



# THE PLAIN DEALER

## Ohio fund commits \$25 million

Recipients are 4 venture capital funds that invest in IT, science firms

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The Ohio Capital Fund has committed \$25 million to four venture capital funds that invest in young life science and information technology companies, at least half of which must be in Ohio.

Two of the firms behind the funds - Arboretum Ventures in Ann Arbor, Mich., and Radius Ventures in New York City, recently have opened Cleveland offices because of the state investment.

Created in 2005 by the Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio Capital Fund invests in largely Ohio-based venture capital funds that, in turn, make at least half of their investments in early-stage businesses in the state.

In addition to Arboretum Ventures and Radius Ventures, Charter Life Sciences in Cincinnati and Palo Alto, Calif., and Fletcher Spaght Ventures in Boston will receive part of the state's latest investment.

Fletcher Spaght, which invests in information and life science technologies, opened a Columbus office to qualify for the fund investment. That all four of the funds invest in life sciences "demonstrates . . . how health care continues to be the transformational force in the regional and state economies," said Baiju Shah, president of BioEnterprise, the health care company developer in Northeast Ohio.

Jon Snyder, a CEO-in-residence at BioEnterprise, will lead the Arboretum Ventures office. Snyder, recently of Imalux Corp. in Cleveland, plans to eventually serve as chief executive of a company in which Arboretum invests.

Dr. Floyd Loop, former chief executive and chairman of the Cleveland Clinic, will lead the Radius Ventures office. Loop is a venture partner at Radius, which led the \$65 million transaction that took Cleveland's Athersys Inc. public in June.

The Ohio Capital Fund has committed nearly two-thirds of its initial \$150 million to 16 venture capital funds, 13 of which have an Ohio presence, said Paul Cohn, regional director of Fort Washington Investment Advisors.

Cohn's Cincinnati private-equity firm manages Ohio Capital Fund assets with Cleveland's Peppertree Partners LLC.

The funds, in turn, have invested in 13 Ohio companies, including Thin Battery Technologies, Cardiolnsight, TOA Technologies, Ayalogic, Ricerca Biosciences and NineSigma in Northeast Ohio, he said.

All 13 companies employ nearly 500 people, Cohn said. About one in four of those jobs have been added since Ohio Capital Fund money was invested in the companies.

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