

# Michigan Bioscience Leaders Participate in Industry Roundtable with Governor Gretchen Whitmer

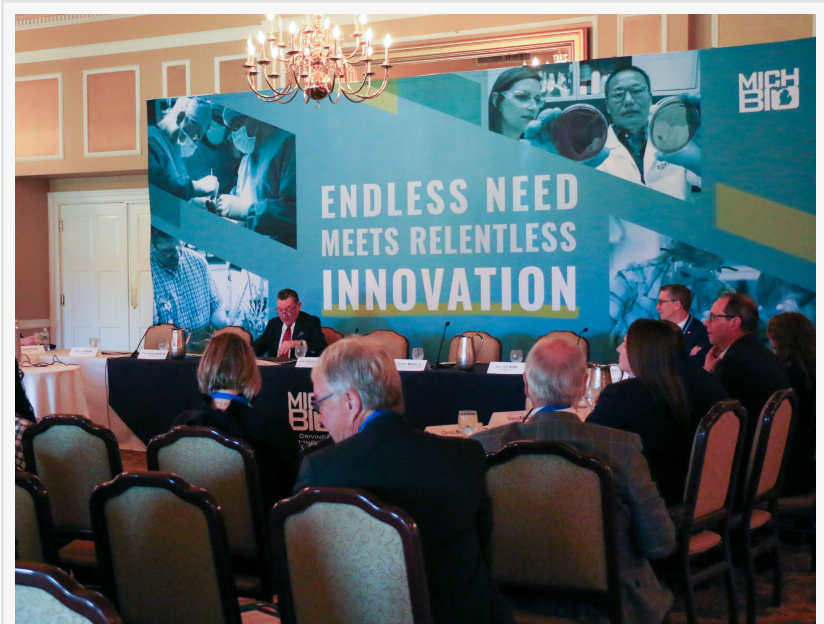
ANN ARBOR, MI, UNITED STATES, October 27, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A panel of fourteen bioscience industry leaders convened on Tuesday, October 24th for a roundtable discussion on the challenges facing the bio-industry with Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Bioscience Legislative Caucus (BLC) Co-Chairs – Sen. Mark Huizenga, Reps. Julie Rogers and Doug Wozniak – and Michigan Economic Development Corporation CEO, Quinten Messer, Jr.

Topics for discussion included:

- The impact of supply chain and labor shortages on the growth of the industry,
- The value of the life sciences beyond economic impact, and especially in terms of saving and improving patient lives,
- The ways companies, research institutions, health systems and providers, economic development organizations (EDOs), funding entities, and policymakers can collaborate to more effectively secure the future of the biosciences in Michigan, and
- The need for capital access for businesses at all stages of development.

Roundtable panelists were pre-selected to represent Michigan's life sciences sectors – BioPharma, MedTech, Health Technology, and Research and Testing – geographic hubs – Ann Arbor, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Lansing, and Marquette – as well as company size and stage from small, start-up organizations to global brands with significant Michigan footprints.

"The intent was to have as many representative and diverse voices around the table as possible," says Stephen Rapundalo, PhD, Roundtable moderator and President and CEO of MichBio, "because, as Rep. Rogers put it during the discussion 'the one size fits none approach doesn't work for anyone'. Collaborative solutions to industry problems, growth of the life sciences in



Roundtable panelists and audience members convening prior to the discussion.

Michigan, and the ability of the state to continue to make meaningful contributions to the quality of life of people in the state and around the globe, require perspectives and resources from all stakeholders to be effective.”

The industry panel consisted of:

- Gary Abusamra, CEO, Oxus America (Auburn Hills)
- Christy Bigelow, Vice President & General Manager - Manufacturing Operations, Emergent BioSolutions (Lansing)
- Connie Chang, COO, ONL Therapeutics (Ann Arbor)
- Lisa Crandall, Site Head & Senior Director Pharmaceutical R&D, Pace Life Sciences (Wixom)
- Dylan Crotty, President, Stryker Instruments (Kalamazoo)
- Dr. Robert Donofrio, PhD, Chief Science Officer, Neogen (Lansing)
- Javier Evelyn, Founder, CEO, & Principle Investigator, Alerje (Detroit)
- Valerie Obenchain, Founder and CEO, AIRS (Newaygo)
- Adam Paltzer, VP Business Development, Able Medical Device (Marquette)
- Dr. Rob Polzer, PhD, EVP, Research & Development, Zoetis (Kalamazoo)
- Braden Robison, President & CEO, Arbor Assays (Ann Arbor)
- Ashlea Souffrou, Founder and CEO, SxanPro (Grand Rapids)
- Dr. Robert Stachlewitz, PhD, Corporate VP & General Manager, Charles River Labs (Mattawan)
- Manoj Zalpuri, VP and Site Head, Piramal Pharma Solutions (Detroit)

In addition, a general audience of life sciences industry leaders was given the opportunity to ask additional questions.

“Several times during the discussion mention was made of something another state was doing that Michigan isn’t,” continues Rapundalo, “and that just highlights exactly why we need opportunities like this for the industry to come together and have these strategic conversations. The blueprints for successful industry growth, and solutions to many of the challenges that exist in Michigan, are already out there, but we can’t bring those ideas to fruition if we don’t have the conversation about a common vision and how to attain it.”

MichBio plans to continue convening industry leaders, policymakers, EDO’s and other stakeholders to expand this discussion, lay the groundwork for an updated industry strategic roadmap, and ensure that Michigan’s life sciences cluster grows to be top ten ranked nationally.

For more information on MichBio visit [michbio.org](http://michbio.org)

MichBio is the trade association committed to driving growth in Michigan's biosciences industry and its many sectors, including agri-biotech, food and nutrition, bio-based technologies and renewable chemicals, industrial and environmental biotech, medical devices and technologies, pharmaceuticals and consumer healthcare, diagnostics and research products, testing and research services, and clinical research. MichBio members include bioscience companies, academic and research institutions, bioscience service providers, and related organizations. For

more information, visit [www.michbio.org](http://www.michbio.org).

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