

A biotech groups to share in major military contract to manufacture stem cells

A team of four biotech organizations led by San Antonio-based [BioBridge Global](#) has secured a \$7.8 million contract from the [U.S. Army](#) that could have a far more significant impact on the Alamo City and its leading industry — health care and bioscience.

The Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium, a nonprofit corporation created by the U.S. Army's Medical Research and Material Command, has awarded the contract to a group that also includes San Antonio-based [StemBioSys Inc.](#), Fort Sam Houston's U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research and RoosterBio Inc., a Maryland firm.

Funds from the contract will enable the development of large-scale manufacturing capabilities for clinical-grade stem cells that BioBridge Global officials said would be for research and therapeutic use — the final goal being to develop cost-effective products and services for use in regenerative medicine.

The hope is that such treatments could revolutionize medical care for soldiers injured in combat, while also serve the broader military community, including dependents and retirees. The treatments also would have widespread use in civilian settings.

StemBioSys CEO [Bob Hutchens](#) told me the military contract is further evidence that San Antonio is “beginning to get on the map” as a serious player in regenerative medicine.

“The MTEC grant makes it clear that we have a physical infrastructure and technical know how that is now recognized by the outside community,” he said.

[Becky Cap](#), chief operating officer of GenCure, a BioBridge Global subsidiary focused on regenerative medicine, said collaborators were in a unique position to pursue the contract because each of the entities brings critical capabilities required to develop a process for large-scale manufacturing of clinical-grade stem cells.

Mesenchymal stem cells derived from bone marrow are the most widely used type of stem cell in research and clinical settings. The ability to acquire such cells in significant volumes, while maintaining quality controls, however, has been difficult, according to researchers engaged in the growing field of regenerative medicine. That lack of stem cells has limited the ability to convert laboratory findings into new cell therapy and regenerative medicine products.

The consortium will address the issue by developing economical platforms for large-scale manufacturing of stem cells, while maintaining their critical quality attributes.

Source: <http://www.bizjournals.com/sanantonio/news/2016/10/03/sa-biotech-groups-to-share-in-major-military.html>

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