

TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE
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BREAKTHROUGH BOOM
FDA TAKES FIVE

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2015
Emerging
Pharma Leaders



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2015 Emerging Pharma Leaders

And the Leaders Are ...

(in alphabetical order)

RAHUL ARAS, CEO, Juventas Therapeutics

ARIS BARAS, Executive Director and Co-Head, Regeneron Genetics Center

JAY BARBER, Associate Vice President, Global Influenza Franchise & Product Strategy, Sanofi Pasteur

JULIAN BERTSCHINGER, Co-Founder and CEO, Covagen

DAN DIETRICH, Vice President, Global Operation Services, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation

ARJUN HANDA, Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Claris Lifesciences

STACI L. JULIE, Senior Vice President and Chief IP Counsel, Teva Pharmaceuticals

MATTHEW LANG, Associate General Counsel of Litigation & Investigations, Gilead Sciences

JACOPO LEONARDI, North America Region Head, Hemophilia and Blood Disorders, Baxter International

KEN MILLER, Worldwide President, BD Diabetes Care

GABY MISHEV, Associate Director of Marketing, Genentech

LIVIU NICULESCU, Vice President, Global and US Medical Affairs, Takeda Oncology

JAMES ROBINSON, President, Astellas Pharma US

SANDRA SANCHEZ Y OLDENHAGE, Deputy CEO, Probiomed Mexico

JULIE SMITH, CEO, Raptor Pharmaceuticals

MENASSIE TADDESE, Vice President, Finance, Global Innovative Pharmaceuticals, North America, Pfizer Inc.

TIMOTHY WHITE, Senior Director and Head of Global Customer Interaction, Lundbeck

Met *Pharm Exec's* 2015 roster of 17 Emerging Pharma Leaders. Selected independently by our editorial staff with support from members of our Editorial Advisory Board, this year's group adds to a list of more than 200 alumni dating back to June 2008. We called that first cohort of leaders "the change generation" and frankly the description remains apt today—change is still the constant because

there is no single commercial model that offers a surefire guarantee of success. What *is* different is a greater diversity in leader backgrounds and the skills required to advance to the "c-suite." We are seeing more bench strength in vaccines and generics, once adjacent businesses that are now key sources of product and process innovation; a transformation of finance and manufacturing roles, from a technical function to a

strategic priority; new competencies in organization design that help field forces get even closer to the customer; the refiguring of medical affairs as liaison to a more informed patient community; and the advent of a new generation of in-house technologists, imported from outside the industry, with the capabilities to deliver customized digital messaging in multiple channels, on many fronts.

— *William Looney, Editor-in-Chief*

The Son Also Rises

Arjun Handa, Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Claris Lifesciences

For Arjun Handa, leadership is a family trait. His father, Sushil, founded injectables firm Claris 15 years ago; before that he had a track record of business ventures in the Indian healthcare sector. In the 1980s he set up Core Healthcare and in the 1990s he was instrumental in bringing Quintiles to India.

Handa wasted no time in meeting his family's entrepreneurial expectations. On graduating Ahmedabad's Gujarat University with a degree in Accounting in 1999, he set up an IT firm that was quickly successful; he continued to run it when he moved to Boston to complete his MBA at Northeastern University. When he returned to India in 2004, his father suggested the firm should become the IT arm of Claris and the two companies merged.

On joining Claris proper, Handa spent time in product development, "learning what was driving the company's growth," before rising to a leadership position in manufacturing, where he spent four years. Head of operations from January 2006, he became chief operating officer in January 2008; in September 2008, at age 28, he was made CEO.

In the meantime, the Carlyle Group paid \$20 million for a 14% stake in Claris. The investment helped to fuel a major global expansion; by 2009, the company had a presence in 76 countries and had achieved a compound annual growth rate of 40% over five years. Amid this activity, Handa was

offered his role as CEO. Wary of his lack of experience in finance, sales and HR, he chose to spend a year "familiarizing myself with those three functions" while easing into the position. The careful transition underlined his diligence and pragmatism; when it was time to fully lead the company, he knew it inside out.



From his earliest days in the Claris labs, Handa suggested taking the company's biggest product, a generic version of propofol, into the US. His father was apprehensive, anticipating too many challenges as the product was patented there. "But I told myself, one day I'm going to do this," says Handa. True to his word, last year Claris filed the product in the US and settled the patent litigation around it; Handa hopes to receive approval soon.

He has also proved his mettle in more trying circumstances. In 2010, the company was the subject of an FDA import alert, after reports of contamination.

"We had to work towards a resurrection," says Handa. "We had to change our architecture of quality, our quality systems, our culture." In 2012, the company had a successful FDA audit and was allowed back into the US, where its products now number 36 (and counting). Handa regards "that whole turnaround as a great personal achievement."

While the growth of the Indian pharma market has been huge over the last 15 years, Claris's injectables busi-

ness remains mostly export oriented; this sector is still evolving at home. Claris's injectable products are "more cutting edge; they achieve better recognition and sales in countries with more developed markets," says Handa. (The company's infusions business was transferred in 2013 to a joint venture with Japan's Otsuka and remains focused on the Indian market and others "where infusion is a high-volume/low-value commodity"). Handa is keen, however, to commend the changes India has experienced.

"There's more potential to do business here now. There are more hospitals, more manufacturing facilities," he says. "And there's a lot more talent. Company founders and their key people used to have to resolve learning curves as they went along. Now, there are seasoned professionals who can join a company and be instantly instrumental in leading it. The nurturing of talent has turned erstwhile middle managers into good senior professionals."

As for his own career development, Handa credits his father as his "true mentor." But he follows his own path. "I am not as motivated by scale as I am by niche," he says. As an entrepreneur, he is concerned with identifying gaps in the market. "My father's generation has given India the basic infrastructure. What is needed now is what is missing. Our business model has to be a balance of off-patent and improved products."

With plans to roll out 48 new products over the next three years and solidify the company's position in regulated markets such as the US, Handa is well on the way to securing his goal for Claris—for it to be "one of the most admired companies in the injectables segment." He has also been rewarded, many times over, by that "time, energy, and focus" his father devoted to making sure his son would carry the skills and expertise to be the right leader for the company's future.

— Julian Upton