

HEALING AT HEART: PROTEIN GENOMICS

It sounds like the work of science fiction: using a miraculous protein to heal wounds and make cardiovascular repairs. The developed protein is called elastin, and from it is a product called Elastatropin. And it's at the heart of Protein Genomics, a medical science company based in Flagstaff. The company launched 20 years ago in New Jersey, but has since relocated to town—and is four to five years from finishing the lengthy process to get a consumer product to market.

Leading Protein Genomics are Burt Ensley and Robert Kellar. They are assisted by Robert Audet and Robert Diller as they work on creating commercial and medical uses for patents registered with the elastin protein. The major goal is to create products to help both people with non-healing chronic wounds and cardiac patients.

“The human aspect about what we do is that, at the end of the day, we have a chance to help someone feel better and improve their quality of life,” Kellar said. “Or we might save their life ... I've always been passionate about the human body and science, and getting to do this is the best job in the world for me.”

Kellar said that Flagstaff has evolved into a great place for the research science community. “The city and community want to attract science and research. It is the first STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) City in America. That's huge.” And Protein Genomics is one of the fascinating companies pushing scientific breakthroughs.

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FROM LEFT: ROBERT DILLER, ROBERT AUDET AND ROBERT KELLAR OF PROTEIN GENOMICS.

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— ROBERT KELLAR