

Extracted from AUTM Newsletter - November/December 2003

**New AUTM Special Interest Group Announced:
Technology Transfer Professionals for Global Health**

Based on early interest, a new AUTM special interest group —Technology Transfer Professionals for Global Health — is under development. TTPGH is designed to serve as a collegial resource and support network for university professionals dealing with inventions and technologies that address treatments for neglected diseases and other afflictions widely prevalent among the poorer populations in low-and middle-income countries. TTPGH members will serve as a resource to other groups and organizations addressing these issues from varied perspectives.

To this end, several non-AUTM colleagues have expressed interest in learning more about TTPGH and being affiliated with it. TTPGH will also help in the efforts of organizations such as MIHR-Centre for the Management of Intellectual Property in Health R&D, which are focused on improving the health of the poorest and addressing training/capacity-building needs in developing countries.

For a summary article on these topics written by Lita Nelsen, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, see “The Role of University Technology Transfer Operations in Assuring Access to Medicines and Vaccines in Developing Countries,” in the Summer 2003 issue of the *Yale Journal of Health Policy, Law and Ethics*.

TTPGH will formally meet for the first time in San Antonio, Texas, at the 2004 AUTM Annual Meeting in March. We are on the lookout for those champions who might be willing to energetically volunteer their time and effort toward advancing these efforts and making a difference.

Individuals interested in TTPGH topics might also wish to attend the March 6, 2004, session “The University’s Role in Global Health Partnerships: Building Bridges Between Technology Management and International Development Organizations.”

Several TTPGH activities are already under way based on some early discussions following the “Global Aspects of Technology Transfer: Biotechnology” conference in late September. TTPGH members will:

- Discuss public-policy perspectives, intellectual property management challenges and other relevant emerging topics in the context of global public health and equity.
- Gather, compile, develop and make available (through a Web site) a set of tools — and perhaps an evolving sense of best practices — for technology managers to potentially examine and adopt in these environments.

- Propose appropriate curriculum, professional training and programs to effectively heighten awareness, understanding and sensitization to global health issues, as well as examine potential roles for university professionals in capacity-building in developing countries.
- Build new partnerships and actively interact with other organizations to disseminate the work of the TTPGH members at key conferences.

If TTPGH activities outlined above deeply interest you, contact Usha R. Balakrishnan, University of Iowa, by phone at 319/335-3271 or via e-mail at usha-balakrishnan@uiowa.edu.