

Antiva's Gail Maderis Finds Inspiration in Today's Biotech Innovation

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Gail Maderis, currently president and chief executive officer of South San Francisco-based **Antiva Biosciences**, has a rock-solid resume. Before taking the reins at Antiva, she led **BayBio (Bay Area Bioscience Association)**, Northern California's life science industry organization. From 2003 to 2009, she was president and chief executive officer of **Five Prime Therapeutics**. Before FivePrime, she held senior executive positions at **Sanofi Genzyme**, including founder and president of Genzyme Molecular Oncology.

The *San Francisco Business Times* recently profiled Maderis, noting, "Maderis cares about her coworkers, but she knows how to shape and lead people to get results."

Antiva Biosciences was founded as **Hera Therapeutics** in 2012 by **Karl Hostetler** at the **University of California, San Diego (UCSD)**. It focuses on developing topical therapeutics for diseases caused by Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection.

Antiva currently has two products in Phase I clinical trials. ABI-1968 is a double prodrug of an acyclic nucleoside phosphonate that directly blocks HPV replication and induces cell death in HPV-infection lesions. The company finished a Phase Ia study of the drug in cervical intraepithelial neoplasias (CIN) and will be conducting a Phase Ib study in women with cervical HSIL (CIN 2,3). The company is also conducting a Phase Ib study of the drug in patients with anal intraepithelial neoplasia (AIN).

"I think one of the things that I've learned that's really made me a better leader is to really value and embrace diversity," Maderis said in a video interview. "It's really important to have different perspectives and to really listen deeply to people and really embrace the differences and understand the context of where people are coming from."

Maderis' tenure as chief executive officer of BayBio was somewhat serendipitous. **Paul Hastings**, who knew her when he headed Genzyme's European group, was in line to chair BayBio at the same time she was. "I proposed to her, 'I will only be chair of BayBio if you agree to be interim CEO,' and it became a partnership that lasted many years," Hastings told the *San Francisco Business Times*.

The two of them oversaw the organization's 2015 mergers with the **California Healthcare Institute (CHI)** to become the **California Life Sciences Association**.

Maderis was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) about 13 years ago. After the merger of the organizations, she decided to retire. However, that was short-lived. She was recruited to head Maderis.

"Gail's combination of grit, business savvy and vision is ideal for an early-stage biotech company," **Wende Hutton**, a general partner with **Canaan Partners**, which co-led Antiva's first institutional fundraising round, told the *Times*. "She has led successful clinical

trials, raised necessary capital and attracted top talent. But what drives her are the people and particularly women that will benefit from Antiva's work."

The company **raised** \$16 million in Series B financing in August 2015. And in July 2018, the company **closed** on a \$15 million Series C-1 financing led by **Hillhouse Capital Management, Sirona Capital**, with existing investors Canaan Partners, **Sofinnova Ventures, Brace Pharma Capital, Osage University Partners** and **Lumira Capital**.

Maderis stated at the time, "This funding will support additional clinical studies in both indications over the next year, positioning us for strong Phase II studies in the second half of 2019. We welcome Hillhouse to our board and look forward to benefiting from their expertise and relationships in the Chinese pharmaceutical industry. China is a strategic market for Antiva, given the high incidence and death rate from cervical cancer in China."

Although she doesn't appear to dwell on her MS, Maderis told the *Times*, "I've benefitted personally from biotech drugs that were not available when I started my career in biotech."

And in her video interview, Maderis says, "I get up every day inspired by the amazing technology we have. We've never had a greater opportunity to apply that technology to improve people's lives around the world. It's really inspiring to be able to take inventions from the lab and be able to develop them and bring them to people around the world to impact their lives."