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## Events Column

**7/31** CURE Biotech Summer Cookout. Owenego Inn and Beach Club, 40 Linden Avenue, Branford. [more](#)

**9/26** Connecticut Innovations Annual Technology Celebration. The Aqua Turf Club, Southington, CT. [more](#)

**12/4** 5:45 pm - 7:45 pm. CURE Holiday Party. Location TBD. "New Haven's best holiday networking event." Watch for details.

## New Members

CURE welcomes the following new members.

[Cara Therapeutics, Inc.](#)  
[Chemipharma LLC](#)  
[City of West Haven](#)  
[CMD Bioscience, LLC](#)  
[CT Dept of Economic and Community Development](#)  
[CT Dept of Public Health](#)  
[Fountainhead Production, LLC](#)  
[Global Medical Communications, Inc.](#)  
[Hilb Rogal & Hobbs](#)  
[MannKind Corporation](#)  
[Market New Haven, Inc.](#)  
[Town of Branford](#)  
[Town of Farmington](#)  
[Town of Trumbull](#)  
[Triumvirate Environmental, Inc.](#)

## Yale Acquisition of Bayer Site Bodes Well

*From the desk of Paul Pescatello, President and CEO of CURE*

Yale's decision to acquire the Bayer HealthCare complex in West Haven and Orange was an excellent resolution to the question of what to do with this valuable bioscience and state-of-the-art laboratory campus. Yale's stewardship of the site will strengthen its already robust presence in bioscience and will catalyze Connecticut bioscience entrepreneurship.

[For the full story](#)



## Vascular Insights Broadens ClariVein™ Horizons

Vascular Insights, the Yale spin-out, has broadened its horizons and will seek to market its ClariVein™ device for uses other than vascular ablation. The varicose vein market remains the company's primary target, however. Formed around the product ideas of Yale's Michael Tal, the company is seeking strategic partners to share risk and accelerate product development, according to chief executive officer John Marano.

[For the full story](#)

## Affinimark Targets Cerebrospinal Fluid Leaks

Attorney and Yale School of Management graduate Chris Levesque and partners have launched Affinimark Technologies. Their first diagnostic under development, *Cerebrostrip*, is designed to detect the existence of cerebrospinal fluid leaks, potentially a \$300 million-plus annual U.S. market. A second product, *Prostalent*, is being developed to offer similar convenience and accuracy in the diagnosis of early-stage prostate cancer, a \$1.5+ billion domestic market with a targeted population of over 55 million men.

[For the full story](#)

## Despite Opposition, New Haven Ups Building Fee

The Board of Aldermen voted June 4 to increase the City of New Haven's building permit fee from \$21.16 per \$1,000 to \$25.16 per \$1,000. "We need to watch creeping costs like these very closely," says Paul Pescatello of CURE.

[For the full story](#)

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### CURE Member News Digest

- **454 Life Sciences** sequencer identifies HIV variants
- **Achillion** names Deshpande executive vice president
- **Alexion** reports European approval of Soliris™
- **Bayer HealthCare** studies Nexavar® for liver cancer
- **Boehringer Ingelheim** studies thromboembolism drug
- **Bristol-Myers Squibb** wins patent support for Plavix®
- **CuraGen** gives update on belinostat
- **Danbury Hospital** appoints cardiothoracic surgeon
- **GlaxoSmithKline** reports progress on cervical cancer vaccine
- **Hartford Hospital** low on heart attack mortality
- **Johnson & Johnson** studies thromboembolism drug
- **Neurogen** sees positive top line on insomnia agent NG2-73
- **Pfizer** reports Lipitor reduces risk of stroke
- **PhRMA** reports on heart disease and stroke
- **UConn Health Center** offers complete skin cancer services
- **Yale** team publishes more on human genome

[For the full story](#)



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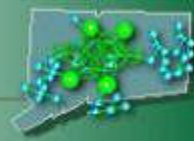
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Tuesday, July 17, 2007

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## Yale Acquisition of Bayer Site Bodes Well

*From the desk of Paul Pescatello, President and CEO of CURE*

Yale's decision to acquire the Bayer HealthCare complex in West Haven and Orange was an excellent resolution to the question of what to do with this valuable bioscience and state-of-the-art laboratory campus. Yale's stewardship of the site will strengthen its already robust presence in bioscience and will catalyze Connecticut bioscience entrepreneurship.



The decision was announced at an event on the property deftly organized by Sandy Oliver and her staff at Bayer HealthCare. President Richard Levin of Yale was there and Governor Jodi Rell took part by phone. The property had become available after Bayer decided to consolidate research facilities following its combination with Schering AG.

The 136-acre campus along I-95 features 550,000 square feet of state-of-the-art laboratory space as well as office buildings, warehouses, and other facilities. Press reports indicate the university will pay about \$100 million for the site, plus about \$600,000 a year in payments in lieu of taxes. The official purchase price will be announced when the deal has closed.

According to President Levin, the ready-made research space that comes with the deal will accelerate Yale's already active commitment to bioscience and medical activities. In the past two years alone the university has committed significantly to stem cell research and the Yale Cancer Center as well as a number of other programs. By Yale's calculations, the university has committed over \$1 billion to strengthening science and medical research since 2003.

Furthermore, through the efforts of Yale's Office of Cooperative research, many of the 40-some biotech companies in Greater New Haven have been created as spin-outs from the university. In the past year alone, Yale has launched seven venture capital-backed biotechnology startups, two of which received seed money through a venture fund that Yale supports.

Connecticut bioscience is not a one-horse show by any means. Besides Yale, the state benefits from the activities of the University of Connecticut, another great research university, as well as strong science programs at smaller schools such as Wesleyan University, which was so active in the recent StemCONN stem cell research symposium. Beyond that, Connecticut's bioscience network includes a salutary mix of large pharmaceutical companies such as Bristol-Myers Squibb, Boehringer Ingelheim, and Pfizer, and numerous biotech companies that have developed independently of the local tech transfer process.

But there is no denying the strong impetus that Yale's commitment has given to medical and bioscience activities in the state. As both President Levin and Governor Rell remarked, looking back 100 years from today, Yale's acquisition of the Bayer facilities will undoubtedly be viewed as a keystone in the building of Connecticut bioscience.

*Paul R. Pescatello is President and CEO of CURE.*

## Vascular Insights Broadens ClariVein™ Horizons

Vascular Insights, the Yale spin-out, has broadened its horizons and will seek to market its ClariVein™ device for uses other than vascular ablation. The varicose vein market remains the primary target, however.

The company's infusion catheter, ClariVein-IC™, is a small caliber (<3 Fr) device that disperses therapeutic fluid via a specially designed dispersion element activated by a battery powered handle mechanism. At the discretion of the physician, it can be used to treat varicose veins (ablation of the greater and lesser saphenous veins) by delivering a sclerosing solution to the diseased vein while mechanically inducing spasm and irritating the endothelium to make the vein more vulnerable to attack by the sclerosing solution.

John Marano, CEO of Vascular Insights, says ClariVein-IC™ will be suitable for a variety of physician specified, physician directed procedures. As such, the company will seek to market it, for example, to Interventional Radiologists for procedures such as Deep Vein Thrombosis, which is responsible for up to 600,000 hospitalizations annually.

Compared with competing infusion catheters, Marano says, no additional guidewire is needed for placement and exchanges are eliminated. The system provides even, controlled irrigation, facilitating well-dispersed drug coverage of the target tissue and reducing the "washing away" of the therapeutic agent into the bloodstream. Yet the device is based on existing technology, which reduces development risk, Marano says.

Treatment of varicose veins with ClariVein-VA™ will remain the primary target for the company. Varicose veins affect between 75 and 150 million people in North America and Western Europe. Traditional therapy for varicose veins is surgery, but worldwide only an estimated one million people per year are willing to submit to the extensive surgical stripping and ligation, or laser burning, required, at a cost of between \$2,500 and \$5,000 per leg.

ClariVein-VA™ is a disposable, single use device. Unlike other recent alternatives to surgery such as radio-frequency or laser-based systems, it is safer and simpler to use and requires no anesthesia, Marano says. In addition, the ClariVein-VA™ device is not powered by an external generator, so a \$30,000 capital expense for the practitioner is avoided.

"The simplicity of the ClariVein-VA™ approach makes it an attractive option for the estimated 30 to 50 million varicose vein sufferers in the US who currently do not seek treatment," Marano says. To serve those patients, Marano would eventually market the ClariVein-VA™ device to a broad range of physicians beyond the specialists who currently treat varicose vein disease. The company would also expand its market beyond saphenous veins to branch and tortuous varicosities, a market not serviceable with laser or radio frequency interventional devices.

With the aid of Yale's Office of Cooperative Research, Vascular Insights was formed in 2005 to build a company around the product ideas of Michael Tal, associate Professor of Diagnostic Radiology and Director of Research in Interventional Radiology at Yale, who is now also chief medical advisor to the company. With seed funding in place from KLP Enterprises of Branford, the company is seeking strategic partners to share risk and accelerate product development.

John Marano, chief executive officer, can be reached at 203-376-3775 or [jmarano@vascularinsightsllc.com](mailto:jmarano@vascularinsightsllc.com).

## Affinimark Targets Cerebrospinal Fluid Leaks

Attorney and Yale School of Management graduate Chris Levesque and partners have launched Affinimark Technologies, a life sciences firm focused on developing rapid response, lateral flow-based devices for the diagnosis of severe medical conditions.

Their first diagnostic under development, *Cerebrostrip*, is designed to detect the existence of cerebrospinal fluid leaks, potentially a \$300 million-plus annual U.S. market. Unlike the current prevailing technology, *Cerebrostrip* would provide on-the-spot diagnosis through a device that operates much like a pregnancy test.

A second product, *Prostalent*, is being developed to offer similar convenience and accuracy in the diagnosis of early-stage prostate cancer, a \$1.5+ billion domestic market with a targeted population of over 55 million men.

The company is seeking up to \$2 million in seed and early-stage funding, and will be negotiating for equity or strategic partnership funding to cover expenses through the next four years, estimated at \$10-15 million.

Christopher Levesque, chief executive officer, can be reached at 860-335-7854 or [<cllevesque05@snet.net>](mailto:cllevesque05@snet.net).

## Despite Opposition, New Haven Ups Building Fee

The Board of Aldermen voted June 4 to increase the City of New Haven's building permit fee from \$21.16 per \$1,000 to \$25.16 per \$1,000. An amendment was made on the floor to reduce the proposed increase from \$30.16, as had been submitted and voted on at committee, to the \$25.16 level. Accordingly, the increase will be \$4 (or 19%) rather than \$9 (or 43%).

Input from the New Haven Chamber of Commerce, CURE, the Home Builders Association of Connecticut, and the local chapter of the National Association of Industrial & Office Properties made a difference in mitigating the increase, according to Yale's Michael Morand, who attended the meeting.

This is the third increase by the City since 1999, when it was \$16.16 per \$1,000. There have been increases since 1999 to \$18.16, then \$21.16; and now to the \$25.16.

No justification was provided on the floor for the increase, except a statement without details that the city administration had shown that current fees did not cover current costs. There was no debate.

"We need to watch creeping costs like these very closely," says Paul Pescatello of CURE. "One of the drivers of growth in the bioscience sector in the New Haven area has been that New Haven provides state-of-the-art facilities at a considerable discount from the rates prevailing in Boston and other bioscience hubs."

## CURE Member News Digest

**454 Life Sciences** (Branford) and a Yale School of Medicine researcher have announced that they have used 454's Genome Sequencer™ system to identify previously undetectable rare drug-resistant HIV variants in samples from an earlier performed clinical trial. The work, presented at the XVI International HIV Drug Resistance Workshop by Michael Kozal, M.D., of the Yale University School of Medicine and the VA CT Health Care System, was a blinded-retrospective analysis of 258 blood samples taken before drug treatment from HIV infected individuals. The results showed that the fraction of patients that harbored resistance mutations is at least twice as high as previously thought.

**Achillion Pharmaceuticals, Inc.** (New Haven) announced that Milind Deshpande, Ph.D., has been promoted to Executive Vice President of Research. Dr. Deshpande previously served as the Company's Senior Vice President, and retains his position as Chief Scientific Officer. "Milind has been instrumental in the advancement of our pipeline of infectious disease candidates, including ACH-702 for serious bacterial infections and our NS4A antagonists for the treatment of HCV, which were discovered through our own internal drug discovery capabilities," said Michael D. Kishbauch, Chief Executive Officer of Achillion.

**Alexion Pharmaceuticals** (Cheshire) announced that the European Commission (EC) has approved the use of Soliris™ (eculizumab) for the treatment of patients with paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH). Soliris is the first therapy approved in Europe for the treatment of PNH, a rare, disabling and life-threatening blood disorder defined by chronic red blood cell destruction, or hemolysis.

**Bayer HealthCare** (Leverkusen, Germany/West Haven) and Onyx Pharmaceuticals, Inc. have announced that Nexavar® (sorafenib) tablets significantly extended overall survival in patients with hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), or primary liver cancer, versus those taking placebo by 44%. The international, Phase III, placebo-controlled trial randomized and evaluated 602 liver cancer patients who had no prior systemic therapy. Median overall survival was 10.7 months in Nexavar-treated patients compared to 7.9 months in those taking placebo. "Because there are no therapies that significantly improve survival for the thousands of patients with liver cancer, these findings demonstrate the compelling study results of Nexavar as the new reference standard of care for the first-line treatment of HCC," said Dr. Josep M. Llovet, co-principal investigator.

Yale University has announced it will buy Bayer HealthCare's West Haven complex, a 136-acre campus along I-95 with 550,000 square feet of state-of-the-art laboratory space that sprawls into Orange. (See [related column in this issue.](#))

**Boehringer Ingelheim** (Ingelheim, Germany/Danbury) announced that Phase III data show that dabigatran etexilate, a new oral anticoagulant, is effective and safe in preventing venous thromboembolism after orthopaedic surgery. Dabigatran etexilate, developed by Boehringer Ingelheim, is currently being evaluated in a number of thromboembolic disease indications in an extensive global clinical trial program.

**Bristol-Myers Squibb Company** (New York/Wallingford) and Sanofi-Aventis announced that the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York has upheld the validity and enforceability of the patent covering clopidogrel bisulfate, the

active ingredient in Plavix®, maintaining the main patent protection for this product in the United States until November 2011. The Court also ruled that Apotex's generic clopidogrel bisulfate infringes Sanofi-Aventis' patent, and has enjoined Apotex from marketing this product in the United States until the patent expires.

**CuraGen Corporation** (Branford) recently presented an update on the clinical development program for belinostat, a histone deacetylase (HDAC) inhibitor. "We are very impressed by the emerging data on intravenous belinostat in the treatment of solid and hematologic cancers, both as a single agent and in combination with other chemotherapeutic agents. These results, along with additional data actively being generated, are helping us to refine the potential indications for belinostat and to enable us to develop an appropriate plan for our Phase III program," commented Frank Armstrong, M.D., president and chief executive officer of CuraGen. Intravenous belinostat is currently being evaluated in multiple clinical trials as a potential treatment for multiple myeloma, T- and B-cell lymphomas, AML, mesothelioma, liver, soft tissue sarcoma, colorectal, ovarian cancers, either alone or in combination with anti-cancer therapies.

CuraGen is closing its pilot manufacturing plant, effective July 27, 2007. As a result, CuraGen will reduce its workforce by approximately 40 employees, primarily composed of preclinical and manufacturing researchers, and additional support staff from within the organization. "The contribution made by all members of the CuraGen team is sincerely and deeply appreciated. This strategic decision was difficult but necessary to ensure that CuraGen focuses its resources and invests appropriately into velafermin, belinostat and CR011-vcMMAE which represent the most significant value to CuraGen, its employees, and its shareholders," Armstrong said.

Pierre Saldinger, MD, FACS, Chairman of the Department of Surgery at **Danbury Hospital (Danbury)**, has announced the appointment of Cary S. Passik, MD, as its new Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery. A specialist in adult cardiothoracic surgery for the past 18 years, Dr. Passik most recently served as associate section chief of cardiothoracic surgery at Yale New-Haven Hospital and as an attending surgeon at the Hospital of Saint Raphael in New Haven. This marks the continued expansion of Danbury Hospital's cardiovascular program—the only heart program in the 1,100 square miles of Western Connecticut and nearby New York to offer complete cardiac services including on-site open-heart surgery, angioplasty, stress testing, cardiac rehabilitation, specialized dietitians, physical therapy, a women's heart program, and long-term risk reduction programs.

**GlaxoSmithKline** (Research Triangle Park, NC) announced that a Phase III cervical cancer vaccine efficacy trial shows Cervarix™ provides excellent protection against lesions caused by most common cancer-causing virus types. In the United States, after breast cancer, cervical cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in women ages 20-39.

**Hartford Hospital** (Hartford) is among a tiny percentage of US hospitals -- 0.4%, or only 17 nation-wide -- that scored "Better Than US National Rate" in a comparison of heart attack mortality rates. The rankings, comparing almost 4,500 hospitals, were released by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The initiative represents the first time in almost 20 years that the federal government has attempted to compare hospital mortality rates.

**Johnson & Johnson** (New Brunswick, NJ) announced that Phase III trial results show the superiority of rivaroxaban over enoxaparin for the prevention of venous thromboembolism in patients undergoing knee replacement surgery. Rivaroxaban is being jointly developed by Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceutical Research & Development L.L.C. and Bayer HealthCare AG.

**Neurogen Corporation** (Branford) announced positive top-line results from two dose-ranging, Phase IIb clinical trials in chronic insomnia patients with the Company's proprietary insomnia agent, NG2-73, an alpha-3 preferring GABA(A) partial agonist. Multiple formulations were studied in each trial to determine the best profile for rapidity of sleep onset and maintenance of sleep through the night without residual sedation the next day.

**Pfizer Inc.** (New York, NY/Groton/New London) announced that Lipitor (atorvastatin calcium) Tablets 80 mg reduced the risk of stroke, coronary heart disease events and major coronary events in type 2 diabetes patients who had no known coronary heart disease but who had experienced a recent stroke or mini-stroke, compared with placebo. The results are from a new analysis of the landmark Stroke Prevention by Aggressive Reduction in Cholesterol Levels trial, and were presented at the 67th Annual Scientific Sessions of the American Diabetes Association.

Pfizer Animal Health has announced that SLENTROL™ (diriloptapide), the first and only FDA-approved veterinary medication for the management of canine obesity, is now available by prescription in the United States. Slentrol was developed in response to the unmet need for a medication to help veterinarians and pet owners better manage canine obesity, an important medical condition that can lead to serious health consequences. An estimated 25 to 40 percent of dogs in the U.S. (about 17 million) are overweight or obese.

A [new report](#) (view related [backgrounder](#)) released by the **Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America** (Washington, DC) finds that biopharmaceutical researchers are testing 277 medicines for two of the three leading causes of death of Americans – heart disease and stroke. The medicines are currently in clinical trials or under review by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Following is recent news from **The University of Connecticut** (Storrs) and the **University of Connecticut Health Center** (Farmington).

"If you've been diagnosed with malignant melanoma, it's important that there's a coordinated approach, because you're going to be seeing several different doctors who will be giving you a variety of care," says Dr. Philip Kerr, assistant professor of dermatology and dermatopathology and director of the Melanoma Clinic at the UConn Health Center in Farmington. "Because we're all located at the Health Center, the interface between doctors is much easier and we're able to take a comprehensive team approach to each patient's individualized care." The Health Center is the only facility in the state that offers whole body digital imaging to monitor and track potential skin cancer in high-risk populations ...[more](#)

*UConn plant breeder and researcher Mark Brand is always seeking candidates for stardom. His latest prospect, an ornamental grass he developed and propagated for more than a decade in the greenhouses and fields of the plant science department, is about to hit the big time. Ruby Ribbons, a new variety of Panicum virgatum – or switch grass – with blue-green base foliage that turns a deep wine-red color months earlier than other red switch grasses, is being launched for wholesale production this month. The firm launching the grass, the West Chicago-based Ball Horticultural Co., is the world's largest breeder-producer of ornamental plants, with distribution companies in 19 countries around the globe ...[more](#)*

Following is recent news from **Yale University** and the **Yale School of Medicine** (New Haven).

A family-based weight management program developed by researchers at Yale School of Medicine was more effective at reducing weight, body fat, body mass index (BMI) and insulin sensitivity than traditional clinic-based weight counseling. Mary Savoye-Desanti, research associate in Yale's Department of Pediatrics, presented the findings at a JAMA media briefing in New York. The study is published in JAMA's June 27 theme issue on chronic diseases of children.

*The nighttime breathing disorder known as sleep apnea increases a person's risk of having a heart attack or of dying by 30 percent over a period of four to five years, according to a Yale School of Medicine study. Sleep apnea triggers the body's "fight or flight" mechanism, which decreases the amount of blood pumped to the heart, said Neomi Shah, M.D., clinical fellow in the Department of Internal Medicine, pulmonary section. She conducted the study linking heart disease and sleep apnea.*

Older people who performed a physical conditioning program developed by researchers at Yale School of Medicine were able to maintain or enhance their driving performance, potentially leading to a safer and more independent quality of life. Published in the May issue of Journal of General Internal Medicine, the study of 178 Greater New Haven area drivers age 70 and older, was led by Internal Medicine Associate Professor Richard Marottoli, M.D., and colleagues at the VA Connecticut Healthcare System in West Haven and the Department of Rehabilitation Services at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

*Yale Cancer Center has announced the launch of a weekly program on WNPR Connecticut Public Radio. The program airs from 6:00 to 6:30 p.m. on Sunday evenings and features the latest information on cancer care. Cancer Answers is co-hosted by Edward Chu, M.D., deputy director and chief of medical oncology at Yale Cancer Center, and Ken Miller, M.D., director of the Connecticut Challenge Survivorship Clinic at the Center. Each week they will be joined by a different cancer specialist, bringing the innovation and expertise of Yale Cancer Center to all of Connecticut.*

Researchers in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology & Reproductive Sciences at Yale School of Medicine have identified a new regulatory target for the Fragile X mental retardation protein (FMRP), laying the groundwork for possible new treatments for Fragile X syndrome (FXS), the leading inherited form of mental retardation. The research team led by Yingqun Huang, M.D., assistant professor in Yale Ob/Gyn, previously found that FMRP interacts with a nuclear mRNA export protein NXF2, in the mouse brain and testes. In this study, the team used mouse neuronal cells to explore the functional characteristics of this interaction.

*When medical residents work shorter hours, fewer patients are transferred to intensive care and there are not as many interventions by pharmacists to avoid errors in medication, according to a Yale School of Medicine study in Annals of Internal Medicine. "What might have helped is reduced fatigue and clinical involvement by more senior physicians to compensate for frequent turnover of house staff," said Leora Horwitz, M.D., postdoctoral fellow in internal medicine and lead author of the study. "We found no evidence of adverse unintended consequences after the institution of work-hour regulation."*

Primates with severe Parkinson's disease were able to walk, move, and eat better, and had diminished tremors after being injected with human neural stem cells, a research team from Yale, Harvard, the University of Colorado, and the Burnham Institute report in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. These results are promising, but it will be years before it is known whether a similar procedure would have therapeutic value for humans, said the lead author, D. Eugene Redmond Jr., professor of psychiatry and neurosurgery at Yale.

*Researchers at Yale's Department of Epidemiology and Public Health and staff of the Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative recently published and released a document for Ethiopia's hospitals that is designed to improve their management capacity.*

An international research consortium including members from Yale University has published a set of papers that promise to reshape our understanding of how the human genome functions. The findings challenge the traditional view of our genetic blueprint as a tidy collection of independent genes, pointing instead to a complex network in which genes, along with regulatory elements and other types of DNA sequences that do not code for proteins, interact in overlapping ways not yet fully understood.

*In announcing its intent to acquire the former Bayer property in West Haven ([see related column in this issue](#)), President Richard C. Levin of Yale said, "Yale is already in the midst of a boom in the expansion of its science and medical facilities. The addition of this ready-made, state-of-the-art research space will allow that growth to accelerate at an unprecedented level, potentially making it possible for Yale scientists to develop new discoveries, inventions, and cures years earlier. The availability of Bayer's science laboratories will enable us to undertake research programs that we would not have had space to develop for a decade or more."*

**For more member news, see the [June 2007 issue of CURE News](#)**

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