

## Georgia Bio E-Chronicle

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Would you attend a half-day forum exploring the potential impact of healthcare reform?

[Click here to take the 2 question poll.](#)

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**GEORGIA BIO**  
[www.gabio.org](http://www.gabio.org)

### Ten H.S. Biotech Classes Launch this Fall in GA

Multiple high schools in Barrow, DeKalb, Forsyth, Gwinnett and Savannah-Chatham school districts are launching new high school biotechnology curricula this fall. These courses emphasize extensive experimentation and laboratory work to engage students in learning science and develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills needed for post-secondary education and career readiness.

Georgia Bio has worked with educators at the schools, along with the Georgia Bioscience Technology Institute at Athens and Gwinnett Technical Colleges, to help prepare teachers for the courses, acquire needed equipment and supplies, and develop materials. New programs in Cobb, Fulton and Clayton counties will be launching in 2010. Much of this activity has been funded through the Innovation Crescent initiative by the Governor's Office of Workforce Development and the US Department of Labor.

### NIH Science Education Director to Open '09 Workforce Forum

**Bruce Fuchs**, PhD., Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Science Education, will be featured as the opening speaker at Georgia Bio's 2009 Life Science Workforce Forum in November at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Organized around the theme of partnerships to improve science education, the forum will provide insights into successful practices and partnerships, and will facilitate formation of local connections for educators, employers, and economic developers. Delivering the closing speech will be **Tony Beck**, PhD., Director of the Science Education partnership program at the NIH's National Center for Research Resources. Dr. Beck will highlight innovative programs and best practices for developing tomorrow's scientists.

The GaBio's annual Workforce Forum is Tuesday, November 17, from 1 pm to 5 pm, at the CDC's Clifton Road campus. More details and registration information will follow in early fall.

## GaBio Responds to State's Medicaid Reimbursement Changes

GaBio's Government Affairs Committee has been working with the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) on resolving issues related to changes in Medicaid reimbursements for injectable drugs administered by physicians in their offices and outpatient settings.

In an effort to save dwindling state funds, DCH in May proposed reducing reimbursement rates for medicines on the state Physicians' Injectable Drug List. GaBio alerted DCH that its initial proposal in June would have reduced the reimbursements below physicians' costs for the medicines. The likely impact would have been a shift to hospital-based administration of the drugs, which is more expensive and would have wiped out the anticipated savings.

The DCH Board postponed voting on the reimbursement changes in June and this month issued a new proposal. It is consistent with Medicare reimbursements and the Medicaid reimbursements of other states. The Government Affairs Committee submitted comments Wednesday applauding DCH Commissioner **Rhonda Medows**, M.D., for the department's willingness to re-evaluate the initial proposal. In addition, GaBio recommended that DCH consider using quarterly updates of drug manufacturers' prices instead of annual updates. In some cases the quarterly updates reveal decreases in prices enabling DCH to lower reimbursements sooner.

## GaBio to File Comments with US Supreme Court in *Bilski* Patent Case

Georgia Bio (GaBio) is filing an amicus brief in the case of *Bilski v. Doll*, which will be argued before the U.S. Supreme Court during its October Term. The brief urges the Supreme Court to reverse the decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in *In re Bilski*. It was prepared for GaBio on a pro bono basis by Arnall Golden Gregory's **William Kitchens**; **David Huizenga**, PhD; and **Robert Hodges**, PhD., **Scott Taylor** and **Heather Smith Michael**.

Although the case does not directly involve biotech patents, the *In re Bilski* decision by the Federal Circuit imposes a rigid test on what business methods are patentable, puts innovations by life sciences companies in question and could reduce the value of patents held by GaBio members and others in the biotech industry. For example, it could make it easier for courts to invalidate claims that are directed to collecting or processing human genetic information.

The case deals with the issue of whether a "process" must be tied to a particular machine or apparatus, or transform a particular article into a different state or thing ("machine-or-transformation" test), to be eligible for patenting and whether the "machine-or-transformation" test for patent eligibility, contradicts Congressional intent that patents protect "methods of doing business."

At stake in the outcome is the most basic question in patent law: what is patentable? GaBio's amicus brief argues that the U.S. Patent Code and the Supreme Court's previous decisions on this question support a broad view of what is patent-eligible, with only limited exceptions. The Federal Circuit's test cuts off significant technologies from patent protection and has already been applied to strike down a broad class of biotechnology and medical inventions. These are inventions that have long been patented, have been specifically considered by Congress to be patentable, have considerable value to the public, and require patent protection to insure their continued development.

## High School Students Shadow Successful Women Scientists

Georgia Bio is assisting in developing shadowing experiences this summer for female high school students with interests in life sciences and research. This initiative, part of a program offered by

Atlanta-based nonprofit Sherpani Partners at the Lovett School, provided career exploration for high school students and young adults, and was part of a week-long exploration of career paths and planning.

Scientists participating from Georgia Bio organizations included **Grace Powers** of CardioMEMS, **Melissa Kemp** of Georgia Institute of Technology and **Traci Goodchild** of Saint Joseph's Translational Research Institute.

Scientists interested in participating can register at [www.georgiabiomed.org](http://www.georgiabiomed.org) as a visiting scientist program volunteer.

## Wanted: Scientists to Share Experiences with Teachers, Students

Georgia Bio's new education website ([www.georgiabiomed.org](http://www.georgiabiomed.org)) makes it easy for science professionals to contribute to improving Georgia's science education.

At the education website, you can register as a volunteer and indicate your preferences as to how you would like to participate. Just go to the website and click on the Visiting Scientist navigation bar, and Georgia Bio will do the rest to connect you to a specific classroom as requests are made. Please be assured your registration is not made public, but is only used internally by Georgia Bio.

Email Cinda Herndon-King, PhD, GaBio's Director of Education Programs with any questions ([cinda.king@gabio.org](mailto:cinda.king@gabio.org)).

## Upcoming Events

### BioBash

Tuesday, August 4 - 6:00-8:00pm  
Lobby at 12, Atlantic Station - Atlanta, GA  
Cost: \$15

### Funding a Medical Device Company During an Economic Meltdown

Wednesday, August 19 - 7:30-9:00am  
GTRI - Atlanta, GA  
Cost: \$20 - Members / \$35 - NonMembers / \$10 - Students

[Click Here to Register](#)

## Looking for Ways to Save?

Now is the time to check out BIO Business Solutions, **BIO's cost-savings program**. With 15 money-saving opportunities with leading providers in the biotech industry, saving your company money is made easier with BIO Business Solutions. **Participation is free to Georgia Bio members.** [Learn More.](#)