

## **Accomplishments** **2010-2011**

Georgia Bio (GaBio) made significant progress in 2010-2011 representing members on multiple fronts. Below is a list of achievements organized by four focus areas: advocacy, education, economic development, and business development.

### **Advocacy**

GaBio launched an aggressive legislative education effort with Georgia's state government officials. The effort is led by the 30-member Government Affairs Committee. There were 30 bills in the House and Senate that were tracked in 2011 alone; all had potential to affect our membership. Key wins were:

- *House Bill 214*: Establishes an independent Department of Public Health.
- *Senate Bill 36*: Establishes an electronic prescription drug monitoring program to prevent abuse of prescription medicines.
- *FY 2012 Budget*: A Senate attempt to dismantle Georgia Cancer Coalition (GCC) was prevented and the organization and funding were restored in the budget signed by the Governor.

GaBio in association with the Biotechnology Industry Organization played a major role in urging Congress to enact the federal Therapeutic Discovery Project Program providing grants to companies to advance development of new medicines and devices. Fifty-one Georgia companies received \$15 million.

GaBio submitted a white paper to the 2010 Special Council on Tax Reform and Fairness for Georgians outlining existing tax incentives that serve as a catalyst for attracting more companies and creating more high-paying jobs. This white paper, along with a proposed package of new tax incentives, will be used to urge the General Assembly and Governor to consider tax policies that support the welfare of today's citizens as well as future generations of Georgians.

GaBio asked the 2010 gubernatorial candidates to submit written answers to three questions of critical significance to Georgia's life sciences industry and the state's future. The three questions were: (1) What is the role of state government in supporting life sciences economic development? (2) How can Georgia ensure that its students will be able to compete for 21st century advanced technology jobs and that our state will have the skilled work force to support life sciences industry growth? (3) What, if anything, is the most critical need for Georgians when it comes to health care reform? Nine of the 14 candidates responded and their answers were posted on the GaBio website.

The General Assembly unanimously adopted legislation exempting from sales tax free samples of prescription drugs and biologics and investigational drugs, biologics, medical devices and animal health medicines in clinical trials.

A coalition formed with patient advocacy groups, universities and the Innovation Crescent business community prevented passage of legislation that attempted to enact limits on embryonic stem cell research stricter than the federal government.

GaBio commissioned a 2006 statewide poll of registered voters, which revealed a majority of Georgia voters supports embryonic stem cell research and therapeutic cloning.

### **Education**

GaBio launched an education and workforce development initiative in 2007 to accelerate the alignment of Georgia's current and future workforce with the needs of its life sciences industries. It achieved this mission by building sustainable partnerships between industry, educators, and economic development.

Georgia Bio has championed the development and implementation of a new high school biotechnology curriculum taught as a science elective or as a career and technical education career pathway, depending on the schools' needs: Launched in 2009, the biotech course is now taught in over 20 high schools in Georgia. Over 1,100 students have completed the course. Evaluation reveals that this lab-intensive curriculum significantly improves student attitudes toward careers in science and these positive attitudes extend to their parents' perceptions of biotechnology's value to society.

GaBio partnered with the state Department of Education (GDOE) to integrate biotechnology into Georgia's middle and high schools: Low-cost biotech tasks were aligned with existing high school and middle school life science courses and disseminated by the Georgia Performance Standards website as a resource for all science teachers.

GaBio is promoting the Georgia Bioscience Technology Institute, a statewide network of technical college degree and certificate programs in bioscience, to share curricula and resources for training the state's skilled bioscience workers.

GaBio developed a first-ever partnership with the Georgia Science Teachers Association and offered a Biotechnology Focused Strand at its 2011 annual conference in Atlanta, resulting in over 600 man-hours of professional development for the state's science teachers.

GaBio promotes interactions between working scientists and the educational community through an annual Workforce Forum, Visiting Scientist program, and mentoring/internship opportunities.

GaBio, in association with the national Biotechnology Institute, sponsors the Georgia competition among high school students to select two finalists for the International BioGENEius Challenge at the annual BIO International Convention.

## **Economic Development**

GaBio launched a Human Resource Network, a member company-led initiative working collaboratively to enhance the region's ability to attract new talent, and to retain and develop its existing workers through lifelong learning.

The 9th Annual Georgia Life Sciences Summit, October 28, 2010, featured the first-ever BioCareer Resource Center, offering career insights and recruiting resources to Summit attendees to help them with their job searches. Preceding the official opening of the Summit, a panel of seasoned recruiters and career experts shared insights on the current job market, high-demand skills and experience, and tips on transitioning careers.

GaBio honored Billi and Bernie Marcus, co-founder of Home Depot and Chairman of the Board of the Marcus Foundation, for their deep and sustained commitment to bioscience research and medical innovation in Georgia. Through the Marcus Foundation they support the Marcus Stroke & Neuroscience Center at Grady Hospital and the Marcus Trauma Center at Grady; the Marcus Autism Center at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta; Project Share at the Shepherd Center; and the Marcus Nanotechnology Building at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Lt. Governor Casey Cagle joined Georgia Bio, the Georgia Research Alliance, the Metro Atlanta Chamber and the Innovation Crescent business community in launching the Georgia Bioscience Commercialization Center, which will act as a start-up catalyst and resource center for bioscience entrepreneurs in Georgia.

GaBio, in association with the University of Georgia's Selig Center for Economic Growth, launched *Shaping Infinity, The Georgia Life Sciences Industry Analysis*, in 2006 as an annual report of the state of the life sciences industry. The first-ever economic impact study was contained in the 2009 report and updated in 2011.

As state affiliate of the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), GaBio organized regional and state planning groups for the 2009 BIO International Convention in Atlanta, May 18-21, and served as Southeast regional host for the convention.

## **Business Development**

The Georgia Life Sciences Summit has become the premier conference in the Southeast for bioscience professionals, attracting more than 800 attendees and making it one of the largest state biotech association meetings in the nation.

The GaBio Annual Awards Dinners attracts more than 300 members of the state's bioscience community to honor individuals and organizations for their achievements. For example, six companies that won recognition for Deals of the Year raised nearly \$200 million in 2010.

GaBio partners with other organizations throughout the year to provide events that promote bioscience innovation in Georgia. For example, GaBio partners with the Atlanta Clinical and Translational Science Institute on the annual Academic & Industry Intersection Conference; and the Georgia Association of Healthcare Executives on an annual event highlighting industry clinical research with community and academic hospitals.

GaBio adopted a five-year strategic plan in 2010, with a mission to **Advance the growth of Georgia's life sciences industry and foster strategic partnerships that can create a healthier world.** The plan outlines four strategic goals:

- Achieve broad community and government support in Georgia for the life sciences industry through greater understanding of its benefits and economic impact.
- Influence adoption of laws that support the life sciences industry's efforts to improve health and quality of life.
- Influence the acceptance and support for life sciences research in Georgia.
- Promote Georgia as the premier state in the Southeast for life sciences innovation.

GaBio's Emerging Leaders Network (ELN) supports young professionals who meet regularly for education, career and social programs. The ELN has a membership of more than 700.

GaBio partnered with the National Institutes of Health to stage its National SBIR program in Atlanta.