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Cell and gene therapy-focused OpenCell Technologies hires MilliporeSigma executive Kevin Gutshall as new CEO

Secures investment from BioGenerator and Synchrony Bio

ST. LOUIS – [OpenCell Technologies](#), an R&D-stage biomedical venture, has announced the hiring of [Kevin Gutshall](#) as CEO. Kevin leaves his role as MilliporeSigma’s director of life science business development and M&A focusing on the cell and gene therapy business unit, to join OpenCell and lead its efforts to translate and commercialize its core technology platform, POROS.

OpenCell was established based on technology developed at the Georgia Institute of Technology, by Engineering faculty and company co-founders Mark Meacham, PhD, Andrei Fedorov, PhD, and Levent Degertekin, PhD. Dr. Meacham was subsequently recruited to Washington University in St. Louis, and OpenCell relocated to the [BioGenerator Labs](#) in the Cortex Innovation Community adjacent to the Washington University School of Medicine. The company’s core technology, which has broad applications ranging from fuel and energy to life sciences, is focused on the rapidly emerging cell and gene therapy market.

“I am thrilled to join OpenCell, as it is now poised to move from an R&D stage to a commercial business,” said Gutshall. “I believe that the POROS platform will be a disruptive technology platform in the cell and gene therapy marketplace.”

During its seed stage, the company benefitted from BioGenerator Entrepreneurs-in-Residence (EIR) that brought key expertise to the company as it pivoted from the research tools market to cell and gene therapy applications. Paul Olivo, MD, PhD, a former BioGenerator EIR and current Venture Partner at Synchrony Bio, which also participated in the current financing, serves as a key advisor to OpenCell, managing the company’s research team. In her role as BioGenerator EIR, Heather Holeman, PhD, now CEO of Lifespan Biosciences, facilitated key business development connections for the company. Concurrent with the financing, Charlie Bolten, Senior Vice President of BioGenerator, joins OpenCell’s board of directors.

“Together with Synchrony Bio, BioGenerator’s investment in OpenCell is the culmination of extensive due diligence and hands-on support by our investment, Entrepreneur-in-Residence and Grants-2-Business teams,” said Bolten. “With the successful recruitment of a CEO with deep experience in commercialization, business development and M&A, we are pleased to see OpenCell take an important step toward commercializing the POROS platform.”

“I am excited to welcome Kevin as the new CEO of OpenCell,” added Chad Stiening, OpenCell Executive Chairman and Managing Director at Synchrony Bio. “His professional background and personal passion in the cell and gene therapy space is a perfect fit for the company as it seeks



to realize the full potential of its technology and enable the development and manufacturing of promising new therapies in this dynamic market.

In addition to investments from BioGenerator and Synchrony Bio, the company has leveraged significant Federal grant funding – over \$3M total – to help secure equity financing and achieve key milestones that helped attract strategic partnering interest as well as its new CEO.

About OpenCell

OpenCell Technologies provides efficient, high-throughput and scalable transfection tools to the Life Science Industry, enabling it to use difficult-to-transfect cells (e.g., primary and cancer stem cell cultures) in development of cell-based analysis techniques and discovery of new therapeutic cell-based therapies. Unlike currently available products, the OpenCell technology features precise control of biophysical actions on a single-cell basis without sacrificing throughput. OpenCell's vision is to realize a novel, cost-effective approach to transfection that will overcome existing research and development obstacles. Our mission is to make cellular therapies effective, affordable and scalable for the clinical and research communities. Visit opencelltech.com for more information.

About BioGenerator

BioGenerator, the investment arm of BioSTL, produces a sustained pipeline of successful bioscience companies and entrepreneurs in St. Louis by creating, growing and investing in promising new enterprises. Visit biogenerator.org for additional information, and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

About Synchrony Bio

Synchrony Bio seeks to achieve consistently superior investor returns in early-stage biomedical and life science ventures by aligning seasoned talent, staged investment capital, and process efficiencies. Careful and coordinated alignment of all three is key to overcoming unique challenges faced by medical device and diagnostics ventures, in order to realize significant upside and superior returns. Synchrony's extended network of experts and advisors includes professionals with deep, cross-functional experience and backgrounds. Visit synchronybio.com for additional information.

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