AGENDA

University of Connecticut
Board of Trustees

Committee for Research, Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Wednesday, June 11, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Public Streaming Link (live captioning, upon request): https://techsupport.uconn.edu/bot

(A recording of the meeting will be posted on the Board website, https://boardoftrustees.uconn.edu/, within seven days of the meeting.)

Call to order at **1:00 p.m.**

1. Public Participation*
   *Individuals who wish to speak during the Public Participation portion of the Thursday, June 11, meeting, must sign up no later than 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 10 by emailing BoardCommittees@uconn.edu. Speaking requests must include a name, telephone number, topic, and affiliation with the University (i.e., student, employee, member of the public). The Committee may limit the entirety of the public comment to a maximum of 30 minutes. As an alternative, individuals may submit written comments via BoardCommittees@uconn.edu, and all comments will be transmitted to the Committee.

2. Minutes from the February 19, and April 16, 2026, Meetings

3. Presentation by John Preston, Founder of Transformative Energy and Materials (TEM) Capital – *Making Universities Relevant*

4. Presentation by Rahul Kanadia Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Physiology & Neurobiology – *Novel RNA-Targeting Therapy for Lethal Prostate Cancer*

5. Presentation by Yidan Zhang, Research Specialist, Nutritional Sciences, and Mingyu Qiao, Assistant Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences – *Deep-Tech Innovation and Entrepreneurship At UConn*

6. University Senate Representative Report

7. Other Business

8. Executive Session (as needed)

9. Adjournment

PLEASE NOTE: *If you are an individual with a disability and require accommodations, please e-mail the Board of Trustees Office at boardoftrustees@uconn.edu prior to the meeting.*

Making Universities Relevant

University success is measured by:

- Educating next generation of leaders and educators
- Converting research to:
  - Jobs
  - Wealth
  - Higher quality of life (e.g. healthcare)

Takeaways

My work at MIT and as an investor has shown that we should:

- Focus on big problems
- Prioritize people over deals
- Use AI as leverage
- Optimize for impact, not revenue
- Challenge incremental thinking

Counterintuitive Truth

Big Solutions Are Easier

- Big problems:
  - Attract **more capital**
  - Attract **better talent**
  - Create **urgency**
  - Enable **faster adoption**
- Incremental ideas often die quietly.
  Big ideas get funded.

The Power Law of Innovation

5% of Startups → 95% of Impact

Success =

- Jobs created
- Wealth created
- Quality of life
- Industries built…

Focus on identifying the **5%**

Example of a Big Problem: Healthcare

- $5.3T US spend
- US is 4% of population, ~ 54% of global spend
- Outcomes lag many developed nations (49th for longevity)
- The system treats sickness, not health

Other Big Problems: Energy, Longevity, Affordable Housing…

UCONN Examples

- Carbon based fuel cells (lower cost power, off grid potential)
- Novel membrane technology (better chemistry like desalination…)
- Use laser cutting technology to attract semiconductor companies
- Add Governor's need for affordable housing with UCONN needs at Avery Point to attract modular housing company to CT
- …

VERINTAS

THERAPEUTICS

Novel RNA-targeting therapy for lethal prostate cancer

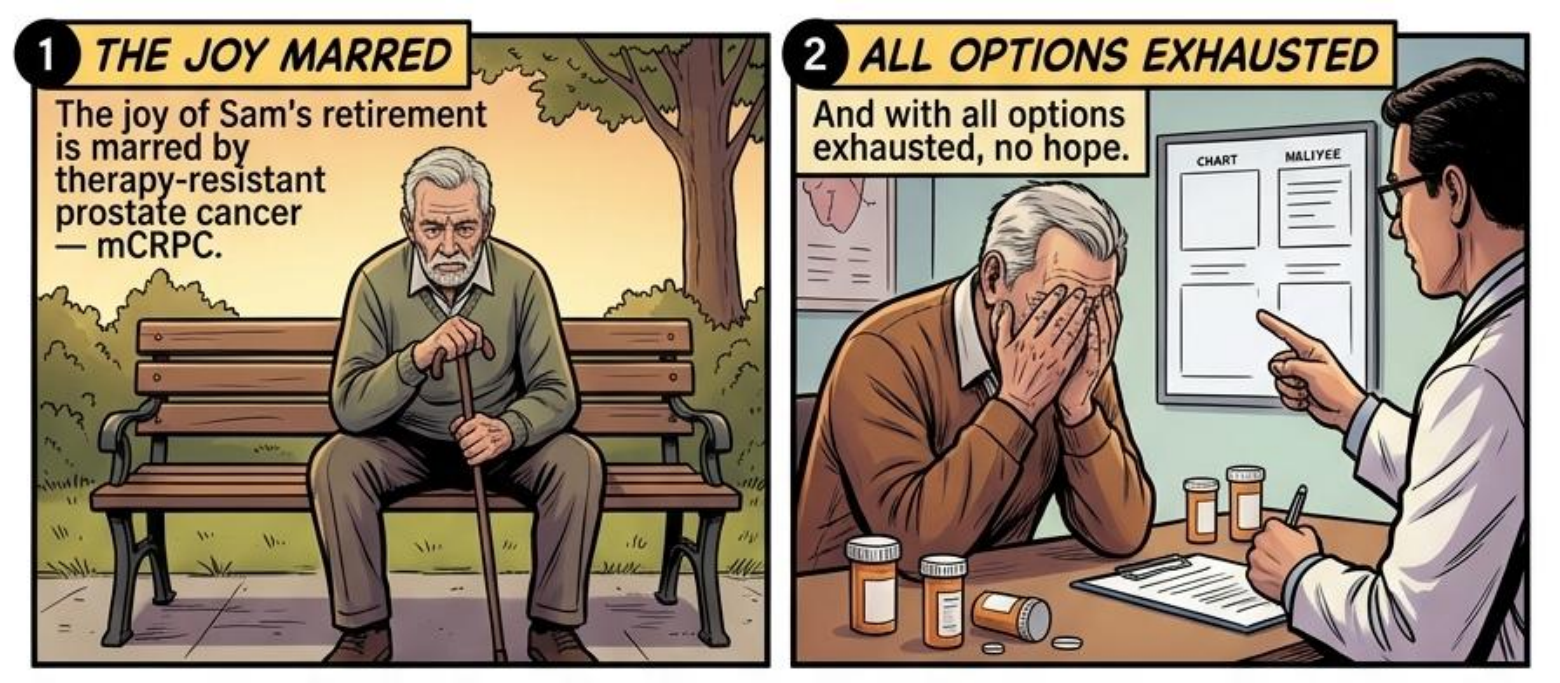
Rahul Kanadia, Ph.D.
Founder & CEO, Verintas Therapeutics
Associate Professor, Physiology and Neurobiology
University of Connecticut

Board of Trustees Briefing | June 11, 2026

VERINTAS

THERAPEUTICS

The PROBLEM



A UConn-Born Company

15 Years

of UConn research

Minor spliceosome biology discovered and developed entirely at UConn Storrs. The science, the platform, and the IP were built here.

UConn IP

licensed to Verintas

The foundational patent estate covering siU6atac and minor spliceosome inhibition is UConn-originating technology, now exclusively licensed to Verintas.

CT-Based

company, staying here

Verintas is CT-based company. Pre-seed capital funds operations anchored at UConn, creating high-skill biotech employment in the state.

THE PAIN POINT

Advanced Prostate Cancer Has Run Out of Road

$21B

Total Market

mCRPC therapeutics market — a population growing as effective therapies fail

~50%

Without Biomarker Guidance

of post-ARSI mCRPC patients lack an actionable molecular target to guide next-line therapy selection

0

Validated Tools

validated molecular stratification tools approved to guide post-ARSI treatment sequencing

The Villain: Empirical Treatment in a Precision Era

- After androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) and AR pathway inhibitor (ARSI) failure, oncologists must choose:
  - taxane chemotherapy or
  - PARP inhibitors or
  - PSMA-targeted radioligand therapy
- **No head-to-head trial data to guide the sequence**. Each carries meaningful toxicity and cost. Each yields diminishing returns.

⚠ The treatment choice defaults to clinical judgment, tolerance, and familiarity — at the moment it matters most.

Why Current Solutions Fail

- **Taxanes (docetaxel, cabazitaxel):** Broad cytotoxic toxicity; no predictive biomarker
- **PARP inhibitors (olaparib, rucaparib):** Restricted to HRR-mutated patients — most don't qualify
- **PSMA radioligand (177Lu-PSMA-617):** Requires PSMA expression; moving earlier in sequence
- **Sequential ARSI switches:** Cross-resistance is well-documented; limited benefit

The Verintas Solution

The old way

Wait for a mutation. If none exists, try therapies empirically with escalating toxicity. Accept toxicity. Watch resistance emerge. No validated guide exists for what to do next.

PRECISE

U6atac snRNA identifies the ~50% of late-stage patients whose tumors depend on the minor spliceosome — no mutation needed.

SELECTIVE

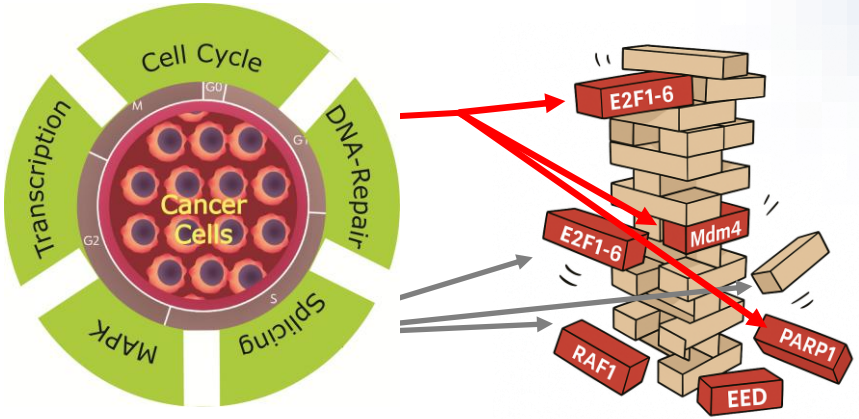
siU6atac kills cancer cells and mCRPC organoids. Healthy cells tolerate inhibition.

VALIDATED

Tumor growth inhibition at $p < 0.0001$ in xenograft models. Outperforms enzalutamide.

THE PROOF

Minor Spliceosome targets multiple processes critical for cancer cell survival



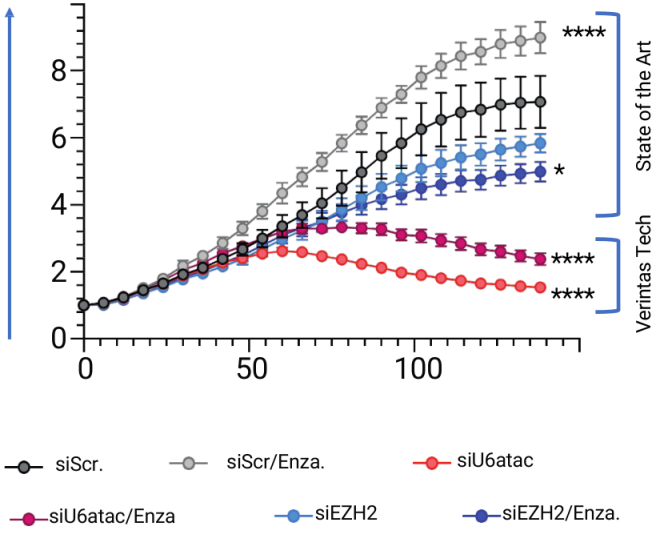
Minor spliceosome

- Novel therapeutic target for lethal prostate and breast cancer
- Combine minor spliceosome inhibition with:
- 1) Radiation, 2) Chemotherapy, 3) Molecular therapy can help reduce doses needed – improved outcomes for patients

Traction

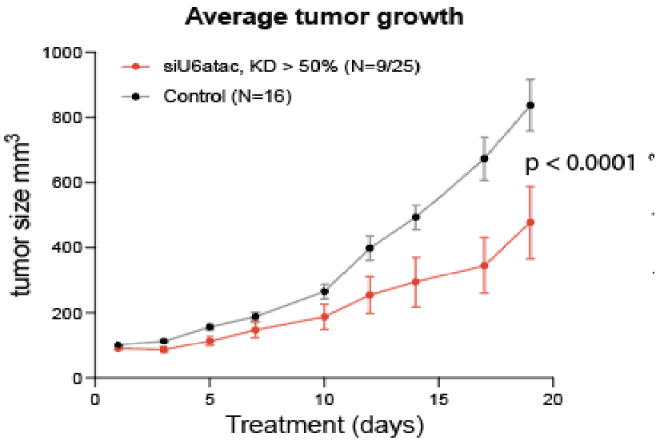
Prostate Cancer (PCa)

siU6atac outperforms state-of-the-art drugs



PCa Xenograft

siU6atac blocks Xenograft growth without adverse effects



Augspach et al. 2023

THE CAPABILITY

A Team Built for This Exact Problem

Verintas is led by the scientists who *discovered* minor spliceosome biology in cancer and the operators who have built, de-risked, and exited biotech companies before.

Rahul Kanadia, Ph.D.
University of Connecticut
Co-Founder CEO

- *Patent: Gene Therapy to treat Myotonic Dystrophy (Univ. of FL) Licensed by Kate Therapeutics, Inc which was acquired by Novartis 2024*
- *Expert on*
  - *the Minor Spliceosome*
  - *Identified minor introns*
- *Bioinformatics*
  - *Minor intron splicing*
- *Built the*
  - *Minor spliceosome platform*

Anke Augspach, Ph.D.
University of Bern
Co-Founder CSO

- *Pioneered the study of Minor Spliceosome in cancer*
- *Developed siU6atac to inhibit the minor spliceosome*
- *Executing xenograft experiments for therapeutic viability*
- *Minor spliceosome in Breast cancer study*

Mark Rubin, MD
University of Bern
Co-Founder CMO

- *World renowned Pathologist*
- *Pioneered precision medicine for Prostate cancer*
- *Co-discovered the first ETS fusion mutation for prostate cancer*
- *Extensive KOL phase I trial network*

Susan Sobolov, Ph.D.
R&D Advisor

- *Dr. Susan Sobolov*
- *Current President and COO of RigImmune, Inc.*
- *Previously COO of*
- *Caelum Bioscience, Which was Aquired by Alexion*
- *ASO Regulatory Expertise*

Jeff Fryer, CPA
Business/Financial Advisor
Previously CFO of Rally Bio, went to IPO

All major decisions are group-driven and resolved by consensus. Rahul serves as CEO and makes the final call — a team that has already shipped, resolved conflict, and executed milestones together.

The Ask

Pre-Seed Raise: $1M

- CMC synthesis and delivery optimization of siU6atac
- IND-enabling toxicology (ADME, marrow/GI monitoring)
- IP estate expansion before Seed round
- KOL engagement and Phase I site pre-alignment (LOIs)
- Pre-IND package triggers $4-6M Seed raise at month 18

What we ask of UConn

- Institutional visibility for Verintas as a UConn innovation story
- Introductions to CT-based investors and economic development networks
- Support for SBIR/STTR applications as a UConn-affiliated company
- Awareness of UConn Health as a future Phase I clinical trial site

Every dollar raised is deployed to de-risk the asset — not build overhead.

Deep-Tech Innovation and Entrepreneurship At UConn

Mingyu Qiao, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship
Department of Nutritional Sciences

&

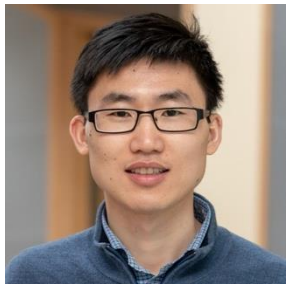
Yidan Zhang, Ph.D.
CEO and Co-Founder of SeaSol Technologies, Inc.

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

June 11, 2026

UCONN | COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES

NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES



AvantGuard
THE SCIENCE OF SURFACE PROTECTION

2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023

UNY I-Corps Node

Cornell Engineering

SBIR · STTR
America's Seed Fund

LaunchNY

Chemical Angel Network

Diversey™

Exit

NSF CORPS
NSF Innovation Corps

CTL Center for technology licensing at cornell university

USDA

NIH

RED BEAR ANGELS

SOSV
THE ACCELERATOR VC

Global #2 cleaning product company

PRAXIS CENTER
for Venture Development

NSF

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Grow-NY

FUZEHUB

INDIE BIO™

UConn Today

ENTREPRENEURSHIP | UNIVERSITY NEWS

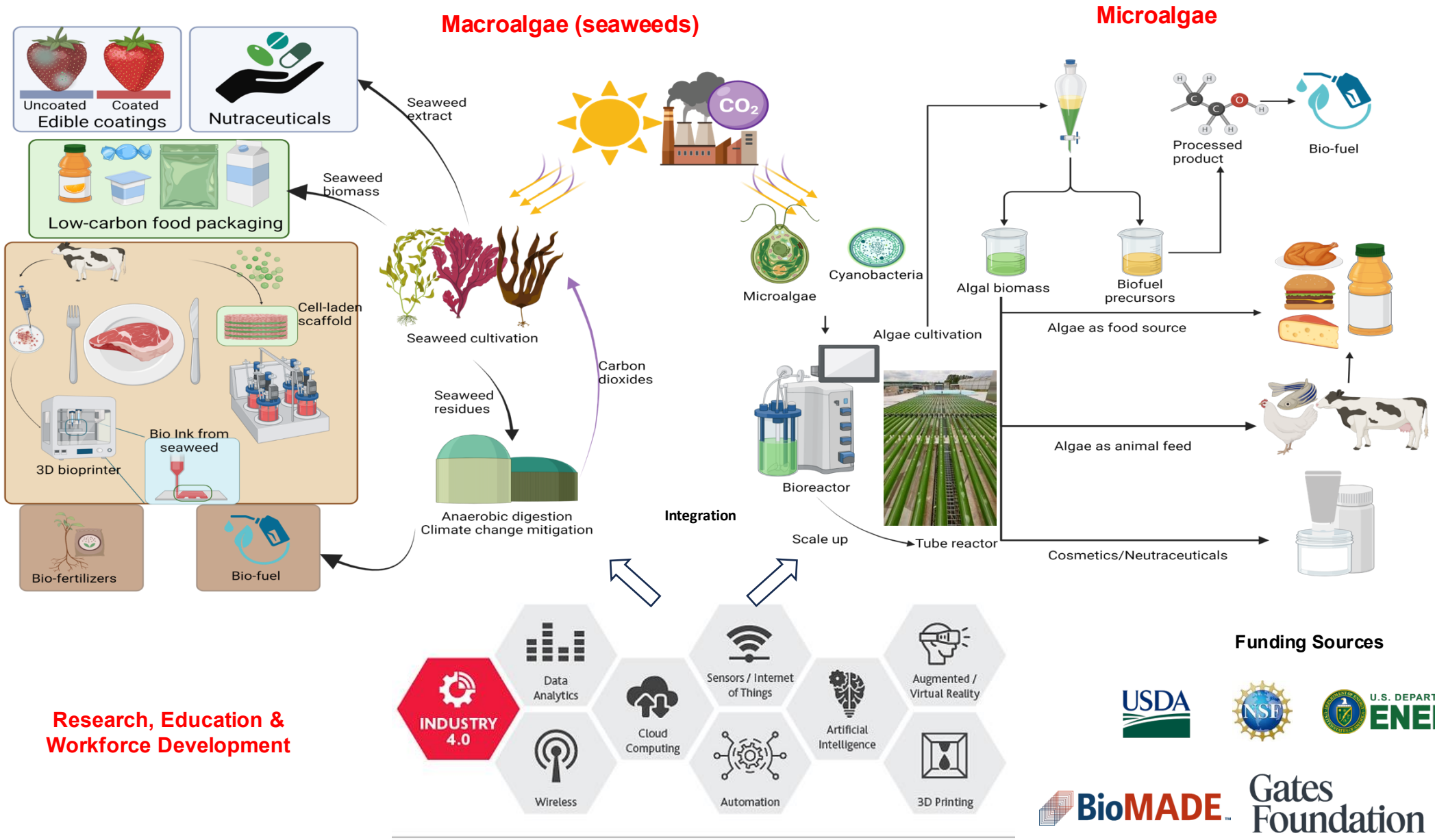
March 24, 2022 | Stephanie Reitz - UConn Communications

UConn Moving Forward on Bold 'Innovation Faculty' Plan to Bolster Entrepreneurialism, Grow State's Economy

Plan envisions recruiting 'innovation faculty' over the next five years, all with track records of entrepreneurship in targeted areas

https://today.uconn.edu/2022/03/uconn-moving-forward-on-bold-innovation-faculty-plan-to-bolster-entrepreneurialism-grow-states-economy/

Algae for Food, Energy and Materials



Research, Education & Workforce Development

Funding Sources

USDA NSF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY BioMADE Gates Foundation pepsico

SeaSolTec

We replace toxic plastic packaging with regenerative seaweed.

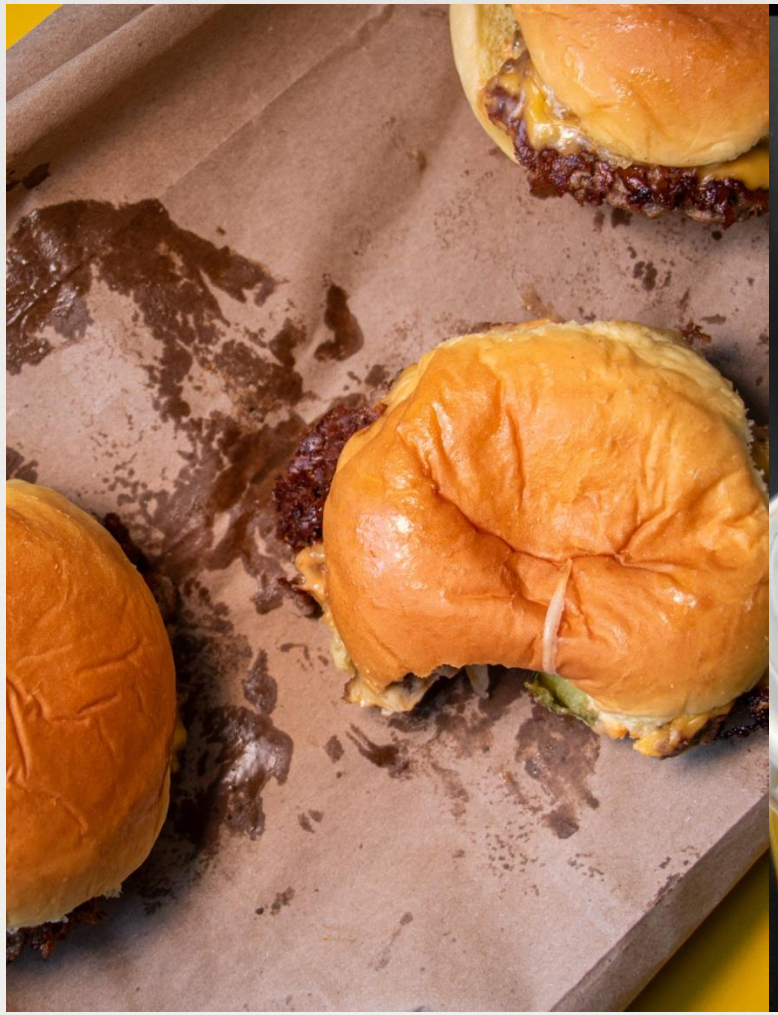
Building a future where our inputs and outputs align with Earth's natural processes.

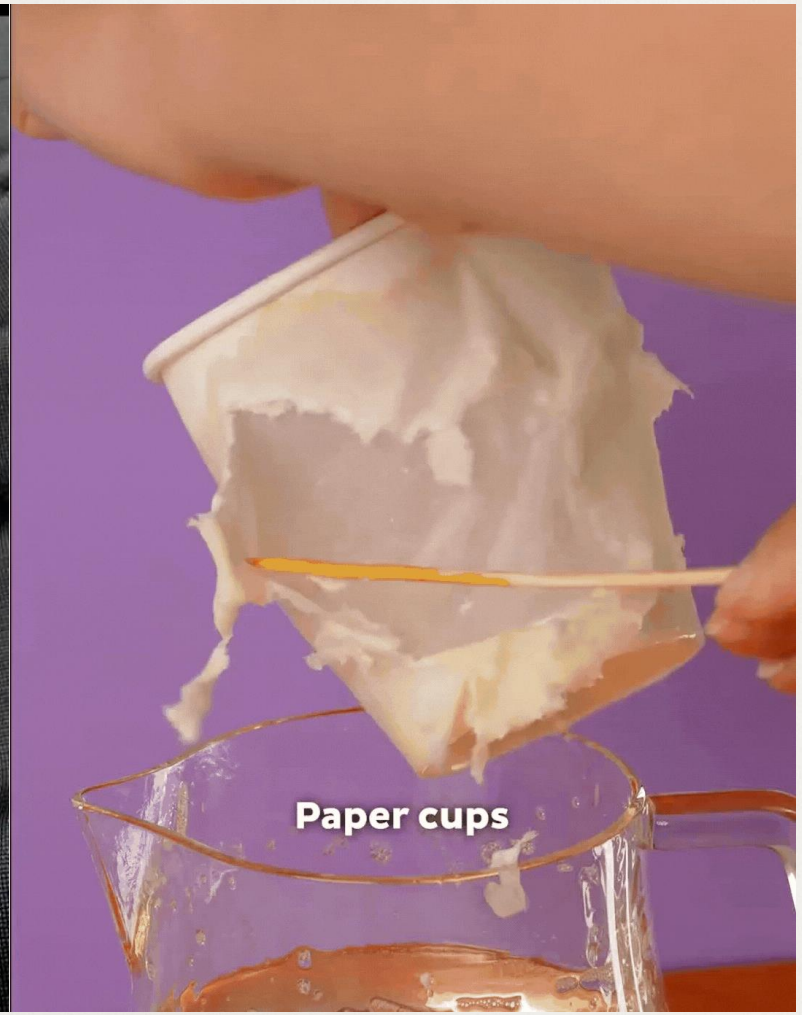
Yidan Zhang
CEO

Jonathan McGee
CBO

https://seasoltec.com/

SeaSolTec

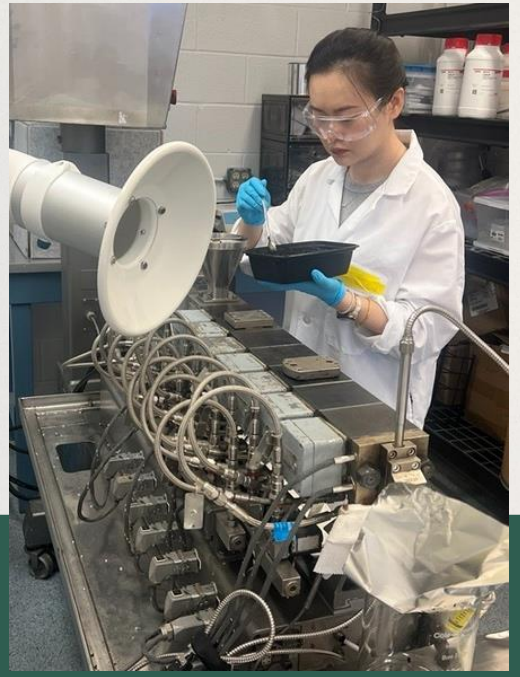


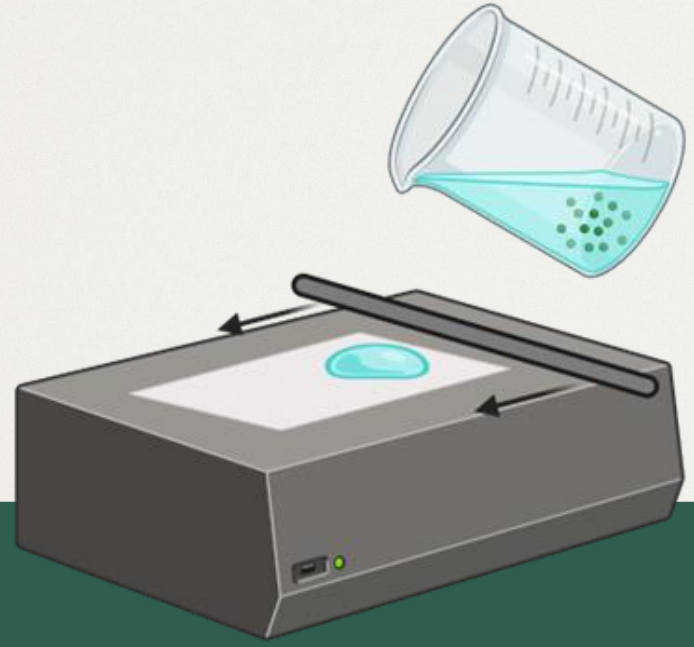


PLAIN paper just doesn’t work.

To fix it, the industry coats paper with plastic.

SeaSolTec





Harvest

CT seaweed by SeaSol's partner growers

Manufacturing

Scalable, low-cost manufacturing with proprietary one-step tech

UConn patent-pending

Coating

Drop-in replacement fits gravure and flexo in paper making

UConn TIP Depot Incubator

Pilot-Scale Extruder Machine