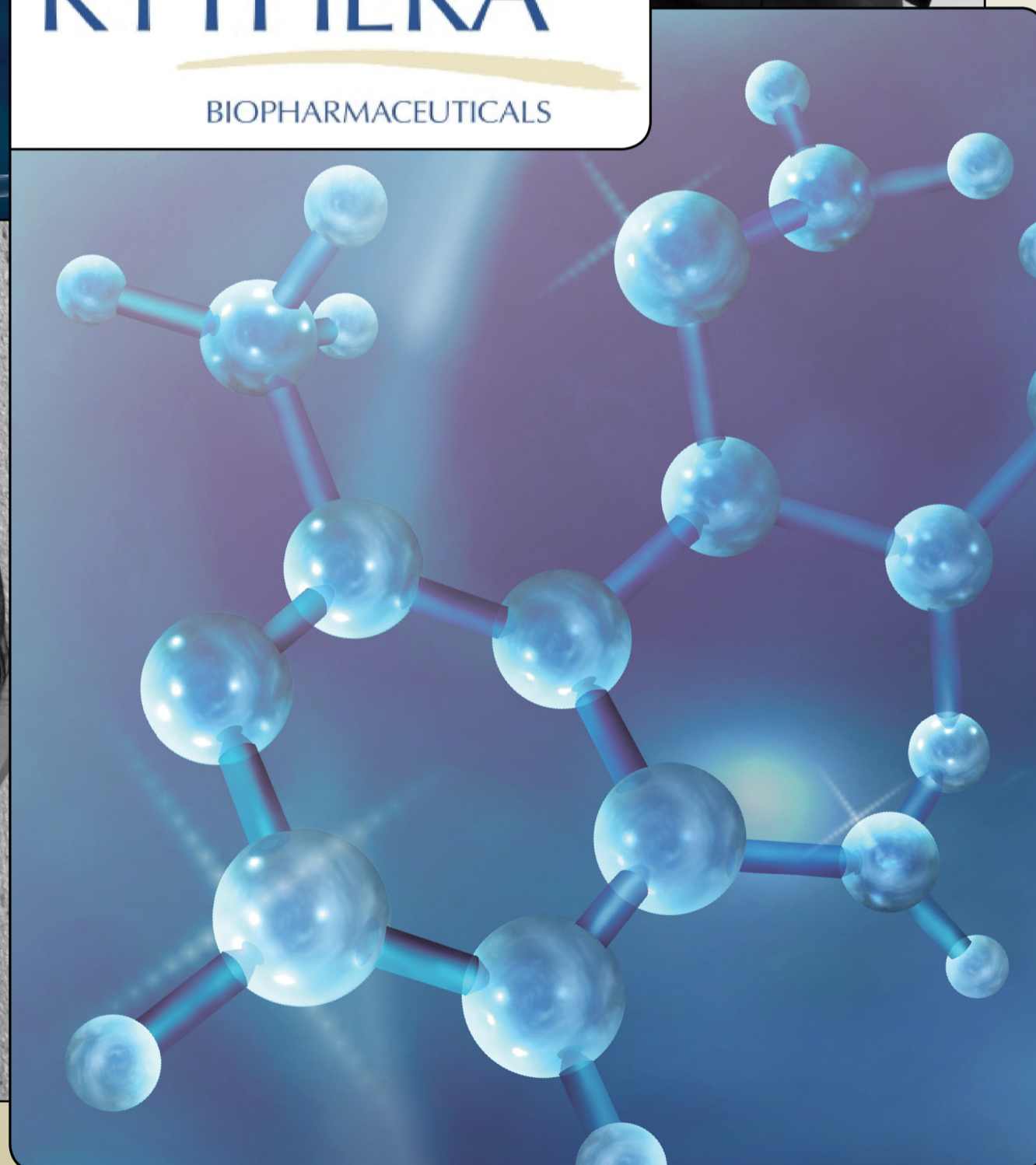


Keith Leonard

KYTHERA[®]
BIOPHARMACEUTICALS



Erica Bazerkanian



A MODERN DAY SUCCESS RECIPE

by Tracy L. Drumm

You may recall the General Electric advertising campaign from 2003 that launched their new line of smart yet sexy kitchen appliances boasting exciting new technology. The 30 second commercials unfolded a fictitious love story between supermodel Yamila Diaz-Rahi and a textbook “nerd.” Coined as the “beauty and the brains” commercials, the union of the unlikely pair in the ads showcased the core message GE was striving to portray; it’s not every day you see a true union of beauty and science and when you do amazing things happen. Walking into the data driven yet creative offices of KYTHERA in Calabasas, California, I couldn’t help but instinctively draw parallels between this biotech aesthetic company and the unique yet powerful pairing of a super-nerd with a supermodel.





Set amidst the rolling hills of the West Coast, the picturesque landscape surrounding the two-story building that houses KYTHERA perfectly sets the stage for the work behind the walls. As you enter the office, you are immediately engrossed in the energy of a team on a unified mission. That collaborative quest as described by the company is to “redefine the area of aesthetic medicine by taking a research-based approach to the development of first-in-class prescription products.”

Upon entering the “nerve-center” of the office, you will find a conference room that breeds curiosity, conversation and creation through innovative touches that are simply part of KYTHERA’s DNA. The room and the office emit a modern, lofty feel that appropriately matches the vibe of this 35-person biopharmaceutical company.

Named after an island in southern Greece that is rumored to have been Aphrodite’s center of worship, KYTHERA’s goddess-inspired, palpable brand is built from a solid team, tremendous leadership and an unwavering commitment to science.

Serving as President and CEO, co-founder Keith Leonard believes that great products are simply the outcome of putting the right ingredients together. ATX-101, KYTHERA’s first-in-class injectable drug that is currently in phase 3 trials for the reduction of localized submental fat, is a result of one of these “success recipes.”

Having a BS and MS in Engineering, a BA in History, and an MBA from the Anderson School of Management at UCLA, Leonard’s credentials make him the perfect leader to help drive his team towards exploring new innovations for the aesthetic industry.

After serving various leadership roles at Amgen for nearly 10 years, Leonard describes coming to the industry of elective cosmetic treatments as refreshing. “The ‘frosting on the cake’ of what we do is that we are working with happy medicine. After so many years of developing drugs for people with serious illnesses’, it’s a lot of fun to worry about quality of life issues that make people feel great.”

As evident by not just Leonard’s words but the actions of the company, there is a clear passion for the quest to discover novel prescription products for the aesthetic market. The values and tenacity of the team can be seen and felt through an inter-office campaign launched in 2008 to convey the company’s core values. On a tour of the building, Marketing Director



Left to Right: Mikos Bazerkanian, Chris Robertson, Robert Hodge, Erica Bazerkanian, Tom Ottenheimer, and Amit Munshi

Erica Bazerkanian passionately reveals the story behind the words on the walls. “We wanted to solidify our beliefs as a company by creating value statements that the employees live and breathe and that could grow with the company.”

Over the course of three months the team underwent a process of exploring and selecting principles that when juxtaposed together would represent what KYTHERA stands for as a company. Rolled out over one week, Erica and her team launched their chosen six values through a series of celebrations designed to help the company internalize their message.

As the marketing mind behind the machine that KYTHERA is becoming, Bazerkanian’s background is perfectly blended to drive this up-and-coming brand deep into the market. With an MBA from Wharton, Bazerkanian has an analytical approach to marketing that is perfectly balanced with her astute client-centric method of communications. Her growing marketing team is quickly becoming a powerhouse that is capable of much more than simply designing campaigns. Swimming, biking and running, this thriving organization has added marathons, triathlons and even Ironman competitions to their list of company activities. Joining forces for team-building efforts,

supporting local cancer organizations and even sponsoring a young girl fighting neuroblastoma, the team members at KYTHERA fully embrace the opportunity to cross any finish line together.

Recognizing the importance of feeling valued at work, Leonard cultivates a team-like environment where each staff member can leave their mark on the company and truly become an integral part of the legend they are building. Leonard explains, “When you catch a glimpse of yourself in your rear view mirror driving home after work, you know whether you have contributed to something that day. A great culture is one where employees never have to look at themselves and question their ability to make an impact or impression on an organization.”

Leaving an impression on me and soon the entire industry, KYTHERA and its team of leaders are truly pioneers claiming their space in this market. We are in a day and age where “adapt or die” seems to be the mantra of many companies; this organization is thriving by going back to the basics of building a company based on passion, data and ethics. With their solidly growing roots, look for tremendous innovation to continue to come from this sharp and dynamic team that is forging new paths in the field of aesthetic medicine.

President of OFPSA

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