

## What Actually Drives Innovation in the Life Sciences Industry

*By John W. Manzetti, President & CEO of Pittsburgh Life Sciences Greenhouse*

With the evolving digital landscape and its impact on the technology sector, innovation has become a buzzword for many different categories. Within the saturated landscape, it's important to take a step back and think about what truly defines innovation. It's more than the ability to take a concept and bring it to commercialization and it's more than finding the right recipe to showcase technology in a way that attracts investors. It comes down to creativity, savvy and ultimately finding novel methods to address problems in ways that are considered "coloring outside the lines" of what is normal. It is not simply a "better mousetrap" – as better is not innovative. "Different" is what makes a solution innovative – something that truly has never been done before.

At the Pittsburgh Life Sciences Greenhouse, we work with a multitude of portfolio companies that we believe are "different." Here's a closer look at the solutions that are making them cutting-edge.

- 1) [Rinovum Women's Health](#) has taken an age-old problem of difficulty in conception and has addressed it in a novel way – through [The Stork®](#), a device that provides a simple, yet elegant solution that is cost-effective in helping families across the globe conceive. CEO and President Stephen Bollinger was thinking outside the box when he developed this technology which has proven in a recent clinical study to be more effective at delivering sperm to the cervix than natural intercourse when trying to get pregnant.
- 2) [Cognition Therapeutics](#) (CogRx) is committed to the discovery of new therapies to improve the lives of those living with Alzheimer's Disease (AD) and other neurological disorders and has stepped up to the plate to solve the "unsolvable cognitive disorder" with a small molecule drug, which appears to be working in recent toxicity tests in [human Australian trials](#). Big pharma can't believe it, as they never thought it could work, but it is showing signs of success and Chief Science Officer Susan Catalano is pleased with the forward progression that has occurred to-date and has said that human treatment for AD will begin this year.
- 3) [Medrobotics](#), the company that created the [Flex® Robotic System](#), has changed surgery as we know it by giving physicians the ability to access anatomical locations that were previously difficult or impossible to reach minimally invasively. The solution combines robotics in a unique and interesting way with surgery techniques that provide a life-saving and tissue-sparing solution for many difficult surgical applications. We will continue to see many successes from Medrobotics as it just passed FDA clearance!
- 4) [Blue Belt Technologies, Inc.](#) is developing the next generation of smart surgical instruments for initial use in orthopedic procedures. The company's Navio® Surgical System incorporates patented technology to provide precise control to surgeons via an intelligent, handheld, computer-assisted, bone-

cutting tool. The Navio system provides robotic assistance to the surgeon while performing bone-shaping tasks through minimally invasive incisions. The Company's STRIDE™ Unicondylar Knee system provides implant features optimized for use with Navio.

While there are numerous evolving technologies entering the healthcare market, I don't believe it will become increasingly harder for start-ups and other companies to think of ways to be "different." We have not seen any drop off in new and exciting ideas, and in fact, there has been more disruption now than ever. I predict that there will be more innovation coming in drug development and health information technology (HIT) applications that provide better and more cost-effective patient care. It's going to be more thoughtful treatment planning and delivery, not a better "mousetrap."