



Larta NIH-CAP 2010/11 Participant Laser Tissue Welding

By Marco Henkel, Programs Associate, Larta Institute

Laser Tissue Welding (LTW), a current NIH Commercialization Assistant Program participant (NIH-CAP), is a privately owned biotherapeutic medical device company located in Humble Texas, and was founded and incorporated in Delaware in 2004. LTW's innovation is a new paradigm in surgical care, an enabling combination surgical device that seals hemorrhage and fluid leaks accurately, instantly on demand without burning. The technology uses a diode laser and two human serum albumin biodegradable bio-materials to enable surgical interventions on vascular solid visceral organs as the liver, kidney and spleen and hemostasis in coagulopathic patients requiring surgery. Both address areas of unmet medical need.

Dr. Yasmin Wadia (Chairman and CEO of Laser Tissue Welding) presented to NIH program officers, Larta staff, and other mentors at the close-out presentation, (final event of the NIH-CAP) last month that the company will begin conducting multiple pre-clinical and clinical trials over the next 18 months, and is strategically partnering with St. Luke's Hospital and Baylor University for a portion of those trials. With regard to funding, the company will be solely relying on future R&D funding and its own internal resources to conduct all the trials and move forward with their technology, thus minimizing dilution of company value. While this might be considered problematic for many companies, LTW has managed to pull off a remarkable series of successes in its pathway to commercialization, through an engaged and continued working relationship with a number of eminent and accomplished partners. The company has acquired its own land to set up a lab for clinical trials near its current location.

The military medical community has already expressed great interest in their technology. Introductions facilitated by Larta Institute at the feedback session for the Company in Los Angeles in March, 2011 have yielded currently active opportunities for the company to address surgical/medical needs of active-duty (or returning) personnel.

The company has one issued patent; two patents are pending. It has exclusive rights via a licensing agreement to the technology. Laser Tissue Welding has completed development of a clinical device and commenced human clinical trials in 2010.

Dr. Wadia felt that the NIH CAP and Larta Institute provided her with strong insights, guidance and counsel, helped to validate and clarify her strategy and gave her helpful exposure to key influencers.

"The National Institute of Health's SBIR Commercialization Assistance Program (CAP) is geared to help SBIR phase II award winners ford the valley of death, i.e. the funding gap after phase II. Larta stands at the intersection between the NIH, industry and investors. For me Larta created a progressive, constructive and mentored milieu which helped me to understand the layers of complexity and most expeditious commercialization route." (Dr. Yasmin Wadia)