

# People

A sample of goings on in and around the biotech and pharmaceutical industry.



**Jose Saro** (photo) has been appointed chief medical officer of biotherapeutic and reagent developer Avacta Group (Cambridge, UK). He brings over 20 years' experience in the preclinical, translational and early clinical development of oncology assets, spanning small molecules, biologics and drug conjugates. Most recently, Saro was senior translational medicine leader at the Roche Innovation Center Zurich. Before Roche, he was executive director oncology global development and medical affairs at Bristol-Myers Squibb, based in Paris.

"I am delighted that Jose Saro is joining Avacta to lead the therapeutic development strategy and to drive the in-house Affimer programs into the clinic," said Alastair Smith, CEO of Avacta. "His extensive experience in developing preclinical assets and translating those into clinical development will be an invaluable asset."

The US Food and Drug Administration has named **Amy Abernethy** principal deputy commissioner for food and drugs, the highest position at the FDA that is not a political appointment. Abernethy was most recently chief medical officer at Flatiron Health, a unit of Roche. "She is a highly regarded thought leader who has held numerous positions of leadership in her fields of interest and distinguished herself for her intellect, her passion for patient care and science, and her collegiality," wrote FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb in a memo to staff announcing Abernethy's appointment.

E-Scape Bio has announced the appointment of **Carrolee Barlow** as chief medical officer. Barlow most recently served as CEO of the Parkinson's Institute and Clinical Center, an independent nonprofit organization providing research, clinical trials and patient care for Parkinson's disease and related disorders.

UroGen Pharma has named **Elizabeth Barrett** as president, CEO, and a member of the board of directors, replacing **Ron Bentsur**. Barrett was CEO of Novartis Oncology and a member of the executive committee of Novartis. She previously served as global president of oncology at Pfizer.

Atara Biotherapeutics has announced that **Isaac Ciechanover** plans to step down as the company's president and CEO. Ciechanover will remain in his role until the earlier of the appointment of his successor or 30 June 2019.

Cerevel Therapeutics has announced the appointment of **Tony Coles**, **Marijn Dekkers** and **Norbert Riedel** to its board of directors. Coles, who will serve as executive chairman of the board, is a founding investor, chairman and CEO of Yumanity Therapeutics. Before Yumanity, he was chairman and CEO of Onyx Pharmaceuticals, which was acquired by Amgen in 2013. Dekkers is the founder and chairman of Novalis LifeSciences as well as chairman of Unilever. He was previously CEO of Bayer AG. Riedel is president and CEO of Aptinyx.

Twenty-five-year pharma industry veteran **Bahija Jallal** has been appointed CEO and a member of the board of directors of Immunocore. She joins Immunocore after serving as president of MedImmune, the global biologics R&D arm of AstraZeneca. Jallal joined MedImmune in 2006 and oversaw the development of several new medicines, including Imfinzi, Fasenra, Lumoxiti, Siliq and FluMist Quadrivalent.



Third Rock Ventures has announced the appointments of **Christoph Lengauer** and **Jeffrey Tong** (photo) as partners. Lengauer joined Third Rock in 2016 as a venture partner, serving as a member

of the founding advising team for Relay Therapeutics and as interim CEO of

Celsius Therapeutics. Before joining the firm, he was CSO and chief drug hunter at Blueprint Medicines. Tong joined Third Rock in 2016. As a venture partner he served as interim CEO of portfolio company Ambys Medicines; he is currently a board member at Ambys and Nurix Therapeutics. Before Third Rock, Tong was executive chairman of the board of Delinia and president and CEO of Nora Therapeutics.



The board of directors of Ironwood Pharmaceuticals has announced the appointments of CEOs to lead the two companies created from Ironwood's planned separation, which

is on track to be completed in the first half of 2019. **Mark Mallon** (photo) has been named CEO and a director of Ironwood, a gastrointestinal healthcare company. He joins the company after a 24-year career at AstraZeneca, where he held a variety of senior executive positions, most recently serving as executive vice president of global product and portfolio strategy. **Peter Hecht**, founding CEO of Ironwood, has been appointed CEO and a director of Cycleron Therapeutics.

Precision oncology therapy developer Personalis has announced the appointment of **Clinton Musil** as chief business officer. Musil joins the company from ARMO Biosciences, where he oversaw its \$147 million initial public offering and \$1.6 billion sale to Eli Lilly.

Genome editing company Caribou Biosciences has named **Natalie Sacks** to its board of directors. Sacks is currently chief medical officer at Harpoon Therapeutics, and previously served in the same capacity at Aduro Biotech. □

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