

PACIV

THE IMPACT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY ON THE ISLAND

By PACIV

B iotechnology can be defined as the use of different engineering and technology principles applied to life sciences. Microorganisms, such as bacteria and other biological substances such as enzymes are used in the application of different industrial and manufacturing processes, among them, the production and manufacturing of drugs and pharmaceutical products. Today more than ever, everyone is talking about biotechnology.

In Puerto Rico the industry of Biotechnology has gained a lot of interest from different sectors of our society, that ranges from the central government, business community (private sector), and the public at large, because it is considered as the next greatest innovation of the 21st century. Just recently, Puerto Rico left a great impression during the 2007 BIO International Convention held in Boston, Massachusetts. Our delegation, led by the Puerto Rico Bioscience Alliance, included the support and presence of Governor Anibal Acevedo Vilá and Boris Jaskille, executive director of PRIDCO, along with Ricardo Rivera Cardona, Secretary of Economic Development and Commerce, Antonio García Padilla, President of the University of PR, and Annette Montoto, President of Banco de Desarrollo Económico.

The Puerto Rico Bioscience Alliance with the support of all its members from PRIDCO, INDUNIV, members of the academy, life sciences manufacturing companies and a selected group representing different local enterprises such as PACIV participated as exhibitors in the world's largest event for the biotechnology industry. Although our presence was positive, there's a lot of work needed to be done and areas of opportunity that can be examined. For instance, for next year's convention plan to have a bigger space area for our Pavilion and come forward as panelists to present and discuss our contribution as a country and value proposition, something PRIDCO is currently working on. To achieve exposure in these forums, more monetary resources and participation from the private and public sectors are needed.

Legislature and municipal governments can also make a difference by approving legislation to increase necessary funds for this sort of event. We also need to be fully trained and gather more skills and knowledge on innova-

tion that is leading the world economy. Funds are needed not only for the construction of new physical facilities, such as the "Corredor del Conocimiento" (The Corridor of Knowledge) which will become key in promoting the development of the industry, but also funds to be used in research and development of new drugs that will help position Puerto Rico as strong competitor in the market. By doing so, lies the opportunity to attract the best physicians and scientists and necessary resources to market it and create strategic alliances with recognized centers of research, development, and clinical studies. These well grounded initiatives should be focused and be a priority in creating an ecosystem that conciliate and will help gain leadership in the market. Continued commitment from private and public sectors is crucial in marketing and leading the Island towards the goal of competing in the global market.

Looking ahead...

Puerto Rico has a great opportunity to position itself attractively in the R&D (Research and Development) arena in this industry, and become the "BioIsland" we aspire to become, and be able to compete in a "BioWorld". More specifically, Puerto Rico is a great candidate for conducting clinical trials, and in the near future in the manufacturing process of final products, which we are already doing. Puerto Rico possesses a series of ideal characteristics to conduct clinical studies mainly because there are different diseases existing in our communities, some of them higher than in other countries as is the case of diabetes, for example. We also know the high number of pharmaceutical multinational companies that already are operating or biotechnological companies opening in Puerto Rico, because they believe in these competitive advantages.

Having the right focus on the manufacturing and scientific industrial processes, guarantee us a brighter future in the biotechnology market. Puerto Rico can become one of the leaders of research and development and clinical trials. We are in the right direction but we need to invest more economic resources, and that can only be accomplished if all players (academy, government, and private sector) agreed that is our main focus. With all the parties on board and a master strategic business plan that clearly define the next 25 years in the business will surely lead the Island to success. **B2BX**

Anuncian nueva alianza GRUPO TRIPLE S Y ASOCIACIÓN DE INDUSTRIALES

Por Grupo Triple-S

E l Grupo Triple-S y la Asociación de Industriales de Puerto Rico anunciaron una nueva alianza, mediante la cual el conglomerado de seguros más grande de la Isla ofrecerá una gama de seguros de salud vida y propiedad para cubrir todas las necesidades de seguros de los miembros de esa organización empresarial.

"Nos llena de gran satisfacción anunciar este acuerdo con la Asociación de Industriales para ofrecer a sus miembros, bajo un solo techo, todos los productos de seguros—desde salud y vida hasta propiedad y contingencia", expresó Ramón M. Ruiz, presidente del Grupo Triple-S.

Por su parte, Edgardo Fábregas, presidente de la Asociación de Industriales calificó el acuerdo como "uno muy novedoso y que ofrecerá mayor agilidad y mejor coordinación a la hora de contratar la diversa gama de seguros que requieren los negocios modernos, así como nuevas alternativas para cada necesidad y presupuesto de nuestros socios".

Ruiz subrayó que esta es la primera vez que el Grupo Triple-S se alía con una organización empresarial para ofrecer toda la gama de productos de seguros que ofrecen sus subsidiarias. "Los Industriales y Triple-S, Inc., nuestra compañía de seguros de salud, han sido socios de negocios por más de 10 años, ya que ese es el plan de salud que ofrece la organización a sus miembros. Este acuerdo es una evolución lógica en nuestra alianza con los Industriales para que sus socios encuentren protección total bajo una sola sombrilla", explicó.

El ejecutivo, además, destacó como ventaja competitiva la experiencia y el conocimiento del mercado, así como el servicio de excelencia que caracteriza al Grupo.

Entre los nuevos ofrecimientos, que estarán disponibles tanto para las empresas como sus empleados, se incluyen seguros de vida grupal e individual, seguros suplementarios, tales como cáncer y seguro funeral; responsabilidad pública, propiedad, equipos e inmuebles, asistencia en el hogar y asistencia en la carretera, entre otros. Benefits Solutions Group es el representante autorizado por la Asociación de Industriales para orientar a todos sus socios sobre los productos y servicios disponibles a través Grupo Triple S. **B2BX**