

September 2007 Special Edition

New Faces Bolster WiSys Commitment to UW System



Left to right: Mindy Dawson, Associate; Bill Adolfsen, Manager; Maliyakal John, Managing Director; Bethany Billman, Projects Specialist; Lisa Murray, Administrative Coordinator

WiSys Technology Foundation is gearing up to assist UW System campuses initiate commercially viable, interdisciplinary research and development. We have recently recruited the following talented young team to spearhead this robust and renewed initiative, the focus of this special fall newsletter edition.

Dr. Bill Adolfsen brings a wealth of science and business management expertise to WiSys as he assumes the WiSys Manager position from Paul Pucci. Originally from New Jersey, Bill received his BS in Biotechnology from Rutgers University, his PhD in Biology from MIT and was a postdoctoral fellow at UW-Madison. Bill was a founding member of Codon Devices in Cambridge, MA, a venture-backed start-up commercializing high-throughput gene synthesis technologies. In addition, Bill has consulted for two venture capital companies— Flagship Ventures in Cambridge, MA and Venture Investors in Madison. Bill will lead the science and technology initiatives, including grant

management. Bill enjoys spending time with his wife, Jessica, and stays active by running, biking and playing soccer.

Bethany Billman, a recent graduate of UW-Madison School of Journalism, will lead the WiSys newsletter, technology catalogue and a number of other special projects. Following a publishing internship with TOR/Forge Books, she recently transitioned from being a temporary employee to her new position as Projects Specialist at WiSys/WARF. She will assist WARF, WiSys and WiCell in special projects such as the Wisconsin Discovery Portal, a searchable database of UW-Madison faculty. In her spare time, Bethany enjoys hosting dinner parties, playing Frisbee golf and exploring Madison.

Mindy Dawson became the team lead for the WARF's Wisconsin Discovery Portal (WDP) in July. The Discovery Portal is a database-in-progress that will help promote collaboration between faculties of different disciplines.

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The database is also expected to play a significant role in industry-faculty partnerships. Mindy has a BS degree from the University of Illinois and has worked as a cytotechnologist in both Evanston, IL and Spokane, WA labs. Mindy began as an intern on the project, and is now a full-fledged WiSys Associate overseeing three interns. Mindy also assists Maliyakal John with patent prosecution.

Additionally, former **WiSys Manager Paul Pucci** has transitioned to WARF Licensing Associate. He will focus on Inside Licensing and Nutraceuticals, working with the agriculture and engineering teams, and will continue licensing duties for several WiSys technologies.

Congratulations to the new WiSys team as they tackle their new roles!

By Brian Sweeney

Bethany, Bill and Mindy join **Managing Director Maliyakal John** and **Administrative Coordinator Lisa Murray** to make up the new WiSys team.

WiSys Redoubles Efforts to Strengthen Technology Transfer on System Campuses in Wake of UW-Milwaukee's Departure

When UW-Milwaukee announced it would start its own technology transfer office earlier this year, inventors at UW System campuses may have wondered how the WiSys Technology Foundation would fare without one of the two research institutions in the state.

But leaders of UW System, WiSys and its parent, the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF), are confident the System-wide service will continue to support inventors, and that its services will even get broader.

WARF and UW System established WiSys in 2000 to patent and license inventions arising from research on UW System campuses. Since that time, UW-M has been one of the heavy hitters, disclosing more than 110 inventions.

"While the departure of UW-Milwaukee from WiSys will invariably reduce the number of disclosures to WiSys in the short term, it will allow WiSys staff to direct more energy, time and resources to other campuses," says WiSys Managing Director Maliyakal John.

WARF Managing Director Carl E. Gulbrandsen agrees. He says that because of its size, Milwaukee required about 50 percent of WiSys' staff resources. Now, WiSys will be able to dedicate more time and energy to other campuses.

John notes that WiSys' strategy is to lead the development of intellectual property within the UW System by facilitating interdisciplinary collaborations among campuses, state institutions and industry. He points to the partnership of WiSys and Marshfield Clinic as an example of this.

"Right now we have 15 active discussions on collaborations between Marshfield and UW faculty," he says, adding, "One long-term therapeutic development has already been initiated between UW-Eau Claire and Marshfield."

John and his staff are confident they can initiate many other new research and development programs for the benefit of both institutions, as well as for the state. In the long-term, John believes these initiatives will provide the basis of a high-value product pipeline for the UW System. He also points out that Milwaukee faculty will be invited to take part in the collaborations.

"While UWM will lead its own technology transfer, that does not mean we will not work together to advance technology development," John says. "We will continue to work with Milwaukee faculty in setting up productive collaborations."

By Jill Ladwig