

flow during oxidation and how the DNA was oxidized in a process known as mediated electrocatalysis,' said Royce Murray, Kenan Professor of Chemistry at the University of North Carolina. 'That process is a well-known phenomenon in fluids, but it has never been observed before in a biological molecule like DNA in a semi-solid environment.'

- 12 Leone, A.M. *et al.* (2001) An ionic liquid form of DNA: redox-active molten salts of nucleic acids. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 123, 218–222

### US website to offer genetic counselling

A website currently undergoing trials in the US will offer its users personalized information and advice relating to their risk of developing inherited diseases, announced its server provider e-Net Software (Bristol, UK). The website, FamilyGenetix, has already passed initial testing in the UK and is looking to now form arrangements with US health insurance companies. Once established, it is expected that the site will expand to cover UK institutions. Genetic

counselling is a well-established field that can save lives by making people aware of any hereditary predispositions to disease that they might have. The data in the website will be highly confidential and will be protected by password and anti-hacking technology. The website will also give users the option of speaking to a qualified professional.

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## People

### New appointment for genomics and liquid handling at Zymark

Mark S. Spector has been appointed as Business Unit Manager for Genomics and Liquid Handling at Zymark Corporation (Hopkinton, MA, USA) and will oversee the strategic and tactical direction of this area of the business, including the management of product lines and their growth. This is a newly created role and combines the tasks of the previous Liquid Handling Product Manager and Segment Manager for Drug Discovery and Screening.

Spector comes to Zymark from being Product Manager for Genetic Analysis and Automated Solutions at Beckman Coulter (Fullerton, CA, USA) and has a background in business development, sales and negotiation, drug discovery, high-throughput automation and point-of-care diagnostics.

### Regional head at LJI Biosystems moves to Gyros

Richard Millett has recently taken up the position of Vice-President of Sales Worldwide for Gyros AB (Uppsala, Sweden). Millett has previously worked as Managing Director and Vice-President of European Operations at LJI Biosystems. His new role will involve establishing a subsidiary of Gyros in the UK and to further develop the company's international sales operation.

Per Sjöberg, Vice-President of Commercial Operations of Gyros in Uppsala, Sweden said that, 'He has been highly successful in building up a number of businesses in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology market, beginning with Biacore AB and, more recently, as a regional head at LJI Biosystems. His experience in working globally at senior level in rapidly growing companies will greatly strengthen the further development of our marketing and sales organization.'

### New CEO for hits-to-leads company



Anthony Baxter has recently been appointed as CEO of Argenta Discovery Ltd (Dagenham, UK), after being Chief Scientific Officer and Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board at Oxford Asymmetry International since February 1999.

Baxter is a Chartered Chemist and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry. He was Principal Research Scientist at Glaxo Group Research (Greenford, UK) until 1990, and then took on the role of Laboratory Manager with Ciba-Geigy Central Research

(now Novartis; Macclesfield, UK). Subsequently, Baxter joined Oxford Diversity (Abingdon, UK) in 1994 as Director of Combinatorial Chemistry, which later became Oxford Asymmetry International.

Argenta Discovery Ltd is a new company that works under contract to convert hits and leads from HTS screens into validated patentable lead series. The company was formed from a three-way partnership of Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine (London, UK), a management buy-out team from Aventis Pharma AG and a syndicate of venture capitalists.

### Management reorganization at CAT

Cambridge Antibody Technology (CAT; Melbourn, UK) has rearranged its management structure to fit into the increasingly diverse activities covered by the company. This has led to the appointments of Jason Avery, Nigel Burns and Diane Mellett to Senior Vice-Presidents of Business Alliances, Preclinical and General Counsel, respectively. In turn, Alex Duncan has been promoted to Vice-President of Drug Discovery, Jon Green to Vice-President of Operations and Duncan Casson to Vice-President of Project Management. Finally, Kevin Johnson who has been CAT's Research Director, has been promoted to Chief Technology Officer and is charged with the responsibility of expanding CAT's efforts in the further exploitation and development of its antibody technology platform.