

# PEOPLE



Protagonist Therapeutics (Milpitas, CA, USA) has announced the appointment of **Richard S. Shames** (left) as chief medical officer. He joins the company from Aldea Pharmaceuticals, where he most recently served as senior vice president and chief medical officer. Prior to joining Aldea, Shames was clinical research and early biologics lead scientist (immunology) at Merck.

“Richard has a long track record of success in leadership positions in clinical drug development across multiple autoimmune and inflammatory diseases, which will serve Protagonist well as we initiate clinical trials of our lead oral peptide, PTG-100, for inflammatory bowel diseases,” said Dinesh Patel, president and CEO of Protagonist. “His background includes oversight of the clinical development of novel small-molecule and biologics programs at both clinical-stage biotechnology companies and global pharmaceutical firms. I am very pleased to welcome Richard to the Protagonist executive team.”



Small-molecule discovery software developer Optibrium (Cambridge, UK) has marked the opening of its office in Cambridge, Massachusetts, by naming **Tamsin**

**Mansley** (left) head of North American operations. Mansley has over 10 years of experience developing, supporting and selling computational modeling and cheminformatics software. Previously, she was a medicinal chemist at Eli Lilly and UCB Research.

**Susan Abushakra** has been appointed chief medical officer of Alzheon (Framingham, MA, USA). She brings 15 years of neurological drug development expertise, having previously served as chief medical officer at Transition Therapeutics and Elan/Perrigo.

Atlas Regeneration (Winston-Salem, NC, USA), a developer for novel software platforms and algorithms for drug discovery relating to regenerative medicine and stem cell research, has launched with **Anthony Atala** as CEO. Atala has served as director of the Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine and has been the W.H. Boyce Professor and chair of the department of urology at Wake Forest University since 2004.

Verona Pharma (Cardiff, UK) has appointed **Ken Cunningham** and **Anders Ullman** as nonexecutive directors. Cunningham, currently nonexecutive chairman of Abzena and nonexecutive director of Xention Pharma, replaces **Trevor Jones** on the board. Ullman was most recently head of R&D at Baxter Biosciences. Verona also announced that **Stuart Bottomley** and **Claire Poll** have retired from the board.

Jounce Therapeutics (Cambridge, MA, USA) has announced the appointment of **Kim Drapkin** as CFO. She brings more than 20 years of experience working with private and publicly traded biotech and pharma companies. Most recently, she led a consulting firm where she served as interim CFO for early-stage biotechs, including Jounce,

Eleven Biotherapeutics, NinePoint Medical, Blueprint Medicines, Warp Drive Bio, Edimer Pharmaceuticals and Voyager Therapeutics.

**Dennis M. Fenton** has been named to the board of directors of biosimilar developer Pfenex (San Diego). Fenton has over three decades of biotech industry experience, recently retiring as executive vice president, operations, at Amgen after a lengthy career. He previously served on the boards of Hospira, Dendreon, Genzyme and Amira Pharmaceuticals and currently serves on the boards of Portola Pharmaceuticals, XenoPort, Nora Therapeutics and Kythera Biopharmaceuticals.

**Thomas Insel** will step down as director of the US National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in November to join Google Life Sciences, the healthcare arm of Google's newly formed Alphabet holding company. According to a Google spokesperson, Insel will “explore how the life sciences team at Google could have an impact on the huge challenges related to understanding, diagnosing and treating mental illness.” **Bruce Cuthbert**, director of the Division of Adult Translational Research at NIMH, will serve as acting director of NIMH.

Denali Therapeutics (S. San Francisco, CA, USA) has named **Steve E. Krognnes** as CFO. Krognnes joins Denali from Genentech, where he had served as CFO and a member of the executive committee since 2009. Prior to that, he led Roche's global mergers & acquisition team for five years and served on its global finance leadership team.

AYOXXA Biosystems (Cologne, Germany) has announced that **Gerald Möller** has joined its supervisory board as chairman. Möller has 40 years of experience in pharma, diagnostics and biotech, having been CEO of Boehringer Mannheim, a member of Roche's executive committee, a board member of Illumina and currently chairman of MorphoSys.

**Cheryl A. Moore** will join the New York Genome Center (New York) in January 2016 as president, COO and a member of the board of directors. She is currently executive vice president and COO of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

**Ted Schroeder** has been appointed to the board of directors of Otonomy (San Diego). He is a cofounder and served as president, CEO and member of the board of directors of Cadence Pharmaceuticals in 2004 until its acquisition by Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals in 2014. He currently serves on the board of Cidara Therapeutics.

**Ian Tomlinson** has been appointed chairman of biotech incubator Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst (SBC; Stevenage, UK). He is head of biopharmaceuticals R&D and worldwide business development at GlaxoSmithKline and founder and CSO of Domantis. Formerly GSK's representative on the SBC board, Tomlinson replaces **John Cooper** of the Wellcome Trust and the Francis Crick Institute, who had been interim chairman since the death of Allan Baxter in January. Cooper will continue on the board as the Wellcome Trust-nominated director.