Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 13th Edition of the UCLA TDG Innovation Magazine. This was a good year for our anchor conferences MedTech and LABEST as we hit record attendance numbers for both. The events showcase medical devices, medtech and drug development and drug discoveries respectfully. It was exciting to bring together researchers, students, industry leaders like the CEO’s of Amgen and Biogen and service providers under one roof to network and spark interaction and conversation. Videos of these conferences are available on our Website and YouTube channel.

The summer issue traditionally highlights our successes and there are quite a few that we are highlighting including Equatic breaking ground on its first carbon dioxide plant in the States. This is a significant milestone for our strong clean tech portfolio.

UCLA TDG just recently partnered with the UCLA Ventures program now headed up by our own, Brija Johnson. Seasoned entrepreneurs can find out more about mentorship opportunities while UCLA entrepreneurs can apply for the Bruin Founders program. We look forward to building the program that will help close the gap between academia and industry.

We checked in with a few of our UCLA startups on their strong progress and fundraising efforts and finally, you can read about our sneak peek of the UCLA Research Park.

We are fortunate to welcome two new board members Brian Israel the Chair of Arnold and Porter Environmental Practice Group, as well as co-lead of the firm’s Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) working group, and Arvin Patel Chief Licensing Officer, New Markets Director, Nokia Bell Labs.

Finally, we wish farewell and all the best to Kathy Wrobel and Dina Lozofsky, who announced their retirement.

Thank you for supporting UCLA TDG and enjoy reading.

Sincerely,

Amir Naiberg
Associate Vice Chancellor, CEO & President
UCLA Technology Development Group
IMPACT AND A CALL TO ACTION: These are the things we most hope to accomplish when we produce UCLA’s annual MedTech partnering conference, selecting topics and speakers for panels and keynotes. This year we felt particularly successful, starting with our opening keynote, “Human Centric AI: Shaping a Just and Ethical Future in Health Technology” by Dr. Medellin Briggs-Maloson, Chief, Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, UCLA Health System. The talk was hailed by many in the audience as the first time that they had heard a coherent and actionable set of suggestions around equity for all in healthcare.

Another panel that was both a call to action and hopefully impactful was this year’s Investor Panel, Women’s Healthcare - Overcoming Investment Challenges. Our expert investors in this field spoke about what they are looking for in solid investments in this area, how entrepreneurs can increase their chances of getting what they need and also highlighted the missed opportunities by investors who still consider this enormous market a niche market. The primary message to entrepreneurs was to go back to basics to demonstrate value and potential in their products/services/company.

As last year, the Demo Track was Standing Room Only, demonstrating the value and appeal of startup companies from around the Greater LA Ecosystem – this is why we are always #LongLA. Our demoing companies came from UCLA, USC, City of Hope and UCI.

We also received marvelous feedback this year about networking and partnering opportunities, both via the partnering platform and synergistically in the halls. There were even rumors of potential funding getting secured at the event.

And speaking of #LongLA – we participated again in LA MedTech Week, organized by BioscienceLA, UCLA and MedTech Innovator. This year we had a great slate of events:

SAVE THE DATE
We’re planning for next year’s UCLA MedTech Partnering conference so save the date March 11, 2025. If you are interested in partnering, sponsoring or participating, please contact Marivi Valcourt, assistant director of marketing and communications, UCLA TDG at marivi.valcourt@tdg.ucla.edu.

All photos by Heromade
LABEST 2024 was hosted at the UCLA Meyer and Renee Luskin Conference Center on May 22nd and 23rd, 2024. LABEST is the annual premier bioscience conference in the Los Angeles region, launched in 2018 by the UCLA Technology Development Group (TDG) and features attendance by key stakeholders in the Los Angeles area, including: UCLA, USC, Caltech, Cedars-Sinai, City of Hope and The Lundquist Institute. The event’s mission is to promote Los Angeles as a center of excellence for biotech innovation and to foster partnerships between academic institutions, life science incubators, the investment community and the biopharma industry. Leading bioscience translational research programs, faculty entrepreneurs and start-ups are showcased where Los Angeles institutions have expertise, pioneering multi-disciplinary research and significant resource commitments directed towards developing novel therapies.

For the third consecutive year, >800 attended and LABEST 2024 achieved a record >90% attendance rate. New programs included the LABEST Research Pavilion and tours of the Pasadena Bioscience Ecosystem and the Lundquist Institute. For the first time, the Nucleate Final Pitch Showcase and First Look SoCal Innovation Showcase were independently scheduled as satellite events prior to LABEST 2024.

**LABEST 2024 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:**

- “Exciting Progress & Innovative Advancements in Ophthalmology” panel organized by the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) and featured Retinitis Pigmentosa Patient Advocate, Kristin Macdonald
- New Payment Models for Ultra Rare Diseases organized by H.C. Wainwright and featured Co-founder/CEO, FOXG1 Research Foundation and Co-founder/CBO, Citizen, Patient Advocate for Amara, Nasha Fitter
- Keynote Address by Robert Bradway, CEO, Amgen
- Keynote Address by Christopher Viehbacher, President and CEO, Biogen
- “California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy at UCLA Research Park” panel moderated by Lindsey Williams, UCLA AVC for Health Sciences Development with founders: Arie Belldegrun, Eric Esrailian and Gary Michelson, and Owen Witte UCLA Presidential Chair in Developmental Immunology
- A VIP lunch featuring Eric Esrailian MD, a UCLA founder of the California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy (CII), and the leadership of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) was hosted at the Watermark in Westwood during the LABEST Pre-Event
- Arie Belldegrun MD, Roy and Carol Doumani Chair in Urologic Oncology, UCLA moderated the “Meet the Experts in the Business of Life Sciences” panel for the sixth time at LABEST!
- “The Latest Trends in Venture Capital Investing” panel moderated by Josh Green, Chairman Emeritus, National Venture Capital Association
- “Women’s Health: Innovative Research Models in Science and Medicine” moderated by Janet Pregler, Director and Iris Cantor Endowed Chair in Women’s Health

**SAVE THE DATE**

and mark your calendars for LABEST 2025 at the UCLA Meyer and Renee Luskin Conference Center on Thursday, May 22nd, 2023!
A collaboration among UCLA, USC and Caltech will advance cell and tissue engineering technology.

The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative today announced a $4 million grant to support research led by the UCLA Samuel School of Engineering that will examine cellular behaviors, many of which play a key role in developing immunity to pathogens and disease.

Researchers from the University of Southern California and the California Institute of Technology will collaborate with UCLA Samueli on the three-year project.

The project is part of the initiative’s four multi-year Exploratory Cell Network grants that will bring together more than 50 institutions across the mid-Atlantic and North Carolina to explore the frontiers of cell biology and synthetic biology by developing new technologies for measurement and analysis.

“We are excited for the continued support of the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative that will help us develop transformative solutions to real-world challenges,” Alissa Park said.

“The technology can lay the foundation for creating new replacement tissue with high-level function as therapeutics. Lab-on-a-particle technology leverages microfabricated nanovials, test tube-like hydrogel particles that are sized for single cells and are a thousand times smaller than the width of a human hair. Using these nanovials, the researchers can mimic cell-to-cell interactions in a synthetic environment and probe the secreted signals released by cells. Because the nanovials are so small, millions of them can be loaded with individual cells all at once, which allows each cell to be analyzed and sorted using standard laboratory infrastructure.

“This project focuses on developing accessible tools that can dramatically accelerate discoveries in the ubiquitous biology of cells interacting with other cells,” said Di Carlo, UCLA’s Armond and Elena Hairapetian Chair in Engineering and Medicine and director of the Di Carlo Lab.

The team will coat the nanovials with proteins that mimic the surfaces of other cells, and the platform will allow measurement of the diversity of responses when cells interact with partner cells. Millions of hydrogel nanovials can each act as an individual reaction vessel to probe cell-to-cell interactions, allowing high-scale cell screening. The technology is also compatible with industry-standard lab equipment, making it easily accessible to the larger scientific community.

“Collaborative projects like this lay the foundation for our trainees — the next generation of scientific leaders — to develop the habit of working in multidisciplinary teams, which is critical for future scientific advancements,” said Di Carlo, who also holds a faculty appointment in the UCLA Samueli Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and is a member of the California NanoSystems Institute (CNSI) at UCLA and the UCLA Health Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center. “We aim for this collaboration to be the start of a long-term partnership across institutions to advance biotechnology in Los Angeles.”

The multidisciplinary UCLA team also includes Dr. Thomas Rando, director of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center of Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at UCLA; the Broad Center’s founding director emeritus, Dr. Owen Witte; Kathrin Rath, a professor of biological chemistry; Jessica Li, a professor of statistics and a UCLA Fielding School of Public Health professor of biostatistics; and Lili Yang, a professor of microbiology, immunology and molecular genetics.

The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative-funded program builds on collaborative research from the Broad Stem Cell Research Center and CNSI at UCLA.
Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) is an autoimmune disease that primarily affects women, often in young adulthood. There is a critical unmet medical need for well-tolerated therapies that offer improved efficacy and durable disease remission. Based on the promising responses and a favorable safety profile observed in the UCLA trial in non-Hodgkin lymphoma, we are encouraged that IMPT-314 has potential to alleviate symptoms and spare patients the need for chronic immune suppression. We expect initial efficacy and safety data from our Phase 1b/2 dose escalation trial in the second half of 2024.

It is important to understand that due to the heterogeneity of lupus, no two patients are alike. No ‘one size fits all’ treatment exists for complex individuals like me,” said Kathleen A. Arntsen, president and CEO of Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc. “What works in one person may not work in another. Therefore, our physicians need an arsenal of therapies to treat lupus and lupus nephritis.

IMPT-314 is being evaluated in an open label Phase 1b/2 dose escalation clinical trial in participants with active, refractory SLE that have been treated with at least two prior standard-of-care therapies and have a SLE Disease Activity Index score (SLEDAI-2K) ≥ 8. The Phase 1 dose escalation cohort is limited to patients with active, biopsy-proven, proliferative LN. Additional patients with and without active proliferative LN will be enrolled during the Phase 2 portion of the clinical trial.

IMPT-314 has received Fast Track Designation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of both active and refractory LN and SLE.

ABOUT SYSTEMIC LUPUS ERYTHEMATOSUS
Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), commonly known as lupus, is a chronic, often severe, systemic autoimmune disease. Systemic lupus erythematosus results from an immune attack on healthy tissues and the development of widespread inflammation that results in tissue damage throughout the body. B cells are known to play an early and central role in disease pathogenesis. Lupus affects more than 200,000 patients in the U.S. alone, with approximately 50 percent having lupus nephritis, the most severe manifestation of SLE which can result in end-stage renal disease and increased mortality. Despite various therapies used for the treatment of SLE, including approved biologics, there remains a significant unmet need for safe and highly effective therapies for this disease.

ABOUT IMPT-514
IMPT-514 is a CD19/CD20-targeting chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy that utilizes a potent bispecific CAR and a 4-1BB costimulatory domain. It is the same CAR construct as ImmPACT’s IMPT-314, which is under development for certain types of non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. IMPT-34 and IMPT-314 are based on work by Yvonne Chen, Ph.D., associate professor, and Sarah Larson, M.D., associate professor of medicine, both of the University of California, Los Angeles. In preclinical studies, IMPT-514 was successfully and efficiently manufactured from heavily immunosuppressed patients with lupus nephritis and systemic lupus erythematosus and showed potent elimination of autologous B cells and a moderate cytokine profile.

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE (CIRM)
At CIRM, we never forget that we were created by the people of California to accelerate stem cell treatments to patients with unmet medical needs, and act with a sense of urgency to succeed in that mission. To meet this challenge, our team of highly trained and experienced professionals actively partners with both academia and industry in a hands-on, entrepreneurial environment to fast track the development of today’s most promising stem cell technologies. With $5.5 billion in funding and more than 150 active stem cell programs in our portfolio, CIRM is one of the world’s largest institutions dedicated to helping people by bringing the future of cellular medicine closer to reality. For more information go to www.cirm.ca.gov.

ABOUT IMMpACT BIO
ImmPACT Bio USA, Inc., is a clinical-stage company dedicated to the discovery of transformative chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapies that address key biological challenges in treating cancer and autoimmune diseases. The company’s logic-gate-based CAR T-cell platform, licensed from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Technology Development Group, are specifically designed to deplete B cells, prevent antigen escape, and overcome the immunosuppressive tumor microenvironment. The company’s technology is based on the work of pioneering scientists Yvonne Chen, Ph.D., and Antoni Ribas, M.D., Ph.D., both from UCLA. For more information, visit http://www.immpact-bio.com.

SOURCE ImmPACT Bio USA Inc.
Equatic to Build North America’s First Commercial-Scale Ocean-Based Carbon Removal Facility

Equatic, a carbon removal company leading the industry in combined carbon dioxide removal and green hydrogen generation. Using a patented seawater electrolysis process, Equatic activates and amplifies the ocean’s inherent ability to absorb and store massive amounts of carbon using technology created and developed at the UCLA Samueli School of Engineering’s Institute for Carbon Management. Equatic works with industry pioneers, national agencies, and government leadership to scale climate solutions at unprecedented rates. The company sells high-integrity carbon removal credits and is the only ocean-based carbon removal company that measures removal with unprecedented certainty.

CARBON REMOVAL COMPANY EQUITIC, with Canadian carbon removal project developer Deep Sky, today announced that engineering has commenced on North America’s first commercial-scale ocean-based carbon dioxide removal (CDR) plant. This plant will remove 109,500 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and produce 3,600 tonnes of green hydrogen per year. It will be the largest ocean-based carbon removal plant in the world and will help enable Equatic to achieve CDR at less than $100 per tonne by 2030. This development follows Equatic’s newly unveiled demonstration project, named Equatic-1, that broke ground in Tuas, Singapore in May 2024. In the U.S., Equatic was recently named a Department of Energy Carbon Dioxide Removal Purchase Pilot Prize semifinalist; the first-of-its-kind program is designed to identify CDR companies proven to offer high-integrity carbon removals and establish pathways to procure their carbon removal credits. Equatic’s oxygen-selective anodes that were developed with the support of the Department of Energy’s Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) to produce green hydrogen while eliminating the unwanted production of chlorine during seawater electrolysis.

The new commercial-scale plant and all subsequent Equatic projects will adhere to the most advanced measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) standards in electrolytic ocean-based carbon removal: ISO 14064-2:2019. Developed in partnership with EcoEngineers and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the MRV methodology offers an exhaustive, transparent framework for quantifying, monitoring, reporting, and verifying greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and removals at the project level in ways that meet ISO’s rigorous and world-renowned reporting standards. Carbon credits and green hydrogen from this and future plants have been pre-sold to companies such as Boeing, and further sales are ongoing.

“Governing bodies around the world emphatically assert the need for accessible, cost-effective, and permanent carbon removal solutions, at low-cost, and with low energy requirements. Our commercial-scale development speaks directly to that need,” says Edward Muller, Chairman of Equatic.
Regenerative Medicine for Hair Loss

Series A Financing led by GV to Revolutionize

**Pelage Pharmaceuticals** Announces $16.75M

more than 90% of all hair loss, impacting both men and women. Additionally, PP405 may also have applications for other forms of hair loss such as telogen effluvium (stress-induced hair loss) and chemotherapy-induced hair loss.

“What we’ve observed is that in people who experience hair loss, the actual hair follicle stem cells are still present but have reverted to a dormant state. We have uncovered a small molecule able to stimulate cellular metabolism to re-awaken hair follicle stem cells and spur new hair growth,” said William Lowry, Ph.D., scientific co-founder, Pelage Pharmaceuticals. The discovery was made by Drs. Lowry, Heather Christofk and Michael Jung, of the University of California, Los Angeles. PP405 is designed to inhibit the mitochondrial pyruvate carrier (MPC) to specifically reactivate the dormant hair follicle stem cells.

“Hair loss is an incredibly common health problem with few effective solutions,” said Cathy Friedman, Executive Venture Partner, GV and Board Director, Pelage Pharmaceuticals. “GV is excited by the incredible science behind the Pelage technology. Pelage is pioneering an innovative approach with the potential to disrupt the treatment landscape, moving beyond agents that merely slow the progression of hair loss to a treatment solution that actually helps to regrow hair.”

Along with the financing and Phase 1 topline data, Pelage has announced the appointment of Qing Yu Christina Weng, M.D., as the company’s Chief Medical Officer (CMO). Dr. Weng is a physician-scientist, Harvard-trained board-certified dermatologist at Massachusetts General Hospital, and faculty at Harvard Medical School. In addition to her clinical expertise, Dr. Weng brings a background in corporate startup strategy and business development. At Pelage, Dr. Weng’s experience will inform the company’s development of PP405 as it advances to Phase 2 studies.

“The current therapeutic landscape is dominated by reformulations of existing products. Pelage is built on rigorous science and offers the opportunity to target the follicle stem cells directly,” said Dr. Weng. “I am thrilled to work with the Pelage team to advance this discovery in pursuit of a novel non-invasive solution for all people who experience hair loss.”

**ABOUT PELAGE PHARMACEUTICALS**

Pelage Pharmaceuticals is a clinical-stage regenerative medicine company developing novel treatments for hair loss including androgenetic alopecia and chemotherapy-induced alopecia. With a focus on molecular and stem cell biology, Pelage is advancing a new class of treatments designed to reactivate dormant hair follicle stem cells and restore the body’s ability to naturally grow hair. Its lead program, PP405, is currently in clinical trials.

Through its rigorous scientific foundation, topical formulation, and novel mechanism of action, Pelage is pioneering first-in-class hair growth solutions for people of all hair types experiencing hair loss.
TORL BioTherapeutics Announces $158 Million Oversubscribed Series B-2 Financing to Advance the Clinical Development of its Novel Antibody-Drug Conjugate (ADC) Oncology Pipeline

Mark Alles, TORL’s Chairman and CEO: “This investment significantly enhances our opportunity to deliver multiple data-driven milestones from our novel antibody-based discovery platform and clinical-stage oncology drug development pipeline.”

“Our leadership of the TORL Series B-2 Financing reflects our confidence in the scientific and business expertise of the TORL team, and the promise and potential of the Company’s emerging ADC pipeline,” said Rebecca Luse, Principal at Deep Track Capital.

“At ORL, our leadership of the TORL Series B-2 Financing reflects our confidence in the scientific and business expertise of the TORL team, and the promise and potential of the Company’s emerging ADC pipeline,” said Rebecca Luse, Principal at Deep Track Capital.

“TORL’s oversubscribed Series B-2 Financing provides the capital necessary for TORL to complete our pivotal, registration-enabling Phase 2 study starting later this year for TORL-1-23, a first-in-class, and potentially best-in-class, ADC targeting CLDN 6 in platinum-resistant ovarian cancer. It also allows us to continue to advance our three other promising clinical stage programs and pipeline,” said Mr. Licata. “With this continued strong support from our investors, we believe we can generate significant long-term value for them, our employees, and most importantly, the patients we seek to serve.”

“TORL is built on more than thirty years of experience discovering molecular alterations associated with solid tumors and hematologic malignancies. This work is followed by development of new and novel targeted therapeutics and clinical strategies for their use to improve and extend the lives of patients challenged with these diseases,” said Dr. Slamon.

TORL BIOTHERAPEUTICS, LLC (TORL), a clinical-stage biotechnology company involved in discovery and development of new antibody-based immunotherapies designed to improve and extend the lives of patients with cancer worldwide. Today, the Company announced its closing of an oversubscribed $158 million Series B-2 financing. The financing led by Deep Track Capital, with new participation from leading global biotechnology investors including RA Capital Management, Perceptive Advisors, and Avidity Partners as well as all existing biotechnology investors.

Proceeds advance TORL-1-23, a first and potentially best-in-class, clinical-stage ADC for the treatment of Claudin 6 positive (CLDN 6+) solid-tumors, TORL-2-307, and a clinical-stage ADC for the treatment of Claudin 18.2 positive (CLDN 18.2+) solid tumors, as well as newly disclosed programs TORL-3-600, a first-in-class clinical-stage ADC for the treatment of Cadherin 17 (CDH17)+ advanced colorectal cancer, and TORL-4-500, a clinical-stage ADC for the treatment of Delta like non-canonical Notch Ligand 1 (DLL1) positive solid tumors.

“We are grateful for the continued support from our existing world-class life sciences investors and are extremely pleased to add RA Capital Management, Perceptive Advisors, and Avidity Partners to the TORL team,” said Mark Alles, TORL’s Chairman and CEO.

TORL is built on more than thirty years of experience discovering molecular alterations associated with solid tumors and hematologic malignancies. This work is followed by development of new and novel targeted therapeutics and clinical strategies for their use to improve and extend the lives of patients challenged with these diseases,” said Dr. Slamon. “We are pleased at the spectrum of diseases for which this approach appears to work as well as the performance of our predictive and development platforms to date. We remain committed to delivering many more breakthrough therapies for patients with serious unmet global medical needs in cancer.” The Company was co-founded in 2019 by Board Member, President, and CFO Dave Licata. Through TORL’s innovative and strategic partnership with the Slamon Research Laboratory at UCLA, the Company was granted exclusive development and commercialization rights to a large portfolio of biology-based drugs designed to target specific antigens overexpressed in cancer cells. Mr. Licata’s and Dr. Slamon’s common vision for a new approach to antibody-based drug development created “TORL and its pipeline of promising cancer therapies.”

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Cytovale

Founded by UCLA faculty member Dino di Carlo, UCLA Alumnus Henry Tse and Collaborator Ajay Shah, Cytovale is dedicated to enhancing human health through innovative early detection technologies that leverage insightful assessments of immune activation. Addressing sepsis, a leading cause of death in US hospitals, Cytovale’s FDA-cleared IntelliSep test delivers crucial insights into immune activation and sepsis risk via a straightforward blood draw. In Q4 2023, the team secured an impressive $84 million in Series C funding to accelerate the commercialization of this life-saving technology.

Saku Biosciences

Saku Biosciences is poised to revolutionize the entire biotech industry by bringing more world-changing bioproducts to market. Founded by UCLA alumni, Mark van Zee, Saku engineers high-yielding cell lines that are sold as products to cell line developers and strain engineers. The team made their debut in May at Nucleate’s Demo Day Showcase, winning the Alnylam Pharmaceuticals Regional Scientific Excellence Award and are closing their first round of fundraising.

SpineX

SpineX is a clinical-stage MedTech company developing a novel bioelectric platform technology for treating unmet medical needs through targeted spinal neuromodulation. We have developed SCiP, a spinal neuromodulation device that treats the underlying condition responsible for the pathologies associated with Pediatric Cerebral Palsy. SpineX’s platform technology acts as a hearing aid for the nervous system; amplifying weak or disrupted nerve signals with noninvasive spinal neuromodulation enabling users to better control their muscles and movement. This platform technology builds upon the decades of research conducted by the founding team, drawing from both pre-clinical and clinical validation studies pioneered by Reggie Edgerton, PhD, often regarded as the father of modern spinal neuromodulation.

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

TDC is committed to promoting entrepreneurship at UCLA through collaborative efforts with various campus organizations. The UCLA Innovation Showcase, organized by Anderson’s School of Management, showcased startups based on UCLA intellectual property pitching at Google headquarters in Venice. Active Membranes, born out of the labs of David Jassby and Eric Hoek, secured an investment from the Draper family, while Symphony Biosciences, from Manish Butte’s lab, earned the Google Audience Award. Teaming up with the CNSI Magnify team, UCLA New Ventures organized regular mixers for the university’s entrepreneurial community throughout the year. Magnify focuses on empowering startups by expediting access to facilities and enhancing their capital efficiency and market prospects. These joint mixers provided a valuable platform for UCLA faculty, founders, and ecosystem partners to network and forge connections.

In collaboration with Startup UCLA, nine UCLA faculty members participated in the Faculty Innovation Fellows program, aimed at accelerating their research endeavors. Led by the Startup UCLA team, the fellows concentrated on refining their pitches, developing business strategies, and receiving venture consulting. TDC remains dedicated to fostering innovation, research, and entrepreneurship across campus, eagerly anticipating new achievements to celebrate in the coming years.

Dr. Edgerton, is a globally respected scientist with over five decades of experience and who has authored over 575 scientific and clinical publications, having made seminal discoveries that reshaped paradigms and unveiled innovative clinical insights widely embraced by scientific and clinical circles.

UCLA HOUSES TRAILBLAZING faculty and tech across all sectors, averaging around twenty new startups per year. In FY2024, several UCLA-affiliated companies achieved significant milestones.
ON MAY 6TH, TEAM MEMBERS from UCLA Technology Development Group had the opportunity to tour the future UCLA Research Park. There were no hard hats needed as the space is currently gutted and no construction was currently taking place.

Parking won’t seem to be a problem as there is ample parking space that was originally built as part of the Westside Pavilion mall. UCLA TDG started its tour on the rooftop parking off Westwood Blvd. at Pico located only a few blocks from our current office at Westwood and Wilshire. We were greeted by our tour guide, Bob Reith, Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives UCLA Academic Planning & Budget, who gave us a brief history of the mall and why UCLA decided to purchase the venue. Next, we continued to a lower floor that was stripped down to the girders supporting the building as memories of Barnes & Noble and Nordstrom made some of us nostalgic. The openness of the space is vast, and the opportunities seem endless.

We moved on to an area that had some office spaces framed out where we, of course, jokingly started to claim stake to offices with windows. But the UCLA Research Park is in such an early stage of development that no one is sure of all the departments that would take residence here. It was time to take the elevator to Level P1 for parking. This is the underground parking garage and our tour guide let us know that since the area is stable, dark and quiet, the area would most likely be the center for quantum science and engineering.

Finally, we were led to the beautiful outdoor area. A space that former owners, Google, built with their employees in mind. The views were gorgeous on this typical, sunny and clear Los Angeles day. The space had a “tech company” feel with blonde wood, trees, plantings and even a pergola with string lights.

We ended our tour with the team enjoying the outdoor amphitheater and imagining the future of the UCLA Research Park.

Read more about UCLA Research Park [https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/ucla-to-transform-empty-mall-into-research-park](https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/ucla-to-transform-empty-mall-into-research-park)
ON APRIL 18TH, the city of San Mateo played host to an intimate gathering—the UCLA Technology Development Group and UCLA Ventures Executive Dinner. The event was more than just a networking opportunity; it was a celebration of groundbreaking partnerships and a glimpse into the future of entrepreneurship at UCLA.

UNVEILING THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP
The highlight of the evening was the announcement of the new partnership between UCLA TDG and UCLA Ventures. UCLA Ventures is a new department within UCLA TDG that includes a philanthropic community made up of more than 200 members with interest in giving back to the UCLA innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem. This dynamic collaboration is poised to redefine the landscape of innovation at the University, further bridging academia and industry. Together, they aim to nurture the next generation of trailblazers through programs like Bruin Founders.

BRUIN FOUNDERS: MOVING YOUR IDEAS FORWARD
The evening brought renewed excitement as the spotlight turned to a new Mentor-in-Residence program, Bruin Founders. The program offers an opportunity for UCLA-affiliated startups to receive hands-on guidance launching a startup or scaling a business with added support from a philanthropic community of UCLA alumni & friends. This new programming will allow UCLA TDG to broaden the scope of startup support and aid in the transition of more ideas to market.

During the event, we featured a startup pitch from one of our node partners and had a captivating keynote from a renowned professor and entrepreneur. Besa mi Vino, one of UCLA Anderson’s success stories, took center stage to share their journey. They provided the group with a debut sampling of a refreshing seltzer drink which left us all wanting more.

Following their presentation Dr. Matthew Lieberman, renowned neuroscientist and UCLA professor, delivered a keynote that resonated with every attendee. His insights into the human brain, social connections, and the power of perspective and empathy had the audience mesmerized. As the room hung on his every word, it was evident that innovation isn’t just about technology—it’s about understanding what makes us human.

ELEVATING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT
The UCLA TDG and UCLA Ventures Executive Dinner was more than an event; it was a catalyst for change. As the evening drew to a close, we left inspired, our minds racing with possibilities. The future belongs to those who dare to dream, and with Bruin Founders leading the way, we’re thrilled to build a space where innovation can blossom.

Stay tuned for more exciting collaborations, transformative partnerships, and more moments that redefine what’s possible. The UCLA spirit is alive, and it’s thriving.
Partnership to Propel Innovation

UCLA Technology Development Group (TDG) and UCLA Ventures Forge Dynamic Partnership to Propel Innovation

Accelerate Commercialization: Streamlining the process of startup formation through tailored mentorship to expedite the journey from the University to Industry. Through this collaboration, UCLA TDG and UCLA Ventures are poised to catalyze a new era of innovation, entrepreneurship, and societal impact. By harnessing the collective expertise, resources, and passion of the UCLA community, they aim to drive positive change and shape the future of the commercial landscape.

Amir Naiberg, AVC, CEO & President of UCLA TDG, remarked, “This partnership represents a significant milestone in our mission to bridge the gap between academia and industry. By joining forces with UCLA Ventures, we can provide even greater support to our entrepreneurs, propelling their innovations from the University to market.” Echoing Naiberg’s sentiments, Brija Johnson, Executive Director of UCLA Ventures, stated, “We are thrilled to collaborate with UCLA TDG to empower UCLA-affiliated startups. By combining our resources and networks, we can amplify the impact of UCLA’s entrepreneurial ecosystem and foster the success of the next generation of innovators.”

For more information about UCLA TDG and UCLA Ventures, please visit: UCLA Ventures

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