

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BioSTL Receives Grant to Promote Inclusion of Women & Minorities in Bioscience and Entrepreneurship

\$100,000 from the Blackstone Charitable Foundation will pilot new efforts and engage new director to expand impact of the St. Louis Bioscience Inclusion Initiative

ST. LOUIS (February 7, 2014) — [BioSTL](#) announced today the receipt of a \$100,000 grant from the [Blackstone Charitable Foundation](#) to catalyze a new pilot programming phase of the St. Louis Bioscience Inclusion Initiative. The goal of this new programming is to strengthen the region's bioscience ecosystem by identifying high-potential women and minority bioscience entrepreneurs and providing a systematic pathway for them to create viable high-growth ventures.

Since 2008, BioSTL has organized an on-going series of regional meetings to heighten the visibility of inclusion in the biosciences. Early meetings of CEO-level community and business leaders evolved to include 81 leaders and practitioners from organizations throughout the community who are engaged in the sciences and dedicated to promoting inclusion. This grant will enable a new programmatic phase for the Initiative.

"St. Louis' ascending bioscience community is a driver of regional economic growth," said Donn Rubin, President & CEO of BioSTL. "But, the region will only achieve its potential if every talented individual, including those with entrepreneurial aspirations, has the opportunity to succeed and contribute to our regional prosperity."

Program participants will be transformed into capable, high-growth entrepreneurs ready to launch and grow successful bioscience companies through a sequence that includes: 1) Awareness of & Engagement in Biosciences, 2) Training to Build Skills for Bioscience Entrepreneurship, and 3) Access to Resources: Networks, Facilities, Capital.

"At Blackstone, we believe that a robust global economy depends upon a pipeline of creative, talented, and inspired entrepreneurs," said Amy Stursberg, Executive Director of The Blackstone Charitable Foundation. "Through this grant program, we are able to direct the Foundation's resources towards helping entrepreneurship flourish across the nation and globally, and support entrepreneurs on a path toward innovation and discovery."

BioSTL is engaging Dr. Cheryl Watkins-Moore as Director of Bioscience & Entrepreneurial Inclusion to guide the program. A portion of her compensation will be covered by the grant. Cheryl will bolster existing collaborations with organizations across the St. Louis region as well as seek new partnerships to promote inclusion in entrepreneurship as well as in the region's bioscience talent and workforce pipelines.

- Dr. Cheryl Watkins-Moore began her career as a physician, then added an M.B.A. from Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management and developed business leadership experience by managing teams in large global and start-up organizations in the life science industry. Most recently, Cheryl served as an Entrepreneur In Residence (EIR) with the [BioGenerator](#), supporting the formation and growth of new bioscience startups. She concurrently served as a mentor for tech entrepreneurs



with the Capital Innovators accelerator program as well as mentored entrepreneurs in Washington University's Skandalaris Center for Entrepreneurial Studies. Previously, in her role as Vice President and General Manager, Cheryl led the Integrated Biomarker Solutions business and prior to that role headed the Analytics Division for the North American market of EMD Millipore, the U.S. subsidiary of Merck KGaA. Prior to Merck, Cheryl managed the U.S. marketing operations for Swedish-based biotech start-up company, Biora Inc.

"St. Louis enjoys many strengths within the biosciences for minority and female talent with the potential to successfully contribute to further growth of our region's economy," said Dr. Cheryl Watkins-Moore, newly-appointed Director of Bioscience & Entrepreneurial Inclusion for BioSTL. "These new programmatic activities aim to institutionalize a pathway of entrepreneurial engagement, training, and start-up resources to enhance the region's pipeline of women and minority bioscience entrepreneurs."

Partners in executing the program will include:

- [Cortex Innovation Community](#) through the expansion of entrepreneurial training programs;
- [Prosper](#), an entrepreneur support organization for women, through development of a women's angel investment network;
- [St. Louis Economic Development Partnership](#) through events to raise awareness among minority professionals of opportunities in the region's bioscience and entrepreneurship communities;
- [Washington University Office of Technology Management](#) through expansion of a pilot program that aims to address the gender gap among students, postdocs, and faculty involved in commercializing innovation; and
- [Women Entrepreneurs of St. Louis](#) (WEST) through events that expand the region's network of experienced female entrepreneurs and connect them to the bioscience community.

The grant was made through the second annual Blackstone Organizational Grants Program, which targets organizations that focus on entrepreneurship and innovation. Through this program, The Blackstone Charitable Foundation, through its 5-year, \$50 million Entrepreneurship Initiative, is helping innovative organizations that directly support entrepreneurs to pilot, expand or replicate projects or programs that will catalyze the growth of successful businesses, industries, and communities.

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About BioSTL

BioSTL builds regional capacity and fosters collaborative efforts to advance innovation, entrepreneurship, and new company creation that capitalize on St. Louis' world-class medical and plant biosciences and to promote economic growth and regional prosperity in St. Louis. Please visit www.biostl.org for additional information.

Contact:

BioSTL
Ben Johnson
Cell: (314) 497-8985
bjohnson@biostl.org

About The Blackstone Charitable Foundation

The Blackstone Charitable Foundation was founded at the time of The Blackstone Group's Initial Public Offering in 2007 with substantial commitments from the Firm's employees. Influenced by the enterprising heritage of the firm and its founders, The Blackstone Charitable Foundation is directing its resources and applying the intellectual capital of the firm to foster entrepreneurship in areas hardest hit by the global economic crisis. Through its investment expertise across several asset classes and geographies, Blackstone has a unique perspective on the global economy and a heightened understanding of how entrepreneurial activity is often the crucial catalyst in the growth of successful businesses, industries and communities. (For more information, see www.blackstone.com/CharitableFoundation.htm)

Contact:

Blackstone
Oriane Schwartzman
New York
+ 1 212 390 2250
oriane.schwartzman@blackstone.com

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