

18 Apr 2022 | News

In Vivo's 2022 Rising Leaders: Putting A Spotlight On Talent

30 Rising Leaders Across The Biopharma, Medtech And Health Technology Sectors

by **Lucie Ellis-Taitt**

The third annual listing of *In Vivo's* 'Rising Leaders' includes entrepreneurs and innovators from across the world who represent the next wave of creativity in health care.

Included for 2022 are investors, CEOs of small and mid-sized companies, rising employees in larger biopharma and medtech businesses, as well as people driving unique health initiatives worldwide.

Age is not a criterion for inclusion – or exclusion. The 30 people below have been recognized for bringing something new to the game. The list focuses on achievements, talent, creativity and strong leadership qualities.

Look out for other features in the [Rising Leaders](#) series, including exclusive interviews with innovators and disruptors, alongside insights from established industry executives on leading top companies in the 2020s.

In Vivo's 2022 Rising Leaders are listed in alphabetical order.



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Thijs Cohen Tervaert

Junior Partner
INKEF Capital

Thijs Cohen Tervaert, a junior partner at INKEF Capital, joined the venture capital firm in 2016. He serves on the board of ViCentra, Aidence, Audion Therapeutics, Rainier Therapeutics and electronic data capture company Castor. Derk Arts, CEO and founder of Castor, is a Rising Leaders alumni, having been *featured in 2020*.

Founded in 2010 by Dutch pension fund ABP and with €500m under management, INKEF is *one of the largest venture capital funds* in the Netherlands. The group runs a long-term fund with a 20-year cycle, allowing it to commit significant amounts to its portfolio companies. The VC aims to get in early on projects, preferring seed and series A investments. Investing around €15m (\$16.5) to €30m over the early lifecycle of a company, INKEF seeks to back sustainable businesses that can grow into European leaders.

Prior to INKEF, Cohen Tervaert was a strategy consultant at the Boston Consulting Group with a focus on health care and technology. He worked on projects for pharmaceutical companies, hospitals and insurers.

In 2014, during a secondment, Cohen Tervaert helped to establish the Amsterdam health and technology institute (ahti). The institute seeks to improve urban health and health care in Amsterdam, and globally, by connecting people, technology and medical knowledge through innovation and entrepreneurship.

A medical doctor by training, Cohen Tervaert graduated from Leiden University in 2008.

**Manuela Corti**

Director of Translational Research
*Powell Gene Therapy Center,
University of Florida*

Manuela Corti is an assistant professor and director of translational research in the Child Health Research Institute and Powell Gene Therapy Center at the University of Florida. Corti is a clinical scientist focused on understanding the contribution of neurological impairment in neuromuscular disorders by combining expertise in clinical assessment and novel therapies that rely on correcting fundamental genetic defects.

Corti is a co-founder and board member of Aavanti Bio, a gene therapy company backed by a syndicate of life sciences investors including Perceptive Advisors, Bain Capital Life Sciences and RA Capital Management. RA Capital led the company's \$107m series A financing in October 2020. Its most advanced program is a Phase I gene therapy candidate for Friedreich's ataxia.

Dedicated to developing AAV gene therapy programs for neuromuscular diseases, Corti's research interests also include outcome measures and clinical trial readiness for neuromuscular diseases such as Pompe disease and Duchenne muscular dystrophy. She received a bachelor's degree in physical therapy from the University of Insubria and earned a PhD in rehabilitation science from the University of Florida.



Rosamond Deegan
CEO
OMass Therapeutics

OMass Therapeutics, a drug discovery company using structural mass spectrometry to discover novel medicines, appointed Rosamond Deegan CEO in 2019. OMass was formed in 2016 as a spin-out from the University of Oxford, UK, and completed a £14m (\$18.5) series A financing in 2018 with participation from Syncona and Oxford Sciences Innovation.

Deegan joined OMass from Bicycle Therapeutics, where she was president, chief business officer and a director of its US subsidiary. Deegan established the company's Boston-based group and, over a three-year period, led three major transactions and grew the subsidiary to more than 20 employees.

Prior to this Deegan, a graduate of the University of Cambridge, UK, was senior vice president of business development and operations at Trevena Inc. During her time at Bicycle and Trevena, the two companies moved four programs into the clinic and raised over \$300m in private and public financings.

Earlier in her career, Deegan was director of business development at GlaxoSmithKline in the US, as well as holding other positions at GSK.

Leadership In 2022: The challenge for companies today is to ensure their diversity and inclusion efforts have real meaning.

force and strategic weight. [Read More.](#)





Debora Dumont
Managing Partner
Bioqube Venture

Debora “Debbie” Dumont co-founded Bioqube Ventures in 2015. From 2016-2019, the group co-managed an investment and incubation model resulting in the set-up and support of a local ecosystem of 10 companies on the Janssen research and development site in Beerse, Belgium. In 2020, Bioqube Ventures launched its first independent fund, Bioqube Factory Fund I, a €110m fund with a focus on the discovery and development of new therapeutic platforms and assets.

Bioqube Factory Fund I is supported by InnovFin Equity, with the financial backing of the European Union under Horizon 2020 Financial Instruments and the European Fund for Strategic Investments, set up under the Investment Plan for Europe.

Previously, Dumont was head of health and care at LRM, a Belgium-based private equity and venture capital firm. In this position, she served as a board member for several biotech companies and was involved in a series of international venture capital transactions including XO1 (acquired by Johnson & Johnson), FFPharma and Complix. Prior to joining LRM, between 2007 and 2010, Dumont was a business developer at the Biomedical Research Institute of Hasselt University and manager of the life sciences cluster organization LifeTechLimburg.

She is also vice chair at the Limburg Cancer Foundation.



Giovanna Forte
CEO
Forte Medical

Giovanna Forte is the director of Forte Medical, which she founded after identifying the patient-centric potential of an affordable device to diagnose urine-based urinary tract infections (UTI) and perform antenatal screening reliably, hygienically and in a dignified way.

Original patent applications and early commercialization were funded by a 2002 Medical Futures Innovation award, sponsored by AstraZeneca. Giovanna's work has focused on developing the Peezy Midstream device as an accurate and responsible alternative to inefficient sampling practices and unnecessary over-prescribing of broad-spectrum antibiotics.

In the US, the device has a Medicaid HCPCS code. In the UK, it meets government standards for microbiology investigation of urine.

A follow-up technology is being developed by Forte Medical to promote integrity across tests for sexually transmitted infections, some early-stage cancers and menopause management.

Forte has driven all aspects of developing the device while also working as vice president of the British Association of Women Entrepreneurs and being an advisor to TEN (The Entrepreneurs Network) and the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group for Entrepreneurship.



Nethaji Gallage
CEO
Octarine

Nethaji Gallage, who was born in Sri Lanka and moved to Denmark when she was 19, is CEO and co-founder of Denmark-based biotech Octarine, a company using synthetic biology to develop functionally superior cannabinoid and psilocybin derivatives. Founded in 2018, Octarine has raised \$3m in seed funding.

Octarine has developed in-cell enzymatic platforms to expand the chemical diversity of cannabinoids, allowing the production of superior molecules with improved chemical and pharmacokinetic properties. Psilocybin and other psychedelic tryptamine derivatives are *gaining momentum as breakthrough therapies* for neurological and psychological disorders. However, development of this unique class of molecules is hindered by limited access to a reliable and cost-effective supply.

Gallage, a mother to three sons, was previously a research group leader at University of Copenhagen where she also obtained a PhD in biochemistry. With experience in other fields away from biopharma, Gallage previously led research on biosynthetic production of vanillin flavor from idea to commercialization with industrial partners.

In Vivo's 2022 Rising Leaders at a glance.
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Sarah Gheuens
Chief Medical Officer
Agios

At Agios, Sarah Gheuens worked on pivotal Phase III trials for the company's lead asset Pyrukynd (mitapivat) in pyruvate kinase deficiency, a rare form of anemia, and simultaneous regulatory submissions to the US Food and Drug Administration and European Medicines Agency. The drug was approved in the US in February 2022.

Gheuens joined Agios in December 2019 and was appointed chief medical officer in September 2021. She previously served as Agios' head of clinical development for genetically defined disease programs, as well as the interim head of regulatory affairs.

She also has responsibility at Agios for clinical programs in thalassemia, sickle cell disease and for pediatric indications.

Prior to joining Agios, Gheuens worked at Biogen, where she held roles in safety, medical affairs and clinical development. Her work was critical for the approval of Biogen's blockbuster spinal muscular atrophy treatment Spinraza (nusinersen).

Before Biogen, Gheuens worked at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) Boston, MA, taking care of patients with HIV and neurological complications and doing research on progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy.

She gained a medical degree from the Free University of Brussels (VUB), Belgium, and completed a neurology residency at the University Hospital of VUB, followed by a

*Black Lives Matter movement, biopharma
companies have made it a priority to*



improve diversity and inclusion. Read More.



Jing Lim
Chief Technology Officer
[Osteopore](#)

Lim Jing is chief technology officer of Osteopore Ltd, a Singapore headquartered medical technology company active in commercializing bespoke products to facilitate bone healing in several therapeutic areas. The company also has a business base in Australia.

In Osteopore's journey to developing patented technology to fabricate specific micro-structured scaffolds for bone regeneration through 3D printing and bioresorbable, Jing has passed significant milestones in regulatory affairs and quality assurance (RA/QA).

His business achievements included a positive contribution to a year-on-year doubling of revenues, culminating in the ASX listing in 2019, the expansion of the product range and securing improvement in margins through manufacturing management.

He holds a master's in engineering with a specialization in biomechanics and a PhD in bioengineering. He has been a member of steering committees that ensure the commercial alignment of R&D activities in projects seeking national level research grants in Australia and Europe. He also helps drive the adoption of medical device ISO standards in Singapore.



Deana Mohr
CEO
MUVON Therapeutics

Deana Mohr has been central to the development of MUVON Therapeutics, a spin-off from the University of Zurich developing and commercializing an autologous cell therapy for the regeneration of skeletal muscle tissue.

Mohr founded MUVON in 2020 following on from her PhD research in muscle tissue-engineering. She obtained her MSc in cellular and molecular biology from the University of Constance in 2011. She then joined the Integrative Molecular Medicine program in Zurich as a PhD student and successfully graduated from ETH in Radiopharmaceutical Sciences in 2015.

The company is focused on developing treatments for stress urinary incontinence, a condition which affects over 200 million people worldwide. MUVON's novel regenerative approach aims to provide a safe and effective treatment to patients suffering from SUI. In a first step, a small muscle biopsy is obtained from the patient. From this tissue, muscle precursor cells are isolated and expanded under GMP conditions. Following quality testing, the product is released and brought to the hospital for injection, where it is injected into the sphincter muscle of the patient. Once injected the cells begin to regenerate the sphincter muscle tissue, restoring strength and allowing it to perform its original function again. The company started Phase I trials in 2020.



Raquel Mura

Head of R&D, North America

Sanofi

Currently head of R&D for North America at Sanofi, Raquel Mura was previously VP and head of global regulatory affairs for Sanofi's consumer healthcare business unit.

She previously held a variety of roles globally with Bristol-Myers Squibb, Novartis, Pfizer and Reckitt Benckiser, leading strategy and operations teams across different regions in regulatory and innovation functions and drove transformation initiatives. She is currently a member of the HBA Gender Parity Collaborative, an award-winning consortium of health care and life-sciences companies dedicated to accelerating gender parity and diversity.

Mura holds a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Universidade de São Paulo, a Doctor of Law from Mackenzie University and a MBA from Washington University in St. Louis – Olin Business School.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Mura fielded a survey across R&D focused on several aspects related to the return to the workplace, including health and wellbeing, and applied the learning to the implementation of hybrid and flexible work guidances. A passionate advocate for purpose driven and inclusive leadership, she is currently focused on bringing together R&D executives across the industry to discuss the diversity, equality and inclusion gaps in the biopharma sector.



Ziad Obermeyer
Co-Founder
Nightingale Open Science

Ziad Obermeyer is associate professor and Blue Cross of California Distinguished Professor at UC Berkeley, where he does research and teaches about the intersection of machine learning and health. He is a co-founder of Nightingale Open Science, a non-profit that makes new medical imaging datasets available for research, and Dandelion, a platform for AI innovation in health.

He is a Chan Zuckerberg biohub investigator, a faculty research fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research and was previously named as an emerging leader by the National Academy of Medicine.

He has been published in a wide range of journals, including Science, Nature Medicine, New England Journal of Medicine, JAMA and ICML. His work on algorithmic bias is frequently cited in the public debate about artificial intelligence, and in federal and state regulatory guidance and investigations.

Previously, he was a consultant at McKinsey & Co., and an assistant professor at Harvard Medical School.

**Aileen Pangan**

VP And Therapeutic Area Head,
Immunology Clinical Research
Merck

In March 2022, Aileen Pangan was appointed VP and therapeutic area head for immunology, global clinical development and medical affairs at Merck Research Labs. Pangan will help lead the company's new immunology therapeutic area and late-stage clinical development.

She brings 18 years of experience in clinical trials, most recently serving as AbbVie's executive medical director of immunology clinical development. There, she led development teams in rheumatology, gastroenterology and dermatology.

Prior to working at Abbott/AbbVie, Pangan was an assistant professor of medicine in rheumatology at Loyola University Medical Center in Chicago. She obtained her BS and MD from the University of the Philippines College of Medicine in Manila, completed her residency in internal medicine at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago and her clinical and research fellowship in rheumatology at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School.

Pangan is a strategic leader with an enterprise mindset and understanding of the clinical/scientific, regulatory, commercial and market access considerations in drug development, business development and pipeline expansion strategies. She is a long-time supporter of the Rheumatology Research Foundation and has previously served as corporate representative to the board of directors, and as a member of the development advisory council and the national advisory council.

**Monika Paule**CEO
Caszyme

“My whole professional career moved to the life sciences and technology field, which I found very familiar and close to my heart.”

Monika Paule is CEO and co-founder of the gene editing company CasZyme. The company offers CRISPR Cas gene editing solutions and R&D services for therapeutics, diagnostics, agriculture, research tools and industrial biotech fields, as well as acting as a molecular tool developer.

Paule also co-founded Paulai Tech, an EdTech company that creates a platform for STEM education for children. She is also an associate professor at Vilnius Tech University with a PhD in social sciences.

Paule recently established the 'Women in Biotech' initiative in Lithuania, the country's first and only platform for encouraging women in leadership in the life sciences sector. She is a board member for the Lithuanian Biotechnology Association and for ScanBalt BioRegion, an international network that brings together academic and industrial research, university hospitals and non-university research institutions, study centers and highly specialized suppliers in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical technology sectors.

**Nabiha Saklayen**

CEO

Cellino

Nabiha Saklayen is the CEO and co-founder of Cellino, a company on a mission to make personalized, autologous cell therapies accessible and scalable for patients for the first time. For her patented inventions in cellular laser editing, Saklayen was named a Pioneer in MIT Tech Review's 35 Innovators Under 35 list in 2018. In 2019, she was named on the Forbes 30 Under 30 healthcare list.

As a Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) International Fellow, she earned her PhD in Physics from Harvard University. She is also the first Tory Burch Foundation Fellow in Genomics at the Innovative Genomics Institute, which is directed by Nobel Laureate Jennifer Doudna. Saklayen is a TED speaker and the co-creator of 'I Am A Scientist', an educational program that inspires children to explore science.

**Karima Sharif**

Head of Inclusive Investments
Publicis Health Media

Karima Sharif is head of inclusive investments at Publicis Health Media and is the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association's global committee chair for the Women of Color (WoC) Affinity Group.

The Women of Color Affinity group was launched during the 2019 HBA Annual Conference to address a need for a focus on diversity and equity within organizations. In 2020, the need of this group was further highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sharif was a leader of the Women of Color Wellness Summit that kicked off the 2021 HBA Annual Conference and was also the visionary behind the HBA's first celebration of Juneteenth.

Publicis Health Media is a leading health media agency in the US designed for delivering best-in-class solutions that connect people with meaningful health and wellness solutions. PHM sits at the intersection of Publicis Health, a health care communications network, and Publicis Media, the number one buyer of media in the US.



Mårten Steen

Co-Managing Partner
HealthCap

"It is important to make sure that we provide significant value to all stakeholders: patients, society, and, of course, also our investors."

Mårten Steen, a medical doctor trained at Lund University, is a managing partner of HealthCap. Prior to re-joining HealthCap as a partner in 2010, Steen worked with global business development at Merck Serono as a director, focusing on product and technology licensing.

Prior to Merck Serono, Steen was a medical associate with HealthCap. He has pursued research in the field of protein chemistry and coagulation at Lund University and Novo Nordisk and holds a PhD in Clinical Chemistry. He is the author of 16 scientific papers published in peer-reviewed journals and has a BSc degree in Business Administration from the Lund University School of Economics and Management.

HealthCap is a European venture capital firm investing exclusively in the life sciences. The group has backed and built more than 100 companies, taken more than 40 companies public and completed numerous trade sales. [HealthCap's portfolio businesses](#) have developed more than 25 pharmaceutical products to regulatory approval and have brought 50-plus medical device products to market.



Mathias Steger
CEO
Rejuveron

Matthias Steger has over 20 years of pharma and biotech experience and is the co-founder and CEO of Endogena Therapeutics, a biotech company with a novel drug discovery concept based on selective regulation of endogenous stem cells to repair and regenerate organs and tissues. He is also co-founder and CEO of Rejuveron Life Sciences, a company that develops and invests in drugs and technologies which have the potential to significantly prolong human lifespan.

As former global head of research and technology partnering at Roche, Steger set up over 50 collaborations and acquisitions for novel drug modalities and new drug discovery technologies and has initiated and built-up Roche's stem cell research. Previously, he set up a pioneering orphan GPCR drug discovery company and worked in investment banking. He served as executive board member of Alliance for Regenerative Medicine and chair of the industry committee of International Society of Stem Cell Research.

Steger earned his MSc in organic chemistry and biochemistry at the University of Zurich and his PhD in medicinal chemistry at the University of Sussex. In 2005 he completed an MBA at the University of St Gallen, where he was awarded Dean's Honors.



Christopher Stokes

General Manager, South Africa

Eli Lilly & Co.

Christopher Stokes started his biopharma career as a sales rep at Pfizer, based in the Washington DC area. He moved to Eli Lilly & Co. in 2008 as a public policy analyst.

Stokes, who is now general manager for South Africa at Lilly, moved through many sales roles at the big pharma between 2011 and 2020, including director of pricing, reimbursement and access. Here he was responsible for the development of pricing, reimbursement, access and pharmacy channel distribution strategy for key US product launches. He leveraged payer expertise to ensure the company included US payer input into product development planning for all therapeutic areas.

Prior to taking on the South Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa regions, Stokes was chief operating officer for Lilly USA.

He holds a MPA in finance from Indiana University Bloomington and a BA from George Mason University.



Yolanda Tibbe

Head, New Commercial
Partnerships In Germany

Novartis

*"We really focus on thinking
differently about how we want to
engage with customers."*

Yolanda Tibbe, head, new commercial partnerships in Germany, is dedicated to reimagining health care. She recently took on the role for commercial partnerships but was previously chief of staff (strategic assistant) to the CEO of Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

Having started her career in management consulting for the life sciences, Tibbe made the move into industry by joining Novartis's Sandoz arm in 2015 as global head of strategy for biosimilars and oncology. During her five years at Sandoz, she worked in various commercial functions. While regional sales manager, she led the launch of the first FDA approved digital therapeutic for substance abuse disorder in the US.

After a rotation in Novartis's branded pharmaceutical division as patient access director in 2019, Tibbe became chief of staff for pharma the following year. She is driving the company's transformation to better focus on the needs of patients, health care practitioners and health care systems.



Nolan Townsend
CEO
[Lexeo](#)

In January 2020, R. Nolan Townsend was appointed CEO of LEXEO Therapeutics. Prior to joining LEXEO Townsend was President of Pfizer Rare Disease for the North America and International regions. He has worked for Pfizer for over a decade, first in corporate finance and then in roles of increasing responsibility in corporate finance, corporate strategy, operations, marketing, general management and commercial leadership in Pfizer's New York headquarters, Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

Prior to joining Pfizer, Townsend worked in Lehman Brothers' healthcare investment banking group, advising healthcare companies on strategic financing transactions and mergers and acquisitions. Townsend earned his master's degree in business administration from Harvard Business School and his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Pennsylvania.



Murat Tunaboğlu
CEO
Antiverse

Murat Tunaboğlu is the Co-Founder and CEO of Antiverse, a platform for AI-first antibody drug discovery. By combining in-house lab expertise with cutting-edge machine learning, Antiverse enables accelerated drug discovery for difficult targets. In 2021 Antiverse raised £1.4 million to advance its AI antibody drug discovery platform.

Tunaboğlu has over 15 years of experience and was a former software manager in a robotics company and automated DNA synthesis workflows at Thermo Fisher Scientific. He earned a degree in electrical engineering from Yildiz Technical University in Turkey after studying computer engineering at Bahçeşehir Üniversitesi. His current focus is on carrying out Antiverse's mission of engineering the future of drug discovery.

**Graeme Tunbridge**

Global Regulatory And Quality,
Medical Devices
BSI

Following a career spent exclusively in the UK public health sector since graduating from the University of Oxford in 2004, Graeme Tunbridge joined the certification body BSI in early 2022 as senior vice president for global regulatory and quality for medical devices.

Post-graduation in molecular and cellular biochemistry, he joined the Department of Health and Social Care, and then became head of medical devices EU policy at the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. He re-joined the DHSC in 2015 before returning to the MHRA in 2017.

As a medtech regulator, Tunbridge's approach to regulation in the UK and in the EU, before Brexit, sought to create a sense of inclusivity with system users while ensuring that device safety was never compromised.

In the two and a half years before he transferred to the private sector, Tunbridge had risen to the post of MHRA director of devices, where he astutely combined regulatory oversight needs with an understanding of how medical device companies should best serve patient needs.



Per Vegard Nerseth
CEO
CMR Surgical

Per Vegard Nerseth is CEO of CMR Surgical, a global surgical robotics business headquartered in Cambridge, UK. Before CMR, Nerseth held a number of senior roles at ABB, including managing director and senior vice president of the ABB robotics business unit.

Nerseth was responsible for establishing ABB Engineering's robotics division for China, growing it to be the number one robotics business in the country.

Having joined CMR in January 2020, Nerseth has been spotlighted on the Rising Leaders list because of CMR's unique approach to robotic assisted surgery. The company, which develops and markets the next-generation general surgical robot Versius, is actively focusing on using data recorded from surgery for tracking patient outcomes. The company says it is "on a mission to redefine the surgical robotics market with practical, innovative technology and data that can improve surgical care."

Nerseth holds an MBA from the University of Stirling and a bachelor's degree in marketing and economics from the Norwegian School of Management in Oslo.



Dun Yang
CEO
Anticancer Bioscience

Dun Yang has over 25 years of experience in cancer cell biology research, the majority of which was gained in the US. Yang returned to China from the US in 2016 to establish the J. Michael Bishop Institute of Cancer Research and to become CEO of Anticancer Bioscience, a precision oncology company that uses synthetic lethal approaches to develop targeted cancer therapies. The company has an intriguing pipeline and substantial investment.

Yang previously spent 16 years at the University of California, San Francisco, in the laboratory of Nobel laureate J. Michael Bishop, where he invented the esiRNA method of gene silence and pioneered the MYC-AURKB synthetic lethal therapy. He holds a PhD in biochemistry from Columbia University in the United States.

**Rutger Zietsma**

CEO

Manus Neurodynamica

Rutger is the founder and CEO of Manus Neurodynamica Ltd, which developed the NeuroMotor Pen (NMP). The NMP is a medical device that assesses neuromotor impairments objectively and accurately. Zietsma developed ideas for using neuroscience from his previous PhD research to create novel, easily implementable clinical tools while working with a small consulting firm.

Manus was founded as a vehicle for bringing those ideas to life. Zietsma oversaw the DiPAR EU project, which aided in initial product development and clinical validation. He also gained experience in biomedical engineering (J&J Cordis Europe, Philips DAP and Medical Systems) and project management for the Dutch healthcare sector (Cap Gemini). He also holds master's degrees in bioengineering and business administration.

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