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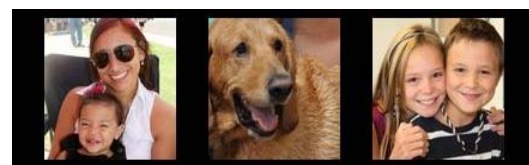
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Arrington to lead Texas Tech University System's research, technology commercialization programs

Texas Tech University System leaders last week made a quiet shift at the top of their technology transfer structure in another step toward achieving tier-one status.

Posted: August 13, 2011 - 9:53pm | Updated: August 14, 2011 - 12:12am

By [Walt Nett](#)

AVALANCHE-JOURNAL.

Texas Tech University System leaders last week made a quiet shift at the top of their technology transfer structure in another step toward achieving tier-one status.

Vice Chancellor Jodey D. Arrington, Chancellor Kent Hance's chief of staff, will replace David L. Miller as the vice chancellor in charge of the Tech system's research and technology commercialization programs.

Miller will return to the private sector as chief operating officer of ClearTalk Wireless, a Lubbock-based mobile communications company.

In addition to founding the National Institute for Renewable Energy through his duties at Tech last year, Miller also was recently named by Gov. Rick Perry to the Product Development and Small Business Incubator Board.

Both men will assume their new duties Sept. 1.



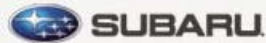
School seal and fountain on Texas Tech University campus.



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"My top priorities for the system have been increasing enrollment and growing our research," Hance said. "Jodey's strong leadership, experience within the Texas Tech System and contacts throughout the state and country will be invaluable to our

success in these critical areas."

With the change in leadership, the Tech System is adding federal relations duties — which would include finding and pursuing government research funds — to the office.

In an interview last week, Arrington said only one immediate change — creating a corporate relations position to find and solicit research opportunities from the private sector — is planned.

Arrington's office will provide oversight at the system level, while the vice presidents for research will continue to report directly to their respective presidents at Tech, the Health Sciences Center and Angelo State University.

The Tech system is a relative newcomer to technology transfer among universities, where the idea of turning research results to commercial use traces a history to the development of FM radio at Columbia University in 1933, and the University of Cincinnati's development in 1940 of Benadryl.

At Tech, the program began as a university administrative office in 1998, Arrington said, and was brought into the top administrative tier in 2008 when the office was revamped and Miller, whose title was managing director, was named to a vice chancellorship.

Arrington lauded Miller's work with bringing the office from its small beginnings to a unit that's gained state and national note through the creation of the National Institute for Renewable Energy a year ago, forging connections with wind energy business and for helping attract funding from the Texas Emerging Technologies Fund.

In addition, he noted, Tech's research budget last year was about \$120 million, a level well on its way toward Hance's Tier One goal of \$200 million in research spending by the year 2020.

"He's provided us with a solid foundation, and that's what we're launching from," Arrington said of his predecessor's service to Tech.

Despite the office's rapid rise within the system, the research and marketing program's had a relatively low profile publicly, seen primarily when something big happens, such as

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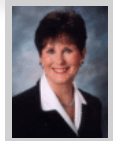
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the creation of the Institute for Renewable Energy, or when sizeable funding is announced for certain kinds of research.

"We're going to let it out of the closet and into the light," Arrington said of the situation, adding that the office's goals will include a certain amount of innovation matchmaking — identifying investment and grant sources in both the public and private sector in terms of research problems that could be solved at Tech system institutions.

Another aspect of the job is a kind of traffic direction component, reviewing existing research in the conceptual stage to see which ideas are close to a stage in innovation called proof of concept — the point where ideas become working prototypes.

To that end, Arrington said, the system's budgeted \$1 million over three years to support ideas closing in on that stage, which is also the entry to what Arrington called "the valley of death" for research and development.

That's the period when the concept is refined from prototype to a viable product.

Another major goal, he said, is to seek ways that Tech's research can become jobs, not just in Lubbock but in communities across the South Plains.

"Texas Tech can play a very visible role in our economy as our start-up companies produce new products and services and provide new jobs that stimulate and diversify our economy," he said. "These products also produce a financial return to the university that will help to support and enhance our future research efforts."

Arrington said one aspect of increasing research and spinoff efforts through the system is to reduce the loss of Tech-trained talent that now goes to research universities elsewhere in the state and nation to continue their studies.

Part of the reasoning for rolling the federal relations duties into the office is to draw on Arrington's experience in Washington, where he was a special assistant to President George H.W. Bush and chief of staff at the Federal Deposit Insurance Co.

Nationally, he said, universities spent some \$60 billion on research last year, and 70 percent of that was federally funded.

"The federal earmarks that supported a lot of our research programs are gone and we can expect extremely tight state and federal budgets in the years ahead," Arrington said. "We also expect fierce competition for the grant programs that have helped us develop and maintain our world class research programs."

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Tech System research examples

■ **Tech Turf**, a hybrid Bermuda grass invented by Dr. Dick Auld at the Texas Tech College of Agriculture in response to needs for an environmentally friendly grass variety that can tolerate drought conditions and grow with less water. It requires about half the water of conventional Bermuda grass while maintains an attractive green color and spreads well. The product was licensed to Frontier Hybrids and is now distributed through nurseries in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Southern California.

■ **SequenceL** is a software development language that was developed by Texas Tech computer science researchers and NASA engineers working together to create an advanced computer programming language needed for the space mission. SequenceL is a simple declarative programming language that helps application developers create optimized code that can run more efficiently on the newest and fastest computers designed with parallel processing. The technology was licensed to Texas Multicore Technologies, an Austin based start-up company that provides transparent

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programming solutions for parallel processing architectures.

■ Fibertect was invented by Dr. Sheshadri Ramkumar at the Institute of Environmental and Human Health. The product is a protective cloth wipe containing carbon that absorbs and traps hazardous wastes and toxins that result from environmental accidents or acts of bio-terrorism. Developed with the support of the Department of Defense, the patented manufacturing process has been licensed to Hobbs Bonded Fibers in Waco, Texas who is producing the wipes and marketing them to the military and emergency first response teams.

■ T-Cell Receptor Mimic Antibody (TCRm), developed by Dr. John Weidanz of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Pharmacy, is a new cancer therapeutic that has proven effective in fighting breast cancer and other infections. These mimic antibodies are the fastest growing segment in the pharmaceutical industry and generate \$26 billion per year in worldwide revenue. This technology was licensed to Receptor Logic, a start-up company located at the Abilene Life Science Accelerator, a biotech incubator, opened last year in Abilene, Texas.

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New Position

By civitas | 08/14/11 - 08:57 am

Replace one vice-chancellor with another and add a new corporate position. Looks like the Kingdom of Hance is continuing the policy of expanding high-level administrative positions while reducing those who actually work.

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@civitas

By feaco | 08/15/11 - 04:53 pm

I assume that Arrington will take a \$17,000.00 pay cut since his new job pays less. I am surprised reverend chancellor Kent (failed politician and lobbyist) Hance didn't appoint his buddy Alberto (I can't remember) Gonzales to this post. That would have been a raise for Gonzo.

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It would have been nice to

By scpena | 08/17/11 - 04:00 am

It would have been nice to see credit given to my brother, the late Dr. Daniel Cooke who was the Chief Inventor of Sequence L and brought tremendous acclaim to Texas Tech for for all of his achievements.

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