

# **Tulane School of Medicine Shines at BIO 2024: A Crucial Step in Advancing Biomedical Innovation**

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This year's BIO team included James Zanewicz, Chief Strategy Officer; Elaine Hamm, Executive in Residence; Heddwen Brooks, Chair of Physiology; Nick Pashos, Entrepreneur in Residence; Alexis Ducote, Business Development Associate, and Eric Malamud, Business Development Fellow.

In the bustling corridors of the [BIO International Convention 2024](#), held in San Diego last week, the presence of Tulane School of Medicine was not just noted; it was celebrated. With a strong emphasis on holistic collaboration to advance the future of

medicine, the active participation of the [School of Medicine's Business Development team](#) underscored the institution's commitment to pioneering advancements in healthcare and biomedical research. With a record-breaking 130 formal strategic partnering meetings and too many informal interactions to count, Tulane cemented its position, holding a significant role in the biotechnology landscape. This year's BIO team included James Zanewicz, Chief Strategy Officer; Elaine Hamm, Executive in Residence; Heddwen Brooks, Chair of Physiology; Nick Pashos, Entrepreneur in Residence; Alexis Ducote, Business Development Associate; and Eric Malamud, Business Development Fellow.

Zanewicz emphasized the importance of the event, stating, "BIO 2024 offers a unique platform to showcase our innovative research and form strategic partnerships that not only accelerate the translation of our discoveries into real-world applications but also to deeply examine current and future trends such as AI and healthcare. Our consistent involvement at the annual BIO meeting is a testament to Tulane's commitment as we lead the way in biomedical research and healthcare innovation."

### **Prominent Showcases: TVANT, Tuleva, Diagnostics, and Antimicrobial Peptides**

Among the highlights of Tulane's showcase were four groundbreaking projects that captured the attention of industry leaders and investors: TVANT, a novel vaccine adjuvant from the Morici and McLachlan labs that promises to enhance the effectiveness of vaccines, showcasing Tulane's ability to develop cutting-edge solutions for improving immunization strategies and combating infectious diseases; Tuleva, a non-addictive pain treatment from the Zadina lab, offering hope to patients and addressing the critical issue of opioid addiction; several advanced diagnostic technologies from the Hu lab that are set to redefine early disease detection and personalized medicine; and the Wimley labs research on antimicrobial peptides, a significant advance in the fight against antibiotic-resistant bacteria that underlined Tulane's consistent role in addressing global health threats. By meeting face-to-face with industry leaders, Tulane was able to answer questions first-hand and build relationships that establish crucial industry-side champions for eventual deals. As talks progress, the Business Development team will work with Matt Koenig

and his Office of Intellectual Property Management team to establish licenses or sponsored research agreements.

## **Key Opinion Leaders: Driving Thought Leadership**

A signature hallmark of Tulane's philosophy focuses on connectivity and concierge-like service, so it was no surprise that meeting topics were not just about traditional inventions and assets. Tulane Medicine's roster of distinguished [Key Opinion Leaders](#) (KOLs) added significant value to the discussions at BIO 2024. Highlighted experts included Sarah Lindsey, PhD, for sex-based differences in cardiovascular issues; Chad Roy, PhD, for world-class aerobiology expertise; Suresh Sikka, PhD, for his crucial work examining the potential impact of new drugs in male fertility, and Brooks, who attended her second BIO in person to discuss nephrology, menopause, and sex-based biology first-hand.

## **Leading the Dialogue in The Bullpen and BIO Committees**

Zanewicz went on camera to film an entire day of Key Opinion Leader (KOL) interviews in [the Bullpen](#), an invite-only club populated by CEOs and investors. On a day themed around AI & Healthcare, this initiative highlighted the institution's expertise in this burgeoning field and positioned Tulane as a forward-thinking player keen on integrating artificial intelligence to enhance healthcare delivery and outcomes. For those interested in this topic, the interviews will be posted on the [Bullpen's LinkedIn](#) page over the next few weeks. Zanewicz also chaired the BIO Technology Transfer Committee meeting, a group focused on identifying and addressing any opportunities for (or impediments to) advancing relationships between academia, investors, and industry.

## **Networking and Beyond**

Receptions and networking events at BIO 2024 provided additional opportunities for Tulane representatives to forge valuable connections, exchange ideas, and explore potential collaborations in a less structured atmosphere. This included the coveted BIO from the BAYOU networking event, a collaboration between the Louisiana delegation and the [Alliance for AI in Healthcare](#) industry association. Coordinated by

the [New Orleans Business Alliance](#) and Tulane Medicine, the invite-only reception surpassed 400 registrants, more than double that of previous years. At the reception, the team also met with many contract research organizations and contract manufacturing organizations, establishing relationships that could help the [Tulane University Innovation Institute](#) identify services that can be leveraged to advance innovations selected for the [Provost's Proof of Concept Fund](#) process.

Tulane School of Medicine's robust participation at BIO 2024 is more than just an academic exercise; it is a strategic effort to enhance its role in the ever-evolving world of biomedical science and healthcare. By showcasing groundbreaking research, fostering thought leadership, and actively engaging in key discussions, Tulane is advancing its mission and contributing significantly to the broader goals of improving global health and fostering innovation. As Tulane continues to build on these efforts, its influence and impact in the biomedical field are poised to grow even further.