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Michael Holder and Larry Calton
photo by Chris Johnson

the concept developed by the FEDC. In this case, no Frisco city or property taxes are used to assist NTEC, founded in 2002. The funding comes from several sources, one being a portion of sales tax under a state established 4A Sales Tax Corporation and local businesses have also invested. Hall Financial Group, Alcatel, ADT and First National Bank Southwest are some of the original stakeholders. The result is an effective, cooperative effort between the FEDC and NTEC.

NTEC focuses on the development of companies who create new medical instruments and devices, diagnostic equipment, medical therapeutic devices, medical monitoring equipment and other health related products.

Larry Calton is the executive director of NTEC. Larry's enthusiasm for NTEC is only exceeded by his vision. He and Bob Allen, chairman of the FEDC board, see a future for Frisco in the medical technology community. Through due diligence Bob Allen and Jim Gandy, president of the FEDC, focused on long-term sustainable growth industries. Allen states, "We learned two critical lessons.

First, we learned that the industry with the most growth potential for the next century would be in the field of medical technology, and second, that if we really wanted large emerging technology companies in Frisco, we might be better suited to grow our own. It is from these two basic principals that NTEC was born." The focus on medical technologies was strategic and has allowed NTEC to leverage existing technical skill sets available in North Texas. These skill sets, communications, information technology, software and semiconductor are converging with new medical technologies to create

Promises Kept

By Don Trout

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I was born in New York City or maybe it's by genetics. Either way, nature or nurture, the net result is a card-carrying cynic. When I accepted the opportunity to write an update on the progress and partnership of North Texas Enterprise Center (NTEC) and the Frisco Economic Development Corporation (FEDC), I was suspicious. Thoughts of the city

of Dallas and the American Airlines Center immediately came to mind. The people of Dallas were sold these grand plans for a sports complex, hotels, shops and restaurants and how much money this would bring to the revitalization of downtown through the impact of a major sports center. I didn't buy it.

However, that analogy is far from

next generation medical devices. "The jury was definitely out three years ago when we chose medical technology as our focus," says Calton. "However, the companies in our Center, those making application, and the tremendous growth nationally in capital investment and business creation in this sector has provided validation," adds Calton.

The operational goal of NTEC was to create a collaborative, resource rich environment in which promising medical embryonic companies receive business mentoring and access to their development resources important to their long-term survival. By pooling multiple functions such as administrative, legal, accounting, marketing and providing access to financial and business partnerships, NTEC has created an incubator for promising medical businesses that would likely not survive without this support. NTEC currently mentors three medical startups in various stages of development.

ORGAN TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

Organ Transport Systems (OTS) has developed a proprietary lightweight medical device called the LifeCradle™ for the extended preservation, monitoring, storage and transport of donor organs. According to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), more than 89,000 adults and children are registered on the Organ Waiting List, clinging to hopes for a new heart, lung, kidney, liver or maybe even a pancreas. Each day 18 of them lose the

battle before an organ is made available, and at the same time another 110 get in line.

In 2004, although there were 7,151 deceased donors in the United States, only 2,016 (28%) heart transplants were completed.

Under existing practices, human hearts are simply bagged and placed in an ice cooler for transporting. This practice severely limits the viability of a heart to a maximum of six hours - including the procurement surgery, the transportation of the heart to the recipient and the transplant surgery to completion. "Often, there is simply not enough time to complete adequate disease testing or to transport the organ to the matching recipient," shares Michael Holder, chief executive officer of OTS.

OTS is poised to make a significant humanitarian impact on society and the medical industry. The LifeCradle has initially been designed for the heart with plans to include all five major organs. It not only improves the quality of the organ relative to the current practice, but also successfully extends the window of viability making geographic distances insignificant. The LifeCradle has proven to successfully maintain heart viability over 26 hours – more than four times standard practice.

The LifeCradle will revolutionize transplantation, drive increased organ utilization and help reduce the length of the organ waiting lists.

OXYSURE SYSTEMS, INC.

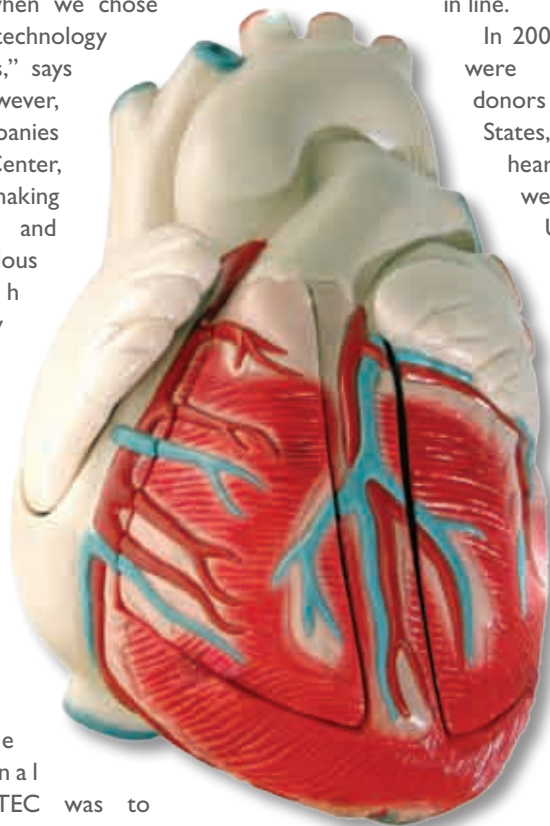
Having access to breathable oxygen is something most people take for granted. However, in certain environments

delivering life-sustaining oxygen can be a dangerous and expensive proposition. In oxygen-deficient environments such as a decompressed airplane cabin or in toxic environments such as in under-ground coalmines, systems that generate oxygen can create heat, toxicity and explosion hazards. At the heart of the tragedy of Value-Jet Flight 592, which crashed in the Florida Everglades in 1996, were a number of supplemental oxygen canisters being transported for disposal that exploded in the cargo hold.

OxySure Systems, Inc. has invented and perfected a new, extraordinarily safe and inexpensive way to create medically pure (USP) oxygen without any of the heat, toxicity or explosion risks associated with older technologies currently in use. Using two proprietary compounds, the OxySure product will deliver medically pure (USP) oxygen in a thermoplastic housing for emergency use in industrial and aviation applications.

"If we really wanted large, emerging, medical technology companies in Frisco we might be better suited to grow our own."

Beyond aviation and industrial environments though, medical oxygen has, to date, not been available and accessible to the public. As a result of the revolutionary technology incorporated in OxySure, medically pure (USP) oxygen can now be pre-positioned in public settings or at home for cardiac, respiratory or general medical emergencies, in the same way that Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) are now pre-positioned in public settings. With its easy push-button activation, a bystander can administer medical oxygen in such an



emergency until medical professionals get on the scene.

Pending FDA approval for over-the-counter sale, OxySure will make emergency/short-duration medical oxygen as readily available as a fire extinguisher in every public setting and in every home.

ULTRASENSITIVE DETECTION TECHNOLOGIES

UltraSensitive Detection Technologies (USDT) is a chemical/biological sensor company focused on developing ultra-sensitive, real-time detection and identification technologies for chemical and biological warfare agents, medical diagnostics, environmental compliance and process monitoring. The enhancement capabilities of USDT's technology enable sufficient sensitivity for real-time detection and near single-molecule identification, affordability for mass production and widespread use, and suitability for technician free, environmentally rugged applications.

LONG TERM PROGNOSIS

The long-term vision: "A renowned medical technology park." This is the consistent response from Bob Allen, Frisco Mayor Mike Simpson and Larry Calton. Calton puts it this way; "Our hope is that the community gets as excited about the greater vision and potential of NTEC as we are. By getting full community buy-in on the greater vision, Frisco can potentially recognize a return on the activities of NTEC which is far greater than that originally envisioned." What exactly is that vision? Again Bob Allen, Mayor Simpson and Larry Calton agree: a major medical company with headquarters in Frisco. To do that NTEC would need to expand to a Medical Park with state of the art laboratory facilities.

PROMISE KEPT?

Has NTEC delivered on the expectation of the FEDC visionaries? In the next 30 days Organ Transport Systems and OxySure will be "out of the nest." They will continue to be located in Frisco at the NTEC facility but financially independent.

Michael Holder explains, "The impact on OTS is that we obtain the stamp of approval from NTEC which evidences our company's progress over the last couple of years. We can leverage this designation in our marketing and our fund-raising activities."

Two new medical technology companies will soon take up residence in the "incubator" of NTEC. The first, TissueGen, Inc. is a medical device company whose patented technology is a platform, polymer-based drug delivery system. Using biodegradable polymers with second-generation drugs such as growth factors, they are designing and building vascular stents that offer breakthrough treatment capability. The second, Key Resource Medical Systems, Inc. has created a low-power energy device with extended shelf life to power miniature and portable medical devices.

"Two new medical technology companies will soon take up residence in the 'incubator' of NTEC."

As a result of NTEC, there are 25 new people working in Frisco with more on the way. To define the success of NTEC, even by the basic standard of the FEDC as simply more businesses in Frisco and more taxpayers, would be

extremely shortsighted. Based on the vision of NTEC and FEDC success is more than an increase in the tax base, although that will come. Not only will the tax rolls increase, the increase will be with long-term, high-paying, growth-industry jobs. The medical industry is currently the highest paying industry and projected to be the largest growth industry over the next 20 years in the United States.

NTEC has also brought visibility to the city of Frisco. Larry Calton was recently named to the Top 40 under 40 leaders to watch in Dallas/Fort Worth. Calton, Allen and Mayor Simpson have represented Frisco in Austin and met with Governor Rick Perry. Calton is working with higher education to attract technology research and development grants to Frisco. There are other large investment firms looking at NTEC and thus Frisco.

"Frisco has benefited from the visibility and exposure that NTEC has brought to our city," Mayor Simpson states. "Major law firms, financial institutions, communications and technology companies have all been added to the list of multi-year funding partners."

Certainly the simple economic answer is "Yes, the FEDC invested well." However, when all is said and done and our grandchildren look back, Dallas will have won several NBA Championships and Stanley Cups. But Frisco will have saved lives, perhaps my grandchild's!

Don Trout is a business analysis and consultant living in Plano.