

Breaking Boundaries: AI's Role in Advancing Science and Innovation

January 25, 2024

Remarks from TTU and TTUHSC



Werner Kuhr, PhD, MS

Associate Vice President of
Innovation and Entrepreneurship
Texas Tech University

Werner G. Kuhr serves as Associate Vice President of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Texas Tech University, where he oversees TTU's robust innovation ecosystem, which includes the Office of Research Commercialization (ORC), The Innovation Hub, the Northwest Texas Small Business Development Center (NWTSBDC), and he serves on the Board of the Texas Tech Research Park, Inc. (TTRP; a separate 501(c)(3) entity). Reporting to the Vice President for Research and Innovation (VP), the AVP I&E works closely with the VP, strategizing, energizing, and leading a focused Research and Innovation Office, and driving economic engagement with TTU's innovation ecosystem. The AVP I&E serves as TTU's primary point of contact for the university's innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic development initiatives.

He has participated in the formation of five start-up technology companies which were based on translation research in protein diagnostics and genomics, including Clinical Microsensors, which is now NASDAQ-listed as GenMark Diagnostics. Altogether, he helped raise roughly \$95M in venture capital and return over \$400M in equity to investors and shareholders.

Phil Sizer, PhD, MEd

Associate Vice President for Research Innovation
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

Phil Sizer is the Associate Vice President for Research Innovation at TTUHSC. He serves as Associate Dean for Research and Innovation for the School of Health Professions, as well as Senior Faculty in the ScD (PT), PhD (Rehabilitation Sciences) and Medical Pain Fellowship Programs at TTUHSC. Phil earned a BS in Physical Therapy from UTMB-Galveston (1985), as well as his MEd in Exercise Science (1993) and PhD with a Motor Control emphasis (2002) at TTU.

Phil is co-inventor of the patent-pending Tis-Kin™ technology and a co-founding partner and CEO of TKQuant, LLC. He is the Co-PI of the NSF I-Corps Team: Tissue Kinematics Quantification that conducted over 250 customer discovery interviews. Owing to over 35 years of professional clinical experience, Phil led his team to 1st place in the 2017 Houston NSF National I-CORPS Cohort, the TTU System President's Innovation Award (1st Place), and TTU Accelerator Program completion. Phil is the Co-Founder of the Matador UAS Consortium that is leveraging commercial drones to support healthcare delivery. He has collectively educated / mentored over 300 innovation teams to-date, where three teams achieved 1st or 2nd place at NSF National I-CORPS Cohorts. Finally, Phil is the Acting CEO for the Texas Tech Research Park (TTRP), and an Ex-Officio member of the TTRP Board of Directors.

ARPA-H Discussion



Mike Stebbins, PhD

Vice President, Medical & Threat Countermeasures Division
Advanced Technology International

Dr. Stebbins is Vice President of ATI and oversees the Medical & Threat Countermeasures Division's. This Division includes six unique Other Transaction (OT) Agreement programs for HHS and DoD valued at greater than \$50B. The HHS portfolio includes BARDA's Rapid Response Partnership Vehicle (RRPV) and BARDA's Biopharmaceutical Manufacturing Preparedness – Consortium (BioMaP), as well as ARPA-H's Customer Experience Hub, part of the ARPANET-H Network. On the DoD side the portfolio includes the Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium (MTEC), the Medical CBRN Defense Consortium (MCDC) and the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Consortium (CWMD).

Mike led the startup of 2 biotech/health related OT efforts and since inception has led the execution of over \$10B of funded prototype development projects through the MCDC and CWMD consortia. He also serves as the Executive Director for both the MCDC and CWMD Consortia, as in his role as the Program Executive for RRPV, Bio-MaP and Customer Experience Hub is guiding the startup of these important new initiatives.

Mike was awarded a Ph.D. in analytical chemistry from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and a B.S. in chemistry from the College of Charleston.



Panna Sharma

CEO & President

Lantern Pharma

Panna Sharma is the President, CEO, and Board Member of Lantern Pharma Inc., a clinical-stage oncology biotech using artificial intelligence and genomics to innovate the rescue, revitalization, and development of precision cancer therapeutics. As CEO, Panna is responsible for developing Lantern's strategic vision, and working closely with the venture investors to raise capital that will place the Company at the forefront of using AI and genomics in developing its pipeline of precision therapies.

Prior to joining Lantern in 2018, Panna was the President and CEO of Cancer Genetics, Inc., a provider of genomic and immune-based cancer diagnostics and therapy development services to some of the most prestigious medical institutions and pharma companies in the world. In his capacity as CEO at CGIX, he raised over \$100 million in the public and private markets and grew the company from 25 employees in New Jersey to over 250 employees globally across multiple continents. Panna took CGIX public in 2013 and acquired 4 companies globally that help CGIX deliver on its mission to help personalize cancer treatment.



Daniel Hargrove, JD

Founder

Texas BioTech Ventures, LLC

Mr. Hargrove is a biotech entrepreneur, investor, lawyer, board member, former law professor, and retired military officer (reserve). He is the Chief Strategy Officer for Telperian, Inc and serves on its Board of Directors. He is also the Co-Founder of PalloV, LLC, a clinical-stage drug company developing novel immunotherapeutics.

Mr. Hargrove is Co-Founder and past President of Cancer Insight (now LumaBridge), which is a full-service clinical CRO that develops immunotherapeutics, and Trauma Insight, a speciality CRO that assisted in the development of medical technologies relevant to the US military. Mr. Hargrove led Cancer Insight and Trauma Insight to exit and acquisition by the private equity firm Summit Partners (deal closed in 2021).

Mr. Hargrove is a former active duty Army officer, having served with the 10th Mountain Division and deployed to the Middle East with the 82nd Airborne Division. As a reservist, Mr. Hargrove served as a Professor of Law at the U.S. Army JAG School from 2004 to 2011 and reserve staff judge advocate of two major commands. He retired from the military Reserve in 2018 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.



David Miller, JD, MBA

Managing Director, Hub Fuel Fund

Texas Tech University

David L. Miller serves as an Executive in Residence and Managing Director of the Hub Fuel Fund for Texas Tech University. He previously held the role of CEO for PaveTex Engineering, which was the largest infrastructure construction engineering and testing firm in Texas before being purchased by Atlas (ATCX, Nasdaq).

Mr. Miller served as a founding member of ALAMOSA, which was a telecommunications carrier which sold for \$4.3B. Mr. Miller is an investor in FCC licensed wireless spectrum and real estate. David was appointed by Governor Rick Perry to the role of presiding officer of the Texas Emerging Technology Fund and is the current chair of the Charter School Finance Corporation for the State of Texas.

He is a Former Vice Chancellor for Research & Commercialization for the Texas Tech University System.



Siva Vanapalli, PhD

CEO

NemaLife

Siva is an entrepreneur and holds the Bryan Pearce Bagley Regents Chair professorship for entrepreneurship at Texas Tech University. He obtained his PhD in Chemical Engineering from the University of Michigan, a M.S. degree in Food Science from Penn State and a B. Tech degree in Agriculture and Food Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. He has 15 years of experience in developing AI-assisted microfluidic platforms for life-sciences.

NemaLife is the second startup out of his patented technologies with the first startup Neofluidics exiting in 2021. He co-founded NemaLife with a strong IP portfolio and a dedicated expert team to bring disruptive innovations to food tech, nutraceutical and pharma industries with the aim of improving quality of life on a healthy planet.