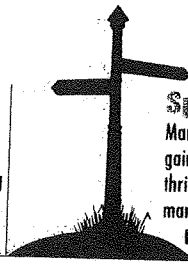


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Lumetrics gets research grant for eye system

By ANDREA DECKERT

New technology being developed by Lumetrics Inc. to improve vision could be a multimillion-dollar annual sales opportunity when the product goes to market, the Henrietta firm's leader said.

Lumetrics recently was awarded a Phase Two Small Business Innovation Research grant of nearly \$490,000 to develop and commercialize a fiber-optic system for measurement of the optical structure of the human eye. The Phase Two funding is used to help a firm develop its concept and see it through to the prototype stage.

Last April, Lumetrics received a Phase One SBIR grant of nearly \$100,000, which was used to help the firm test the scientific and technical feasibility of its concept. The research was led by Todd Blalock, Lumetrics' chief technology officer, and Filipp Ignatovich, its principal scientist.

John Hart, Lumetrics president, said the proposed product would be in a new market, although it is related to the firm's current technology. Hart noted that despite improvements in cataract and refractive surgeries in the past decade, there has been little advancement in pre-surgical diagnostics.

The fiber-optic measurement system that Lumetrics is developing uses a small device that shines invisible light into the eye to measure the optical structure. The device then sends the captured data to a connected computer that simultaneously displays it on a monitor and saves it for future use. That data then is analyzed for use in making decisions about surgery.

Company scientists said the technology can provide better accuracy 50 times faster than current methods, as well as providing additional measurements from one device.

Hart said the company likely would team up with other firms when it is ready to take the technology to market. A product launch is scheduled for the first quarter of 2012.

Lumetrics employs 15 local workers. It develops and manufactures high-precision thickness measurement and gauging systems for industrial applications. Started in 2002, Lumetrics licensed thin film measurement technology from Eastman Kodak Co. and created OptiGauge, an approach to non-contact optical measurement of multilayer materials for the medical, pharmaceutical, food packaging, eye-care products and coatings industries.

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