

Connect Magazine >

## USTAR introduces two "nanotechnology all stars" lured to Utah with State funding

### Duo working on early disease detection and killing cancerous tumors

By Via Press Release, 10/29/2007 7:29:08 AM MST

Nanotechnology thrives at the tiniest of molecular levels. But its impact on Utah's economy could be huge. That was part of the message at the Utah Nanotechnology Conference hosted by the University of Utah in partnership with Utah State.

In conjunction with the Conference, the Utah Science, Technology and Research Initiative (USTAR) introduced two new scientists recruited to the University of Utah using funding allocated by the state legislature via the USTAR program. The two scientists, Marc Porter and Hamid Ghandehari, are leaders in their field who have bought into USTAR's plan of developing research that can be commercialized and translated into economic returns for the State of Utah.

"Marc and Hamid are excellent examples of the kind of people we are recruiting in all of our innovation focus areas," said Ted McAleer, Executive Director of USTAR. "They are pioneering research that has enormous potential for commercialization and benefiting our state."

Dr. Marc Porter comes to Utah from Arizona State University, where he was one of the first Scientists recruited to the BioDesign Institute and where he ran the Center for Combinatorial Sciences. While Arizona offered Dr. Porter excellent facilities, he was attracted to Utah by USTAR's three-fold approach of recruiting top researchers, building world-class facilities and, importantly, aggressively commercializing the technology through the assistance of the Technology Outreach and Innovation Program.

Dr. Porter's research focuses on nanotechnology "biosensors" a USTAR Innovation area that intends to bring together collaborators from the College of Sciences, Dept of BioEngineering and the Medical School. He holds 10 patents, with several more pending. Porter brings with him to Utah a company called "Nanoparts," which he founded to manufacture gold nanoparticles, one of the most widely used classes of nanomaterials for chemical, bioanalytical, biomedical, optical, and nantechnological applications.

Dr. Hamid Ghandehari comes to Utah from the University of Maryland, where he has directed the Center for Nanomedicine and Cellular Delivery. He founded one of the first multidisciplinary nanomedicine centers in the U.S. with faculty membership spanning the disciplines of engineering, chemistry, dentistry, pharmacy, and cancer research, providing expertise for the design, development and translation into clinic of nanosystems for therapy and diagnosis.

Dr. Ghandehari's research – funded by NIH, NSF and the Department of Defense – focuses on innovation in drug delivery. Specifically, Dr. Ghandehari is working on targeted delivery of bioactive agents to solid cancerous tumors and in Utah he will be one of the new faculty anchoring the USTAR BioMedical Device Innovation team .

In March 2006, the Utah State Legislature passed Senate Bill 75 creating the Utah Science Technology and Research (USTAR) initiative providing funding for strategic investments at the University of Utah and Utah State University to recruit world-class researchers and build state-of-the-art interdisciplinary research and development facilities and to form first-rate science, innovation, and commercialization teams across the State. This initiative focuses on leveraging the proven success of Utah's research universities in creating and commercializing innovative technologies to generate more technology-based start-up firms, higher paying jobs, and additional business activity leading to a state-wide expansion of the Utah's tax base. Ultimately, USTAR stands as an innovative, visionary, and far-reaching initiative to further bolster Utah's high-technology economy, which recently received recognition from Kaffman Foundation as the "Most Dynamic Economy" More information can be found at [www.ustar.utah.gov](http://www.ustar.utah.gov).

Copyright ©2000-2006 Lumin Publishing, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Powered by MWI Content Management System