

## NEWS

From left to right:

Professor Julian Crampton;  
Dr David Marks, PI Bioscience  
Ltd; Dr Rob Rule, MICAP plc;  
John McQuillan, Director of  
MerseyBIO; and Dr Curtis  
Dobson, University of  
Manchester.



## Sweeping the board at Biotechnology awards

Merseyside's young biotechnology businesses swept the board at the third North West Biotechnology Awards ceremony and, to cap a triumphant night for the region, Professor Julian Crampton from the University was awarded the prestigious title 'North West Biotechnology Personality of the Year'.

**D**r David Marks, founder and director of PI BioScience Ltd, based at MerseyBIO, was named 'Young Biotechnologist of the Year' in recognition of his contribution to starting the company, designing and developing its products and playing a key role in the business's strategic development.

Provexis Ltd, another company based at MerseyBIO, was awarded the coveted 'Start-Up Biotechnology Company' prize. Provexis' first product, Cardioflow, has enjoyed successful clinical trials and is expected to be on the market by early 2005. Provexis develops medical food products using natural bioactive ingredients and has secured considerable investment in 2004.

Micap plc, based at Newton le Willows, won the prestigious 'Company of the Year' award. Micap floated in 2003 – the first ever Merseyside biotech company to obtain a stock exchange listing.

Professor Julian Crampton has been instrumental in raising the profile and capacity of the biotechnology base in the North West and in Merseyside particularly. The flagship MerseyBIO Incubator at the University and the National Biomanufacturing Centre at Speke are products of his vision for the biotech industry in the region. Professor Crampton has also founded his own biotechnology company, Insecta, and is now leading the University's engagement in the exciting 'Northern Way' project.

The North West of England is one of the fastest growing biotechnology business regions in Europe.

## Pitching your ideas

An up and coming University of Liverpool oncology company - AsterTherix - has been awarded first prize at the 'Pitch Your Idea 2004' competition, organised by Biology in Business and held at Cambridge University.

**A**sterTherix were among six contenders for the award, which was chosen by an expert panel, and as part of their prize they now have the opportunity to present their elevator pitch alongside Cambridge businesses at the 'Cambridge Network in the City' dinner being held in London early this year.

Founded by Dr John Jenkins and Dr William

Greenhalf to exploit intellectual property arising from their research in the Faculty of Medicine, AsterTherix is developing a systematic predictive approach to enhancing chemotherapy by targeting cancer pathways with combination therapy.

AsterTherix has been working with MerseyBIO to develop their commercialisation strategy and is currently seeking seed investment.



Dr Greenhalf and Dr Jenkins.

## Visit of Sir David King

Government Chief Scientist, Sir David King, has visited the University to highlight the growing problem of flooding in the UK.



**O**ver £2 billion of assets are at risk around British rivers and coasts and in towns and cities, and the risk of flooding is set to increase over the next 100 years.

During his visit, Sir David examined the problems posed by flooding and discussed the issue of climate change – a subject that will feature heavily on the agenda of the G8 summit in September this year.

The University is helping to address the risks of flooding as part of a major research collaboration with the University of Lancaster around the theme of sustainable water management, including the development of strategies for greater understanding and prevention of flooding both nationally and internationally.

The Interdisciplinary Centre for Sustainable Water Management brings together international expertise of scientists, ecologists and geographers from the two institutions in the investigation of scientific and social issues that arise in catchments, estuaries, coastal and marine waters to improve water management systems.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Jon Saunders commented:

*"We were delighted to welcome Sir David King back to Liverpool; I'm sure he will stress the importance of environmental issues on the global and national agenda."*

During his visit, Sir David also met with civil engineering students at the University. Sir David was previously a Professor of Chemistry at Liverpool before taking up a position at the University of Cambridge.