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Pentax Corporation licenses leading-edge scanning fiber endoscope (SFE) technologies from the University of Washington

New Imaging Technique for Endoscopy

Seattle, WA—March 24, 2008—UW TechTransfer, which facilitates the intellectual property protection and commercialization of UW research, has signed an exclusive license with Pentax Corporation for a suite of scanning fiber endoscope (SFE) technologies. The company, which funded the project for the last 4 years, hopes to have a product on the market within a couple of years.

“This brand-new imaging technique will provide new modalities in [the] endoscopy field,” said Hiroshi Sano, Senior General Manager of Research and Designing Management Department, Medical Instrument SBU, Life Care Division.

“Collaborating with one of the leading companies in medical imaging is a testament to the quality research being conducted at our university,” stated James A. Severson, UW vice provost of intellectual property and technology transfer. “It also represents the largest deal our office has negotiated in terms of the number of patents, technology disclosures submitted, and departments involved, which translates into complex discussions all around. The resulting agreement is significant for the university.”

A fundamental difference of the technology developed by the UW team led by Eric Seibel, with chief technologists Rich Johnston and David Melville, is that it consists of just a single optical fiber for illumination, oscillated in a pattern to scan a broader field of view, with better image quality. This tiny imaging device can provide better images of hard-to-reach places than is possible through conventional endoscopy. Using this new UW-developed technology, endoscopes will become much thinner and will be able to integrate various advanced diagnostics and therapeutics.

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About UW TechTransfer

Established in 1982, UW TechTransfer facilitates the commercialization of new innovations arising from UW research through the management and licensing of intellectual property. Since the department's founding, UW TechTransfer has helped create more than 235 companies in Washington state and abroad. In FY07, UW TechTransfer generated \$38 million in total revenue from all sources. Additionally, UW TechTransfer manages a total patent portfolio of over 2000 issued and pending patents filed in the U.S. and around the world.

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