

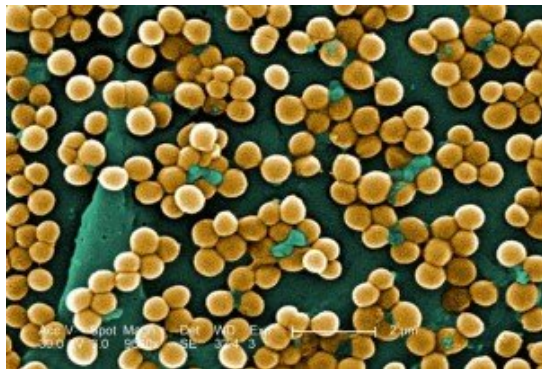


## **Cleveland Clinic takes an equity stake in Pennsylvania antimicrobial drug developer**

by Mary Vanac

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Spores of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria

CLEVELAND, Ohio — The Cleveland Clinic is investing the time and expertise of its business and medical professionals in FTA Therapeutics LLC for an undisclosed equity stake in the Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, company that develops drugs to treat resistant bacteria.

The announcement was made by PURE Bioscience in San Diego, which develops and markets bioscience products that provide non-toxic solutions to global health problems. A year ago, PURE Bioscience partnered with FTA to develop PURE's patented antimicrobial agent, silver dihydrogen citrate, which shows promise in treating wounds and acne.

FTA's mission is "to be the leader in the emerging field of free-ion based microbials — to deliver significant clinical benefit through innovative research, effective drug formulation and unique product design," the company states at its Web site. FTA wants to develop "an advanced generation of free-ion based topical drug delivery systems and surface applications" that prevent and treat infections caused by drug-resistant microorganisms, like methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria, nicknamed MRSA.

Dr. Francis Papay, chair of the Dermatology and Plastic Surgery Institute at the Cleveland Clinic is co-founder and medical director for FTA Therapeutics, which goes by the name FTA Bioscience at its Web site. Dr. Papay brought FTA to the attention of Cleveland Clinic Innovations (CCI), the Clinic's commercialization and investing unit, said Chris Coburn, the unit's executive director.

“This is not technology that started at the Cleveland Clinic,” Coburn said. “To be clear, our investment here is our time and our effort, it’s not money. We’re not a cash investor.”

That said, the Clinic decided to invest in FTA “because it’s an exciting technology that our team here felt had a lot of potential and for us,” Coburn said. “It’s a collaboration we think will have longterm benefits, whether they’re clinical outcomes or commercial ones.”

The innovation unit vetted a potential investment in FTA the same way it does the Clinic’s technologies when it spins them out to companies that can take them to market. “We go through the same process to establish this relationship, this equity stake, as we do when we create a company,” Coburn said. “So it goes through all the same vetting. It goes through the same board. The board votes up or down. It’s a very set approach for us.”

The Clinic has made non-cash investments for small stakes in some other companies. “We call this our Equity Partners Program,” Coburn said. “I think it’s relatively innovative. We have not seen ... other institutions that are doing it.”

PURE Bioscience also announced FTA’s board of directors:

- Thomas Bradshaw — co-founder and chairman, who is former CEO and president of Ricerca Biosciences LLC in Concord Township, Ohio, a contract research company to the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. Bradshaw also is co-founder and chairman of Great Lakes Pharmaceuticals, created in 2005 by Ricerca and that licenses technology from Case Western Reserve University and University Hospitals Case Medical Center.
- Dr. Anthony J. Balsamo – orthopedic surgeon at Geisinger Specialty Clinics in Wilkes-Barre, Penn.; clinical professor at the Drexel University College of Medicine.
- Anthony J. Balsamo Jr. – executive at Philadelphia-based Vynamic, a health and life sciences management consulting firm.
- Dr. Wilma Fowler Bergfeld – co-director of dermatopathology, Departments of Dermatology and Pathology, and senior staff dermatologist and past head of the Section of Dermatological Research in the Department of Dermatology at the Cleveland Clinic. She also is director of the Cleveland Clinic’s Dermatopathology Fellowship and professor of dermatology and pathology at the Clinic and associate clinical professor of the Department of Dermatology at Case Western Reserve University.
- Dr. Papay – co-founder and medical director for FTA; chair of the Dermatology and Plastic Surgery Institute at the Cleveland Clinic; section head of the Clinic’s Craniofacial Surgery/Department of Plastic Surgery; co-founder of Bioneer Surgical Inc.
- Dr. Allison T. Vidimos – serves on the Judicial Committee for the American Academy of Dermatology, the editorial board for the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology, as well as on the boards of the Ohio Society for Dermatologic Surgery, and the International Transplant Skin Cancer Cooperative; chair of the Department of Dermatology at Cleveland Clinic.