a long-term manufacturing agreement. Under the arrangement, Lonza Biologics will manufacture commercial quantities of Genentech's drug Rituxan, a therapeutic antibody indicated as a single-agent treatment for certain types of B-cell non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, at a production facility in Portsmouth, NH. "This agreement complements our current manufacturing capabilities and allows us flexibility in our existing facilities to respond to any increased demand for our therapeutic

antibody products," said David Ebersman, Genentech's senior vice president of product operations, in a press release.

Biopsies on biochips. Affymetrix (www.affymetrix.com) and Arcturus Bioscience (www.arctur.com) will collaborate to develop new tools for conducting gene expression analysis on paraffin-embedded clinical biopsy samples using Arcturus reagents and Affymetrix custom-made arrays. This agreement could provide experimental access to millions of clinical tissue samples previously thought to contain only destroyed or modified nucleic acid species not open to gene expression analysis.



Glucose contract. Roche Diagnostics (www.roche-diagnostics.com) was awarded a new, three-year contract from Premier, Inc. (www.premierinc.com), a general purchasing organization for hospitals and health care systems. Under the contract, Roche will provide a complete portfolio of hospital glucose products, including the handheld Accu-Chek glucose monitor, Accu-Chek Comfort Curve test strips, Accu-Chek Safe-T-Pro lancet device, and IT solutions that will give Premier members a choice in connectivity options. The contract has a total value of more than \$80 million.

Marketplace

Biotech bonanza. The Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) reported that its member companies earned 37 FDA approvals in 2003, including 25 new drugs and 12 novel indications for previously approved biotech products. This is an increase of 25% from 2002. In addition, the Nasdaq biotech index increased by 46% during the past year, allowing companies to raise \$16.4 billion in new financing, 56% more than was raised in 2002.



Hospira for hospitals. A new, independent global hospital products company planned for launch by Abbott Laboratories (<http://abbott.com>) in the first half of 2004 has been named Hospira. It will be a specialty pharmaceutical and medication delivery company with, according to Abbott, approximately \$2.5 billion in sales and more than 14,000 employees worldwide. Employees of the new company selected the name through a global voting process.

Adverse-event surveillance. TheraDoc (www.theradoc.com) launched new software called ADE Assistant, designed to perform automated trigger-based surveillance and enhanced voluntary reporting of adverse drug events in hospitalized patients. The decision-support software features automated documentation, archiving, and alerting capabilities. According to Stanley Pestotnik, CEO of TheraDoc, "The system continually surveys the patient population for triggers and signals of suspected and potential adverse events." ■