

BEACON Newsletter

The Biomedical Engineering Alliance and Consortium

April 1, 2001

A Good Beginning

During the first quarter of 2001, BEACON began a number of initiatives that were well received by members of the BEACON community. This Newsletter highlights a few of these activities.

BEACON Holds First Technology Fair

On Friday, February 16, 2001, BEACON held its inaugural Technology Fair. The purpose of this event was to provide members of the BEACON community the opportunity to become more familiar/aware of the educational, research and entrepreneurial interests of others within the BEACON network. To achieve this goal, this event was open only to members of BEACON, i.e., institutional and corporate as well as individual members. The Technology Fair was held at the **General Electric Medical Systems** facility in Wallingford, Connecticut. During the course of the afternoon (1:00-4:00pm), approximately 50 presenters described their interests and activities via poster or laptop presentations. In total there were over 120 individuals from BEACON member institutions and corporations that attended this event and engaged in a lively dialogue about common interests. Consequently, several collaborative arrangements were made as a direct result

of the conversations that occurred during the Technology Fair. To cap off the event, General Electric hosted a wine and cheese social from 4:00-5:30pm thus enabling BEACON members to further interact and share information. Many thanks to Ray Huey, the Site Manager and Director at GE Medical Systems, for the use of the facilities and support of this event.

An Abstract Booklet, briefly describing the presentations was published, and handed out at the Fair. If any BEACON member would like a copy, please contact Jane Mussehl. As a final note: a questionnaire was sent out to all attendees. The overall response was extremely favorable. As a result, it was suggested that BEACON hold another Technology Fair in the fall of 2001, open to all who wish to participate. **Plans are presently underway to have a combined event, i.e. BEACON Symposium and Technology Fair on Friday, October 12, 2001** (see second page). Anyone wishing to assist in the planning of this event, please contact Jane Mussehl or Joseph Bronzino promptly.



BEACON, the Biomedical Engineering Alliance and Consortium Collaborative Team: Trinity College, The University of Connecticut, The University of Hartford, The University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Central Connecticut State University, Hartford Hospital, John Dempsey Hospital, Saint Francis Medical Center, Baystate Medical Center and The University of Frieburg Medical School. Corporate Sponsors include Pfizer, Kendall Health Care, GE Medical, Neurogen, Pepe & Hazard, Noble, Young & O'Connor, Pullman & Comley, The Steinbeis Foundation (Germany), Boston Scientific, Premise Development, and Bletchley Park Advisors, LLC.

BEACON's First Institutional Visit

One of BEACON's primary goals is to facilitate the formation of collaborative educational and/or research efforts within the BEACON network. With this in mind, BEACON has instituted a series of "Institutional Visits" which will enable each BEACON institution to showcase those areas of activity that it wishes to establish collaborative ties.

The first institutional visit was held at **Saint Francis Medical Center** on Monday, March 12, 2001 from 2:00-4:00pm. Approximately 15 attendees from BEACON participating institutions were treated to a brief presentation and private tour. The visit focused in a detail review of the following areas:

- **Effect of gene expression on bone density.**
Dr. Ernesto Canalis
- **Clinical research efforts at the Hoffman Heart Institute.** Dr. Bernie Clark.
- **Sleep Apnea and related disorder studies.**
Dr. Herbert Scherzer.

The attendees were impressed by the scope and sophistication of the work underway, and felt that the Visit was very worthwhile. Institutional Visits for other BEACON partners are presently being planned. Please refer to the BEACON Working Calendar for dates and times

BEACON Sponsors NIH Visit

Following conversations with BEACON at the Whitaker Foundation Educational Summit last December, Dr. Richard Swaja, the Senior Advisor for Biomedical Engineering in the office of Extramural Research at NIH, visited the BEACON community on Friday, March 16th. During his activity-packed day, Dr. Swaja spent the morning touring Trinity College and The Learning Corridor, then listened to showcase presentations on Tissue Engineering for Diabetes, collaborative efforts in Biomechanics, plus new developments in 3D Echocardiography and Biomaterials. Dr Swaja made a presentation to a luncheon (12:30-3:00pm) audience of approximately 45 members of the BEACON community and engaged in a lively question and answer period before heading back to Bethesda, Maryland.

The visit was extremely beneficial to all faculty, medical professionals, and corporate partners of BEACON by providing first hand the interest NIH has in supporting a wide range of research efforts in Bioengineering and Bioinformatics. Most noteworthy was the preference by NIH to support "partnerships" that advance their long-term interests research. Dr. Swaja explained the improved avenues of accessing grant opportunities and outlined NIH's future goals. Dr Swaja was most

impressed by research already underway within the BEACON community and commented that we are "further along than other organizations" he has seen in the US. Those present were strongly encouraged to submit applications to NIH for establishing new centers, industrial research projects, training grants, and other relevant applications to further the efforts of the BEACON community.

Dr. Swaja closed by stating; "NIH is keenly focused on supporting collaborative research and partnership efforts that NIH feels best helps their response to our national needs and interests".

BEACON Plans Symposium/Technology Fair

Plans are underway for BEACON's fourth annual Symposium. This year it will be held in conjunction with a Technology Fair which will include poster and laptop presentations from BEACON institutional and corporate members. The Symposium theme is "Bioinformatics" and it will cover topics on computer-based instrumentation and medical informatics. It will be held at Heublein Hall in the Education & Resource Center at Hartford Hospital on Friday, October 12, 2001. The Symposium and Technology Fair will also include exhibits and demonstrations from corporate sponsors. Please mark your calendar.

The Symposium Committee members include: E. Rosow, R. Huey, B. Miller, N. Toussaint, D. Peterson, L. Lazar, J. Horn, J. Bronzino, and J. Mussehl. Roles within the symposium committee were established. J. Bronzino with J. Mussehl's assistance, will assume the responsibilities for "Overall Chair". These duties will include overall coordination of the symposium including the contact of funding sources. E. Rosow will assume the role of "Program Chair". His responsibilities will include the recruitment of speakers and attendee databases. N. Toussaint agreed to be the "Technology Fair Chair". His responsibilities will include the recruitment of vendors and Tech Fair participants to provide poster and laptop presentations. Anybody interested in assisting should contact one of the co-chairs as soon as possible. At any rate, please mark your calendars for this important event.

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