



Texas Roundup: EnergyFunders, Neal Murthy, Xenex, Xeris, LiveOak

Let's catch up with the latest innovation news from Texas.

Initially set up as a crowdfunding-type platform for small to medium oil and gas operators, EnergyFunders has now expanded its services beyond providing cash. The site, which launched in 2015, also connects operators to hardware and specialized talent they might need to fully realize their project's potential. "We've developed an expertise in managing a whole life cycle of a project," says Philip Racusin, EnergyFunders' co-founder and CEO.

We have "Five Questions For ..." Neal Murthy, a Houston entrepreneur and investor. We talk about his yearly innovation trips (2017 is all about machine learning), the use of play in socialization, and how a boss can never really manage his or her employees.

Researchers at the [University of Michigan are planning a study](#) of the effectiveness of Xenex Disinfection Services' robot for healthcare facilities. The researchers have been awarded a \$2 million grant from the National Institutes of Health. The San Antonio company sells robots that use pulses of xenon-based ultraviolet light to kill so-called drug-resistant "superbugs"—organisms like *Clostridium difficile* (C. diff) or methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) that can cause severe infections in hospital patients.

Anecdotally, it feels like the tech world is largely comprised of white men. A recent study by Amalie Barras, a co-organizer of the Open Austin meetup, shows that, at least in Austin, that's true. The Austin American-Statesman reported that Barras' study found that of 15 Austin tech meetups last year, only 14.5 percent of 255 speaking slots were occupied by women. Out of 74 single-speaker events, 11 women spoke; in multi-speaker events, 25 of 146 speakers were women.

Carnegie Technologies says it has developed technology that can prevent interruptions in service that occur when the cellular network is switching from a WiFi network to a wireless one. (Say, when you are talking to someone in your home and you step outside to walk somewhere.) The San Antonio company hopes to sell its product, a cloud-based system that's attached to an operator's network, to various mobile and fixed-line network operators.

In other funding news, Austin's LiveOak Ventures has led a round of investors in a \$3.4 million Series A round of funding into a San Antonio cybersecurity startup. Infocyte uses a so-called threat-hunting method to seek out hidden or dormant hackers before any malicious software can strike. The startup had raised about \$1.4 million in funding from LiveOak previously.

Source: <http://www.xconomy.com/texas/2017/01/17/texas-roundup-energyfunders-neal-murthy-xenex-xeris-liveoak/>

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