

UM's Tech Transfer Notes
May 2010
Strengthening Relationships

Dear Colleague,

At the conclusion of this spring semester I had the privilege of participating in several capstone course project presentations here on campus. Being back in a classroom setting was a good change of pace from my day to day routine! In addition to being energized by the students, I was greatly inspired by the excellent teamwork each group demonstrated through their respective projects. A few weeks removed now, the projects that stick out in my mind best were carried out by groups that allowed each member to utilize his or her individual strength(s) for the greater cause of the team!

Teamwork is very important to my role here on campus, as many stakeholders, including faculty, entrepreneurs, the public, students, and investors – *to name a few*, each play a key role in the technology transfer process. Building relationships with these stakeholders is an exciting part of my job! Along these lines, two partnerships of great importance to technology transfer activity at The University of Montana have started to take shape recently, and I want to provide you with an overview:

The School of Business Administration

Partnerships between technology transfer offices and business schools exist around the country, and serve as a great platform for promoting entrepreneurship among faculty, staff and students. Since my arrival in Missoula many individuals have shared with me a similar vision for The University of Montana. It's fair to say that The School of Business Administration has been a leader in this discussion, and this past semester took action toward establishing a partnership with the Office of Technology Transfer.

Drs. Klaus Uhlenbruck and Jakki Mohr each partnered student teams from their respective spring courses with faculty inventors and entrepreneurs. The outcome of the collective projects was four marketing reports and three business plans that defined commercialization opportunities for inventions arising from The University of Montana's research enterprise. Feedback from both the students and faculty involved indicated that the overall effort was a great experience for all, and definitely worth building upon in future semesters. To further enhance this collaboration, the Office of Technology Transfer will launch an ***Innovation Internship Program*** this coming fall. This effort will provide real-world opportunity for MBA students to work with inventors, entrepreneurs, and experts to perform market research and develop commercialization feasibility reports during the upcoming academic year. If you know of anyone interested in applying for the program, they are encouraged to email a resume along with a letter of interest to Dr. Bambi Douma at bambi.douma@business.umt.edu. Interviews will be conducted during the week of June 14 with an anticipated start date of July 12, 2010.

Institute of Translational Health Sciences

Translational research involves moving knowledge and discovery gained from the basic sciences to its application in clinical and community settings, often referred to as "bench-to-bedside" and "bedside-to-community" research. This exciting field requires a tremendous amount of collaboration as the commercialization process involves basic research, pre-clinical studies, clinical trials, and launch of a product. Here at The University of Montana two of our translational research strengths involve basic science and pre-clinical studies, both which can serve as a platform for the discovery and early stage validation of life saving and life improving treatments. Advancing these early stage discoveries beyond

the laboratory is a challenge for most universities, thereby reinforcing the need for strong partnerships along the translational research pipeline.

One important partner for translational research activity at The University of Montana is the Institute of Translational Health Sciences (ITHS, <http://www.iths.org/>), an affiliate of the University of Washington that facilitates the education, resources and collaborations necessary to translate discoveries into practice. In addition to funding several research projects at the University, ITHS also sponsored the May 17 Pre-Clinical Research & Development Summit here on campus.

Among several summit recommendations was a collaborative effort between the Office of Technology Transfer and the ITHS' Drug and Device Development Advisory Committee (DDDAC), which can assist with the review of proposed life science innovations and "provide appropriate preclinical, clinical and regulatory guidance to investigators seeking to transition their research innovations into the clinic." As follow-up to the summit I will be working with Drs. Kim Folger Bruce and Lynn Rose (both of ITHS) to move this collaboration forward in the coming months. You can learn more about Kim, Lynn and the other DDDAC members here – <http://www.iths.org/node/57>. Thanks to all of the guest speakers, Tech Ranch and the Montana BioScience Alliance for making the pre-clinical summit a success!

As a champion of research and technology transfer here at The University of Montana, I look forward to building upon these, and establishing additional collaborations, in the future!

Best regards,
Joe.

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