

by TOM O'CONNOR

Commercializing

INNOVATIONS

Inventive minds create a healthier world

- + A radio frequency probe that destroys tumors without the need for surgery.
- + A miniaturized robot, the size of a pen, that allows surgeons to perform surgery remotely.
- + A unique form of creatine now being sold in nutrition stores around the country.
- + A nanotechnology drug delivery system that delivers medications more effectively.
- + A new technology to quickly and economically purify therapeutic proteins.

The common feature of these inventions is that they were developed by researchers at UNMC and licensed to companies for commercialization by UNeMed.



UNeMed, the technology transfer arm of UNMC, works with researchers to evaluate, protect and license the innovative discoveries made on campus.

“These are just a few examples of the innovative research occurring at UNMC that have the potential to impact the health of people around the world,” said James Linder, M.D., associate vice chancellor for research and the president of UNeMed. “Our goal is to ensure that the faculty inventions move from the laboratory into clinical use and generate royalty revenue for the university that can further advance research.”

That’s challenging because research discoveries typically develop over several years, and it can sometimes take a decade or more before the university realizes any financial gain.

With more than 200 funded researchers at UNMC and more than \$80 million in research funding, Dr. Linder sees great possibilities. “I am excited about our future potential to license new technologies and stimulate Nebraska’s economic development.”


“Patentability is not the only issue,” said Todd Headley, director of licensing for UNeMed. “The key is that our discoveries must have commercial appeal. It is the

marketplace that defines the best research, with the provision that the research must affect patient care.”

Headley works closely with UNeMed’s director of intellectual property, Michael Dixon, Ph.D., who wants to create a culture of innovation among the faculty, graduate students and staff. “We can do this by making it as convenient and as efficient as possible for scientists to make their disclosures,” Dr. Dixon said.

UNeMed will increase internal and external publicity for research discoveries and work closely with researchers. The active involvement of researchers increases the likelihood that inventions will be successfully commercialized, he said. In the past three years, invention disclosures from faculty have increased 60 percent, and patents and patent applications have increased 43 percent.

“The ultimate question is – how is the public benefiting from UNMC’s research?” Dr. Linder said.

“Research is powerful. Its greatest value is that it provides better health care, while creating the potential for new university revenue and economic development. We can help our faculty take research to a new level.” 

THE UNEMED TEAM, FROM LEFT: TODD HEADLEY, DR. MICHAEL DIXON AND DR. JAMES LINDER.

