copper and zinc. Like traditional barcoding, the technology enables the creation of extremely large sets of uniquely identifiable particles by the width and composition of their stripes.

Suspensions of barcoded particles are prepared by sequential electrochemical reduction of metal ions into pores on the membrane templates. The structure of each particle is governed by membrane pore diameter, the sequence of ions used, and the charge. Individual particles can then be identified by an optical microscope.

The approach, known as multiplexing, means that large numbers of biological assays can be performed simultaneously in a small volume of liquid. With the advent of genomics, proteomics and metabolomics, the new technology holds great promise for the future.

8 Nicewarner-Peña, S.R. *et al.* (2001) Submicrometer metallic barcodes. *Science* 294, 137–141

Genetic basis of adverse drug reactions

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK; Stockley Park West, Uxbridge, UK) and First Genetic Trust (FGT; North Deerfield, IL, USA) have announced a collaboration to study genetic variations that could influence the adverse reactions some people experience when taking medication. This would hopefully lead to the development of diagnostic tests to screen for patient susceptibility to further prevent the risk of exposure.

Serious adverse drug reactions (ADRs) are the primary reason why effective medicines are subsequently removed from the market, yet they are so uncommon that they do not become apparent until the drug is used in the general population. At present, less than 1% of the population is at risk from ADRs and this study will potentially reduce the occurrence of side effects and facilitate product prescription.

GSK is sponsoring the study and will do all the analyses while FGT is providing its genetic banking services for the storage of biological samples, as well as medical data. FGT will also be responsible for patient confidentiality and privacy and for obtaining informed consent.

Allen Roses, Senior Vice-President of Genetics Research at GSK, said 'This study to investigate the genetic basis of ADRs will have important implications for drug development and clinical use. Pharmacogenetic studies such as this one will not only increase patient safety but also provide a scientific basis to understand ADRs at the molecular level.'

Financial boost for French biotech

The French government has agreed new plans proposed by the French Biotechnology Industry Association (France Biotech) to boost investment in the French biotechnology industry. The proposal, coined 'Plan Biotech 2002', will be backed jointly by France Biotech and an association of entrepreneurs, Objectif 2010.

The main objective of Plan Biotech 2002 is to create an increasingly favourable climate for investment in France by facilitating the creation of biotech start-ups and accelerating growth of the more established companies. Accordingly, 90 million will be spent on bank loan guarantees to finance acquisitions of foreign biotech companies and R&D investments. In addition, a further 60 million will be channelled into a seed-financing venture to promote start-ups. Hopes are that if the plan grows in 2003, it should result in several billion Euros of investment by 2006.

News in Brief was written by *Natalie Baderman*, *Joanne Clough*, *Joanna Milburn* and *Joanna Owens*

People

Awards

Founding Chairman of amfAR honoured

Mathilde Krim, Founding Chairman and Chairman of the Board of the American Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR; New York, NY, USA), has recently been awarded the Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Medal in recognition of her leadership role in the research effort against HIV/AIDS. Previous recipients of the award include Dorothy Height (President Emerita of the National Council of Negro Women) and Christopher Reeve (Chairman of the Board of the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation).

Krim also holds 13 doctorates *honoris causa* and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in August 2000 in recognition of her 'extraordinary compassion and commitment'.

The 2001 Albert Lasker Awards

Mario Capecchi (University of Utah, UT, USA), Martin Evans (Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK) and Oliver Smithies (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, USA) have been awarded the 2001 Albert Lasker Award for Basic Medical Research for pioneering the use of mouse embryonic stem cells to create animal models of human disease. Meanwhile, the 2001 Albert Lasker Award for Clinical Medical research went to Robert G. Edwards (University of Cambridge, UK) for the development of *in vitro* fertilization. Finally, William H. Foege (Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA) was awarded the Mary Woodard Lasker Award for Public Service in Support of Medical Research and the Health Sciences for improving worldwide public health and playing a key role in eradicating smallpox and preventing river blindness.

Appointments

Hamner announces retirement from leading the North Carolina Biotechnology Center

Charles E. Hamner, President and CEO of the North Carolina Biotechnology Center (Research Triangle Park, NC, USA) recently announced that he plans to retire on

1359-6446/01/$ – see front matter PII: S1359-6446(01)02063-3

31 March 2002. Hamner joined the centre in February 1998 when there was only a fledgling biotechnology industry in the state. North Carolina is now one of the top five biotechnology states in the US with more than 125 biotechnology companies and 65 contract research and testing companies.

Previously, Hamner was Chief Operating Officer at the University of Virginia Medical Center for ten years and Director of Program Coordination for Research and Development at A.H. Robins Co. for five years. Hamner said: 'After 14 years of productive partnership with so many wonderful people in North Carolina, a refreshment of management is needed as we enter the new era of genomics, bioinformatics and proteomics.'

Bruce Maloff new CBO for First Genetic Trust

First Genetic Trust (Deerfield, IL, USA) has appointed Bruce L. Maloff as Chief Business Officer. He comes to the company from being Executive Vice-President, Commercial Operations at Variagenics. He has previously held many other senior positions including Vice-President, Business Development at Quintiles CNS Therapeutics, Vice-President Marketing and Corporate Development at AmericasDoctor, and Senior Research Pharmacologist at DuPont Pharmaceuticals.

Arthur Holden, Chairman and CEO of First Genetic Trust said: 'Bruce brings an outstanding background in pharmacogenetics and clinical research, as well as strong leadership skills to our company. As we build our commercial and strategic partnerships, we will benefit greatly from Bruce's track record of developing and executing successful collaborative partnerships.'

New Executive Vice-President for Takeda Pharmaceuticals North America

Takeda Pharmaceuticals North America (Lincolnshire, IL, USA) has appointed Mark Booth to the newly created position of Executive Vice-President and will oversee sales, marketing and business operation functions. Booth was previously General Manager and Senior Vice-President, Commercial Operations at Immunex. Prior to this he worked at Abbott Laboratories in a variety of sales, marketing and general management positions. The company also announced the promotion of Richard Daly from Vice-President, Marketing to Senior Vice-President, Marketing.

Tony Scullion becomes CEO for Memory Pharmaceuticals

Tony Scullion has accepted the position of CEO of Memory Pharmaceuticals (Montvale, NJ, USA). Scullion was previously Vice-President and Head of Global Business Development at GlaxoWellcome. He has also previously held many senior management positions at Pfizer covering marketing, strategic and operational positions. Memory Pharmaceuticals is a neuropharmaceutical drug development company working on learning and memory disorders and utilizing intellectual property developed by the Nobel Laureate, Eric Kandel.

New President and CEO for Genetronics

Avtar Dhillon has been appointed as President and CEO of Genetronics (San Diego, CA, USA) and takes over the position from Grant Denison who is stepping down but will remain on the Board of Directors. Previously, Dhillon was Vice-President of MDS Capital Corp., a North American venture capital firm focussing exclusively on healthcare and life science companies. Dhillon is a Director of Phytogen Life Sciences and Protiva Pharmaceuticals and a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Canada, the College of Family Practitioners in Canada and the British Columbia and Canadian Medical Associations.

Lehrer takes over from Reinhoff at DNA Sciences

Steven B. Lehrer has taken on the role of Acting President and Chief Operating Officer of DNA Sciences (Fremont, CA, USA) after the resignation of Hugh Y. Rienhoff Jr as Chairman and CEO. Lehrer joined the company in 2000 and held the position of Chief Business Officer for the company. This change in management reflects the Board of Directors' decision to focus on the application of genetics to clinical development of pharmaceuticals and the development of new technologies of genetic analysis.

Lehrer said: 'Our goal in this next phase is to focus our scientific talent on the most viable commercial opportunities, including opportunities in pharmaceutical and technology development. As part of the transition, we will continue to integrate our scientific and business teams and increase our product development and commercialization efforts.'

Lance Gordon is new CEO of VaxGen

Lance K. Gordon has recently been appointed CEO of VaxGen (Brisbane, CA, USA). Previously, Gordon was President and CEO of OraVax where he secured a 20-year contract to develop and manufacture a 40-million dose of smallpox vaccine for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. When the company was acquired by Peptide Therapeutics, Gordon became Director of North American Operations of Peptide Therapeutics (now Acambis). Gordon has also previously worked as CEO of North American Vaccines, Director of Immunobiology Research at Connaught Laboratories and Medical Director for Infectious & Inflammatory Diseases, Clinical Pharmacology – Drug Medical Affairs at E.R. Squibb & Sons.

Donald P. Francis, President and co-founder of VaxGen said, 'Lance's extensive business and scientific background, as well as his commitment to ending the AIDS epidemic, make him the ideal CEO for VaxGen. He has experience with virtually every step required to invent, develop, manufacture and market vaccines.'

Daniel Cohen focuses on the science at Genset

Daniel Cohen has been appointed Director General of Scientific Strategy at Genset S.A. (Paris, France) from the position of Chief Scientific Officer. The move comes after requesting to disengage himself from his operational responsibilities and concentrate on the scientific direction of the company. Andre Pennett, CEO of Genset will now also take on the role of Chief Scientific Officer, a title he previously held at Abbott Laboratories for 20 years.

People was written by *Rebecca N. Lawrence*